

city of berkeley

2012

SUSTAINABILITY

LAND USE

ACCESS

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

URBAN DESIGN

STREETSCAPES

OPEN SPACE

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SERVICES

HOUSING

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Illustrated Version of

**DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN**



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# 1 - INTRODUCTION



# 1- INTRODUCTION

## THE VISION FOR DOWNTOWN BERKELEY

Downtown is the heart of Berkeley where people enjoy urban life.

Downtown demonstrates Berkeley's commitment to sustainability. Downtown models ways to minimize human impacts on the environment, through its emphasis on walking, bicycling, transit, green streets, and green architecture.

Downtown is economically vibrant. Downtown increasingly serves Berkeley's residents and visitors with attractive retail, exceptional restaurants, community services, and remarkable streets, parks, and plazas. Downtown celebrates its proximity to a university renowned for academic accomplishment and physical beauty. Downtown's cultural, educational and historic assets form the foundation for its continued success.

*Downtown is a great pedestrian-oriented neighborhood. Safe and tree-lined streets, shops, services, and amenities make it possible to meet most daily needs on foot. It offers diverse housing opportunities for all kinds of people, with an emphasis on affordability and supporting people of all abilities.*

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**Facing Page:** *Berkeleyans participated extensively in the creation of the DAP, including three visioning workshops held early in the process. Here, citizens discuss their goals for the Downtown Area at a public 'visioning meeting.'* Staff photo.

## PURPOSE AND PROCESS

Downtown serves as the vital, recognizable heart to the city of Berkeley. In Downtown, Berkeleyans come together to work, play, shop, stroll, and meet. When out-of-town guests say they want to "See Berkeley," Downtown springs to mind.

Downtown Berkeley possesses many qualities of a great downtown. Shops and buildings come to the edge of sidewalks, as is typical of America's "main streets." Windowed storefronts reveal merchandise and inside activity. An eclectic mix of buildings – many historic – give visual interest and suggest a rich history. Newer buildings complement their historic neighbors while demonstrating Berkeley's forward-thinking culture. Downtown offers a variety of places to eat, theatrical shows, a great library, a widely used YMCA, and unique shops. Downtown continues to be a major transit hub, and it has the advantage of a large world-class university on its doorstep.

To be successful, Berkeley should have a clear and realistic vision of what Downtown is and can become. The Downtown Area Plan (DAP) builds on the strengths of the 1990 Downtown Plan, which succeeded in: making Downtown a recognized center for culture and the arts, bringing new housing to Downtown, and preserving Downtown's historic assets. The DAP adds result-oriented provisions to make Downtown more vibrant. The DAP also promotes environmental sustainability with new standards for green building and green infrastructure, and by accommodating future residential and employment growth within a pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented district.

## THE 1990 DOWNTOWN PLAN

The previous Downtown Plan was adopted in 1990 after six years of effort. The 1990 Plan emerged at a time when the things that made Downtown a special place were at risk, especially features that give Downtown its unique pedestrian-friendly character. Soulless banks and fast food restaurants replaced older buildings. Street improvements focused on moving cars while reserving modest sidewalks for pedestrians. BART's construction further disrupted Downtown. Many feel that it never recovered.

The 1990 Downtown Plan emphasized the importance of protecting Downtown's traditional character. The Plan embraced the community's values for protecting its historic character, cultural diversity, and human scale. Cultural uses formed another cornerstone of the 1990 Plan. While Downtown's retail anchors were not saved, cultural uses presented a way to maintain Downtown as a regional destination. A new Arts District was created by successfully recruiting live theatres, preserving historic facades, and making community-inspired street improvements.

The 1990 Plan also emphasized high-density housing as being critical to Downtown's revitalization, at a time when little "urban infill" was occurring. At that time, the community understood that in the face of auto-oriented suburban malls and big-box retail, revitalization of a traditional downtown meant increasing the number of people living and shopping there. The 1993 Downtown Design Guidelines that helped to implement the 1990 Plan was innovative in its emphasis on traditional building types where buildings are built to the street edge, and where residences and offices are built over stores that face the street.

The 1990 Plan also could not anticipate a new spectrum of concerns. Environmental sustainability and global climate change had not yet emerged as leading issues. "Transit-oriented development" had not been coined as an expression, let alone developed as a concept. In addition, the social benefits and economic imperative of well-designed streets and buildings was poorly understood and received little emphasis.

## THE DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN PROCESS

A new Downtown Area Plan effort was initiated in 2005, partly to settle a dispute between the University of California, Berkeley and the City of Berkeley regarding the University's Long Range



**Figure IN-1: View of Downtown Looking West.** Downtown plays a vital economic and cultural role within Berkeley – and the larger Bay Area. Staff photo

Development Plan (LRDP). The University's LRDP called for 800,000 square feet of new development in and adjacent to Downtown. It was not clear how UC's Downtown development would be arranged or what its character would be.

The City and University recognized that the future of Downtown was of mutual concern, and that fostering a healthy, sustainable, livable, and vibrant Downtown was in the interests of both the City and the University. Specifically, the City and University agreed to foster Downtown revitalization by working in partnership to develop a new Downtown Area Plan that would address community goals and shape University development plans.

The Downtown Area Plan was developed through the extensive participation of Berkeley's citizens, along with the cooperation and support of the University. Community concerns and a community-based process were central to the Plan's development. In 2005, Berkeley's City Council appointed a 21-member Downtown Area Plan Advisory Committee (DAPAC), with three additional ex officio University representatives. The DAPAC provided direction for a draft Downtown Area Plan that expressed a shared vision, common goals, and policy objectives. DAPAC and its subcommittees met through two years and nearly one hundred meetings, with assistance by City and University staff. Various experts were brought in to better clarify complex issues that DAPAC faced.

The DAPAC identified the issues addressed by the DAP and set the direction for most policies contained in the Plan. DAPAC made its final recommendations and forwarded them to City Council and Planning Commission in late 2007. The development of implementing measures was deferred to the Planning Commission.

In 2008, Berkeley's Planning Commission began developing its recommendations for the Downtown Area Plan. Using DAPAC recommendations as a foundation, the Commission considered an array of measures for implementing the Plan. The Commission also sharpened language to eliminate redundancies and ambiguities.

The Planning Commission differed with DAPAC on some substantive issues. Most Planning Commissioners expressed support for having a few more tall buildings Downtown, while a majority of DAPAC members did not. The Planning Commission agreed with the DAPAC that there were significant public benefits from higher intensity development, but it concluded, based on a development feasibility study (Strategic Economics, 2008), that taller buildings would be needed to attain many benefits. The study found that the economics associated with height, building codes and construction costs are likely to make buildings heights between 75 and 160 feet infeasible under typical conditions.

In July 2009, City Council adopted a Downtown Area Plan that was rescinded after opponents to the 2009 Plan gained enough signatures to place that Plan on the ballot. In February 2010, the Council identified significant substantive changes and additions for consideration, and referred the development of a new draft Plan to Planning Commission. Planning Commission made its recommendations for a new DAP in May 2010.

The City Council decided to place controversial aspects of the recommended Plan on the ballot as "Measure R". This advisory measure contained general goals for a new DAP, and detailed provisions relating to building heights, incentives for sustainable development, and ways to streamline the entitlement process. Measure R passed by a 65% to 35% margin in November 2010.

## DAPAC's Analysis of Alternatives

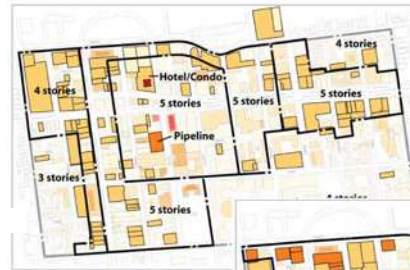
DAPAC considered several land use alternatives, which were analyzed from the perspective of residential yield, greenhouse gas generation, solar access, and aesthetics of massing options. Three alternatives were developed early on by Staff, served as touchstones during debate, and were illustrated using the corner of Allston at Shattuck as an example.



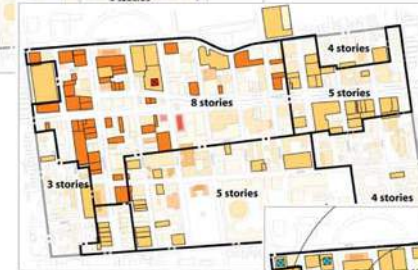
**5-Story Baseline "By-Right".** This Alternative depicts what would probably be built using zoning and practices that were in effect, which would generally result in 5-story building heights in commercial/mixed-use zones and 4-story building heights in residential areas.



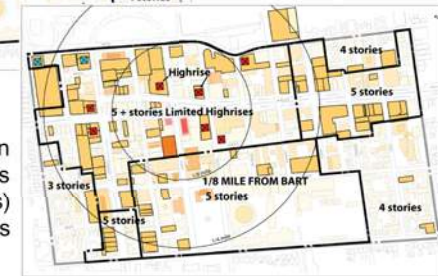
**8-Story Alternative.** This Alternative assumes an 8-story building height, except for the Civic Center area. While a majority of DAPAC members preferred buildings at this height, an economic feasibility study conducted after DAPAC indicated that projects of this height have high construction costs relative to the number of units they yield, and that residential projects between 76 feet and 160 feet are unlikely under typical circumstances.



Existing Zoning (new construction at 5 stories) – 1800 new units



Mid-Rise Option (new construction at 8-story) – 2500 new units



High-Rise Option (16-stories on 9 sites otherwise 5-stories) – 2500 new units



**5-Story at Street with Narrow High-Rise.** This Alternative steps the building back above the 5th floor. Zoning controls would limit the width of the upper part of the building so that sunlight would be blocked at any point on the street for only an hour or two in a day. Setting the building back also maintain a building silhouette of 5-6 stories as seen from sidewalks. The taller building height of the building depicted is also 180 feet, while the height at the street is about 65 feet.

In early 2011, Planning Commission considered the creation of a new Downtown Area Plan once again, using its May 2010 recommendations as a foundation. Implementation measures were also added. In December 2011 Planning Commission made its recommendations for this new DAP to the City Council. In early 2012, after six years of effort and nearly two hundred public meetings, City Council adopted this Downtown Area Plan, and the General Plan amendments needed for it to take effect.

The University of California will also make use of the adopted Plan. While this State of California institution remains jurisdictionally separate from the City, it has pledged to use the Downtown Area Plan as it plans for and constructs on University property in the Downtown Area.

## PROJECT LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

Downtown Berkeley is one of the Bay Area's principal city centers (Figure IN-2: Regional Context). In a location adjacent to the University of California, Berkeley, the Downtown Area grew around the intersection of Shattuck Avenue, a historic link to Oakland, and University Avenue, linking the campus and Downtown to Berkeley's original settlement at the Bay's edge and I-80. Shattuck and University remain as major arterials within the East Bay. Downtown Berkeley continues to be the second largest transit node in the East Bay, and is served by BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit), bus lines operated by AC Transit, and shuttle buses operated by UC Berkeley and others.

The Downtown Area is generally bounded by Hearst Avenue along its northern edge, Oxford-Fulton Streets along its eastern edge (east of which lies UC Berkeley's main campus), Dwight Way to the south, and Martin Luther King Jr. Way to the west (Figure IN-3: City Context).



Figure IN-2: Regional Context.

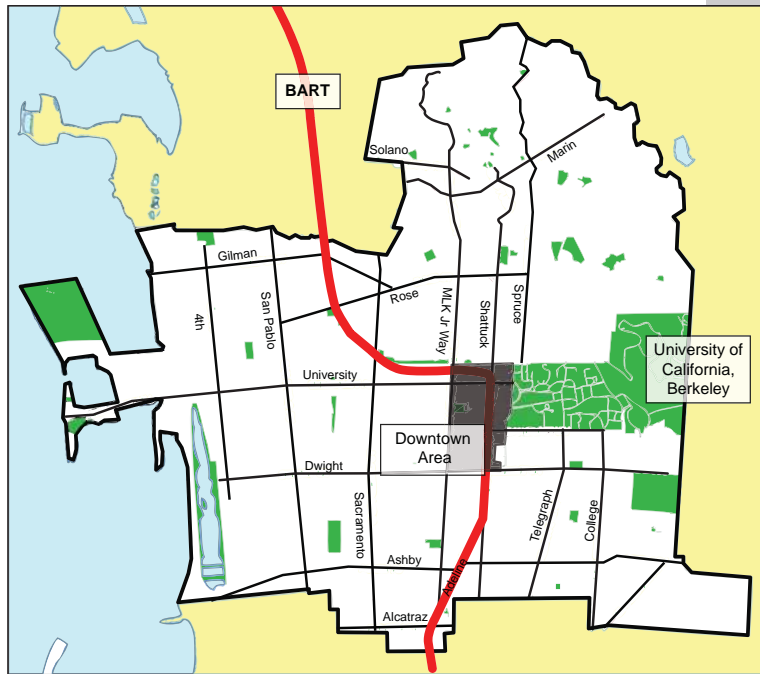


Figure IN-3: City Context.

The Downtown Area includes all of the commercial and civic areas considered by Berkeley residents to be “Downtown.” The planning area for the DAP is significantly larger than the area considered by the 1990 Downtown Plan that focused largely on the blocks closely surrounding the BART station. The Downtown Area also takes in portions of residential neighborhoods, to allow the DAP to consider boundaries and appropriate ways to transition (Figure IN-4: Existing Street-Level Uses) to these lower-intensity residential areas.

## **DOWNTOWN’S HISTORIC SETTING**

Downtown Berkeley has a long history compared with many California cities. A central business district began to take shape in the 1870’s, with successive waves of development through the 1920’s and 30’s. Development in this period followed the traditional pattern of American cities, with a grid street pattern and most buildings built to the edge of the sidewalk with housing or office space above street-level storefronts. Many buildings in Downtown date from before World War II and contribute to the character of Downtown, while other buildings have been built since.

Downtown’s position as a transportation center played a pivotal role in its development, as Downtown was a convergence point for several rail lines. Shattuck Avenue’s generous right-of-way held several intercity rail tracks, and was a focal point for commercial activity. University Avenue intersects Shattuck in the Downtown Area and offered local streetcar service.

Significant retail development continued to happen through the 1950’s, but by the 1970’s Downtown’s position as a regional shopping destination was in decline. Interurban train service ceased in 1958 and when BART opened its Downtown Berkeley station in 1973, shop-

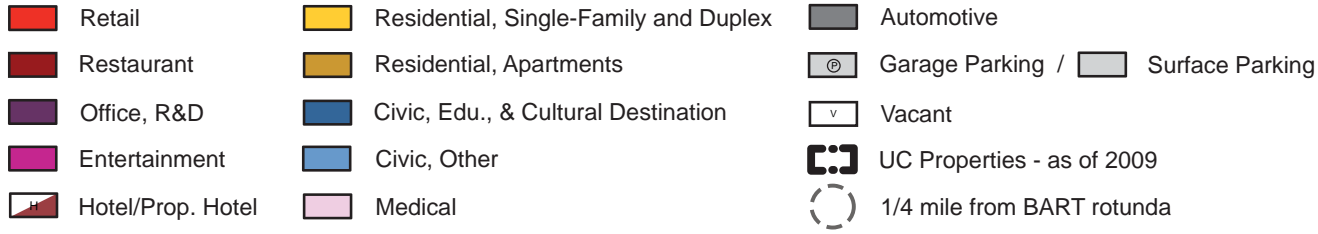
ping destinations with easy auto access were eclipsing traditional centers across the nation. BART construction was also a major disruption to Downtown and – in an effort to make it more welcoming to cars – Shattuck was reconfigured to maximize diagonal parking spaces while moving through-traffic quickly. Fortunately, Berkeley did not embrace the “urban renewal” schemes of the 1960’s and 1970’s, in which other cities tore down whole blocks of historic fabric to create large-scale redevelopment opportunities. Much of Berkeley’s historic fabric remains and is highly valued by Berkeley residents. The DAP reflects this value, as described in more detail in the Historic Preservation and Urban Design chapter.

Since the 1960’s and 1970’s, and continuing to today, UC Berkeley has played a growing role in Downtown development motivated by expanding programs and fewer opportunities for new development within its core campus. University expansion is occurring in Southside, Northside, and Downtown areas. The University, and the affiliated Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), have leased and developed space in Downtown, such as the Helios Solar Energy Research Center. The DAP will help guide the University’s plans for continued expansion within the Downtown Area.

The 1990’s brought new interest in developing apartment buildings in Downtown. Students occupy most, but not all, of this new housing. Oxford Plaza has brought more families Downtown and projects like the Arpeggio are expected to attract more professionals and empty-nesters.

Downtown’s reputation as a center for theatre and the arts was also strengthened in the past 20 years, with development of the “Arts District” along Addison Street, including a second stage for Berkeley Repertory Theater, the Jazz School, the Aurora Theater, and the Freight and





**FIGURE IN-4:**  
**Existing**  
**Street-Level Uses**  
**as of 2006**



# FIGURE IN-5: Potential Development Opportunity Sites

- UC Sites (as of July 2009 except as noted with \*)
- City + BHS Sites
- Private Sites /  Private Sites, dependent on historic evaluation
- H Historic Landmark on Site
- 1/4 mile from BART rotunda

## NOTES

“Opportunity Sites” are illustrative. Nearly all of them are:

- Vacant, OR
- 1-story, OR
- 2-story near BART.

Not all sites will be developed.

There may be additional sites beyond those shown.



Salvage folk-music club, among other arts venues. Anticipated construction of a new Berkeley Art Museum / Pacific Film Archive will further enhance Downtown as a cultural destination.

## LAND USE

The Downtown Area has a wide mix of uses that result from an economy with five general sectors:

- A diverse retail sector, including shops and restaurants that cater to local patrons and, more occasionally, patrons from outside of the area.
- Cultural uses that bring people Downtown and include live theater and music, museums, cinemas, and community uses like the YMCA and Central Branch Library.
- Personal services medical services, and services that support business activities.
- A major employment center because of its offices and institutions, including city government and space associated with UC Berkeley.
- Apartments and other residential uses that support Downtown's retail and service sectors.
- Portions of low-intensity residential neighborhoods are included in the boundaries of the Downtown Area.

Foremost, Downtown is known as a commercial hub along Shattuck near BART, and extending along Shattuck and University Avenues. These commercial areas have largely retained a "main street" character where storefronts are built to the street.

Many Downtown buildings are "mixed-use" with residential units or office space above retail shops or other street-level uses. Some mixed-use buildings have been built recently, while others are older and contribute to Downtown's historic character.

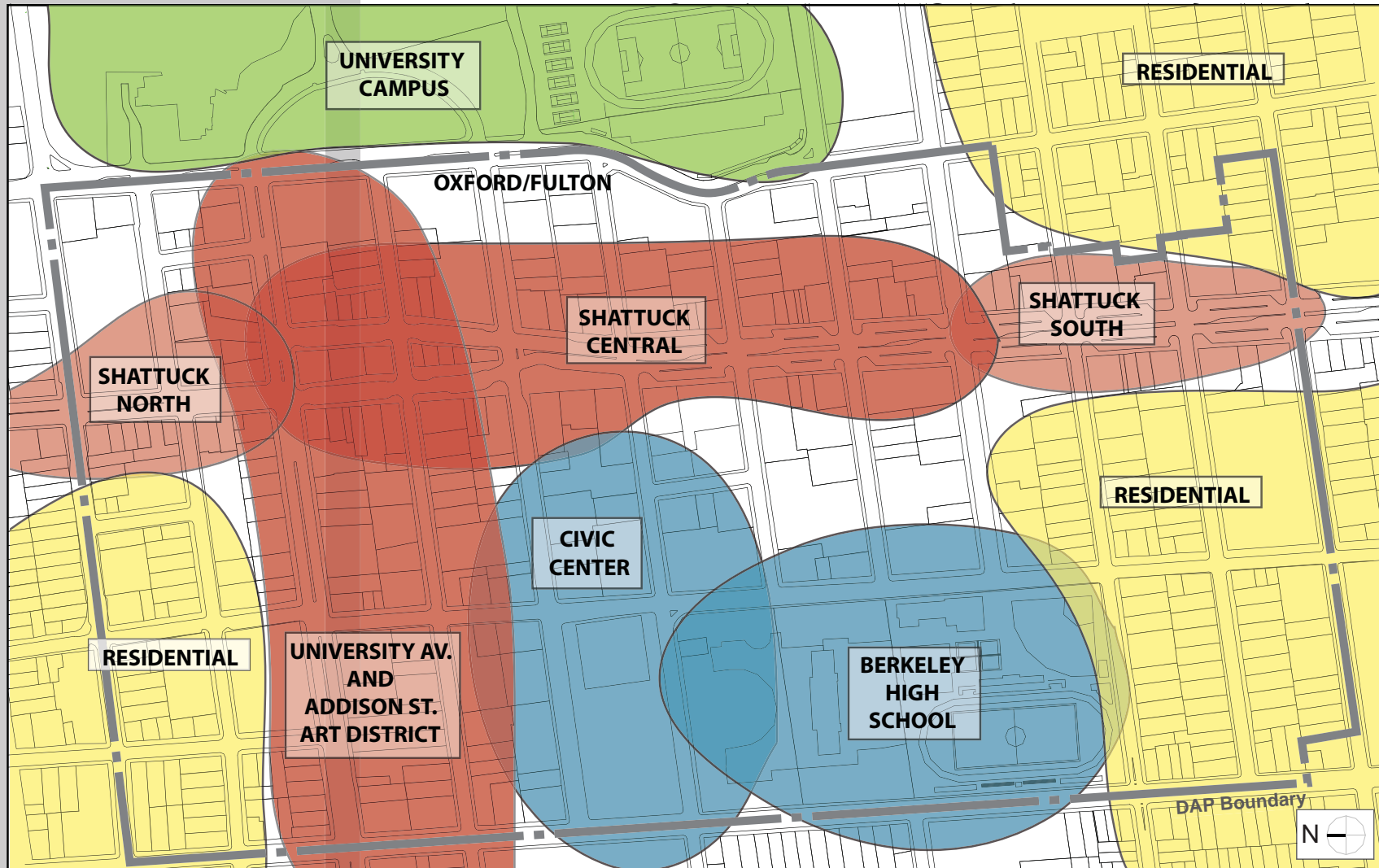
While Downtown has long been a cultural center recent efforts have cultivated a regionally recognized "Arts District" that includes an especially high concentration of live theaters and music venues along Addison Street. A cluster of cinemas, near Shattuck and Kittredge, and a growing number of museums continue Downtown's identity as a cultural center.

Downtown is also a major employment center. Office space occupies the upper floors of many buildings, and a range of commercial uses occupy most ground floors. Additions and renovations have modernized office space in many older buildings. New space is more limited, particularly full-service professional, or "Class A," office space. In its entirety, the Downtown Area makes up 168 acres. Private- and institutionally-owned parcels comprise 113 acres within the Downtown Area. Among these parcels, approximately 27 acres have been identified as potential "development opportunity" sites. These sites are comprised of vacant lots, surface parking lots, one-story buildings, and two-story buildings near BART (see Figure IN-5: Potential Development Opportunity Sites). Two-thirds of Downtown Area parcels are occupied by more substantial buildings and unlikely to experience change in the 20 year time frame of the DAP.

There are several major institutions in and immediately adjacent to the Downtown Area. Just east of Downtown is the main campus of UC Berkeley. The University owns several properties in Downtown, most on the blocks immediately adjacent to campus, including the former

## FIGURE IN-6: Existing Subareas

Depicted informally here, the Downtown Area is comprised of several subareas -- each having special characteristics and issues to address.



California Department of Health Services site. The University also owns and plans development on other key sites on or near Oxford Street.

Near the western edge of Downtown lies Berkeley High School and the largest open space in the Downtown Area, Civic Center Park. Other major civic uses line other sides of the Park, including two City administration buildings and, on the west side of Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Old City Hall. North of Civic Center Park lies Veterans Memorial Hall, the YMCA youth center, and government offices. Many community-serving uses line Allston Way, including the YMCA, Berkeley High School, and Post Office. Berkeley's Central Library offers a large collection on Kittredge Street. Berkeley City College serving 5,300 students is located on Center Street.

Herrick Hospital is another important institution at the southern edge of the Downtown Area, and offers some health services as part of the larger Summit/Alta Bates medical system. Many small medical offices are in its vicinity.

Apartments can be seen throughout Downtown, often above commercial uses. At its southwest and northwest corners, the Downtown Area also includes blocks that are exclusively residential, comprised of single-family homes and apartments. Many apartment buildings in these areas were converted from former single family homes.

**Retail.** A downtown's vitality is largely defined by its retail environment. At one time, Berkeley was a major regional retail center, attracting people from many East Bay communities to its department stores and specialty shops. But Berkeley's retail sector declined as its department stores migrated to locations that offer easy access by car, as has been the case for American retailers generally. Downtown's mix of retail has since tilted toward neighborhood-serving

shops and shops that carry retail goods that attract all Berkeleyans has declined.

Special factors can maintain urban centers as viable regional destinations, however. Downtown San Francisco continues to be a strong draw because of its preeminent regional location and superior transit service. Downtown Santa Rosa, San Diego and Pasadena and Walnut Creek have also retained department stores, but only through the use of mostly inward-looking shopping malls that resulted from aggressive redevelopment efforts.

Downtown Berkeley offers a very different retail environment from the malls, homogenized chain stores, and big-box retailers that have dominated retailing over the past 30 years. Downtown Berkeley must build on its unique characteristics and inherent strengths to distinguish itself as a retail destination. Downtown offers restaurants, bookstores, cinemas, live theater and other cultural uses that regularly draw people from other communities. Downtown can also capitalize on the proximity of the University's staff and students. Finally, increasing the number of Downtown residents can provide an essential base of support for businesses – including those with a larger regional clientele.

Downtown Berkeley can also promote itself by being an interesting and welcoming place to be, such as by having beautiful streets, inviting plazas, and public art. It can distinguish itself by using green infrastructure, like rain gardens and permeable pavers, and by maintaining a sense of history. Urban places also succeed when they offer a sense of community. Any downtown should be a great place to people watch, meet friends, and enjoy events.

**Employment.** Downtown continues to be a major employment center that offers professional

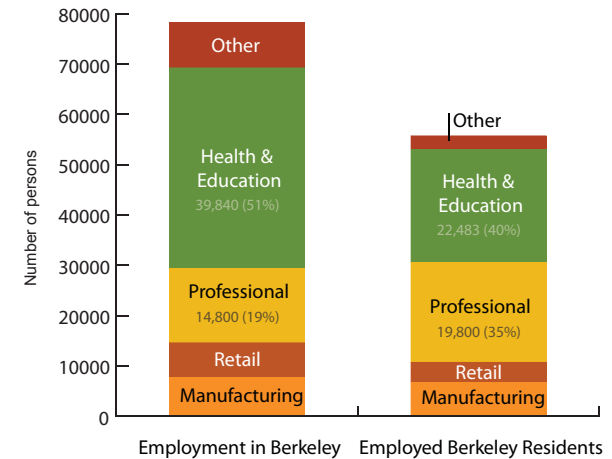
and personal services, serves the community with health and government services, houses functions relating to UC Berkeley, and maintains retail and other commercial activities. Because the retail at street-level is largely built out, employment related to retail is not expected to grow significantly. Office growth can be expected, however.

Downtown has low vacancy rates in offices, and office rents are high compared to most parts of the Bay Area. The University leases a significant amount of office space in the Downtown Area. Downtown's central and transit-oriented location also adds private demand for office space. Access to "intellectual capital" in the city and University breeds start-ups and spin-offs. In spite of this demand, Berkeley has little high-quality office space. Downtown has only two "class A" office buildings as defined by exceptional interior finishes, state of the art IT systems, high levels of security, and reception areas.

A large number of non-profit organizations find Downtown to be an advantageous. These non-profits represent a wide spectrum of concerns, such as public policy, computer and internet technologies, cultural programs, and community services.

Despite the low vacancy rate and relatively high rental rates, there has been very little office development in Downtown Berkeley for many years. State density bonuses, City policies encouraging residential development and, until recently, a very strong housing market, have made office development a less attractive option for developers. DAP building height policies and the usual swings in the market place may result in more private office development in the next 20 years than has been seen recently.

**The University of California, Berkeley.** UC Berkeley, the city's largest employer, has de-



**Figure IN-7: Berkeley Employment and Employed Residents.** Each day, Berkeley imports health and education workers and exports professionals. (US Census, 2000)

velopment plans that may greatly increase the amount of employment in Downtown as it builds on the vacant and underutilized sites that it owns. The University's "Long Range Development Plan" (LRDP) anticipates new construction of up to 800,000 square feet in the Downtown Area and abutting the Tang parking lot (on Bancroft abutting the DAP area). The LRDP targets the "West Adjacent Blocks" in the Downtown Area for museums, public services, and other visitor-intensive uses, along with research & development and administrative activities.

While the University's growth into the surrounding city has been a source of town-gown tension (partly because the University, as a state agency, is not subject to City property taxes or regulations), the Downtown Area Plan offers a new approach to University-City relations. University students, staff and faculty already help support Downtown restaurants, cinemas and other businesses. If planned appropriately, University growth can also accelerate revitalization

in Downtown by bringing additional employees and public services – and by enhancing the look of Downtown through attractive new buildings and landscaping.

**Personal and Business Services.** Downtown contains many kinds of services including personal services such as hair stylists and tailors, and business-related services such as photocopying or shipping packages. These commercial service providers support both local businesses and the University.

**Community Services.** Many types of community services are provided in and around Downtown, and especially in the Civic Center area. The YMCA serves the community by offering a variety of programs for people of all ages and abilities. The Civic Center area also provides social services for those with physical and mental disabilities, recovering from drug and alcohol abuse, needing job skills and assistance in getting employment, and who are homeless or hungry. The array of available services attracts people with special needs to Downtown. Downtown Berkeley has a high concentration of homeless individuals relative to most places in the Bay Area.

**Health Services.** Herrick Hospital lies just inside the southern boundary of the Downtown Area, and is a part of the Summit/Alta Bates medical system. Herrick provides targeted services for certain illnesses, and has not been a general service hospital for many years. Health services might also be provided by the University if it implements the “Community Health Campus” envisioned in its Long Range Development Plan. As envisioned by the Plan, UC clinics that serve the general public would be built on the former Department of Health Services site, to help make services more accessible to the general public.

**Cultural Uses.** The arts and entertainment community play a crucial role in Downtown. Live theater, music clubs, cinemas and museums bring people to Downtown from all over the Bay Area. In addition, the University’s Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive is planned Downtown and further enhance it as a cultural destination.

**Housing.** Housing supplies an essential component to Downtown’s economy. Local residents support – and will continue to strengthen – local businesses and cultural events. Without the freeway access that is essential for regional department stores, housing has become the foundation on which Downtown’s economy must stand.

**Residential Neighborhoods.** Several residential blocks lay in the northwest and southwest corners of the Downtown Area. Residents have expressed their desire to maintain their scale and character of these residential areas. Downtown Area Plan policies seek to reduce development pressures in and maintain the general character of these residential areas.

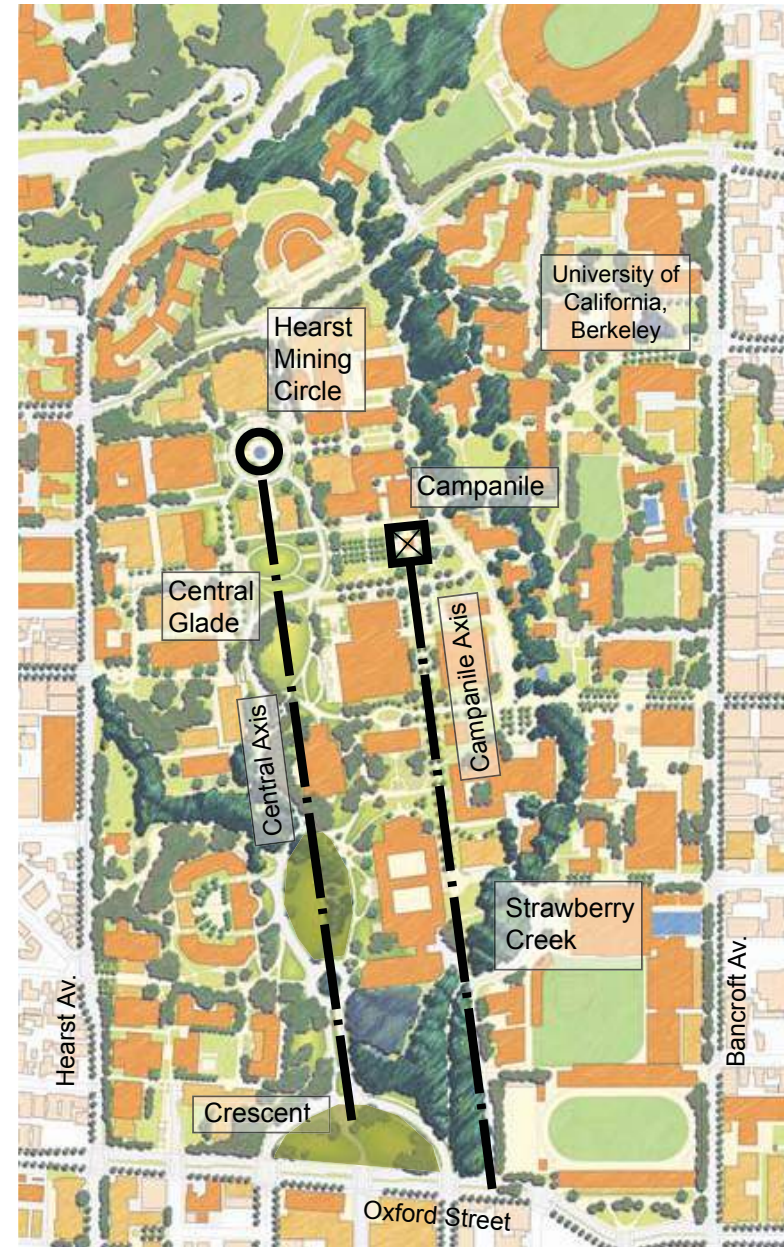
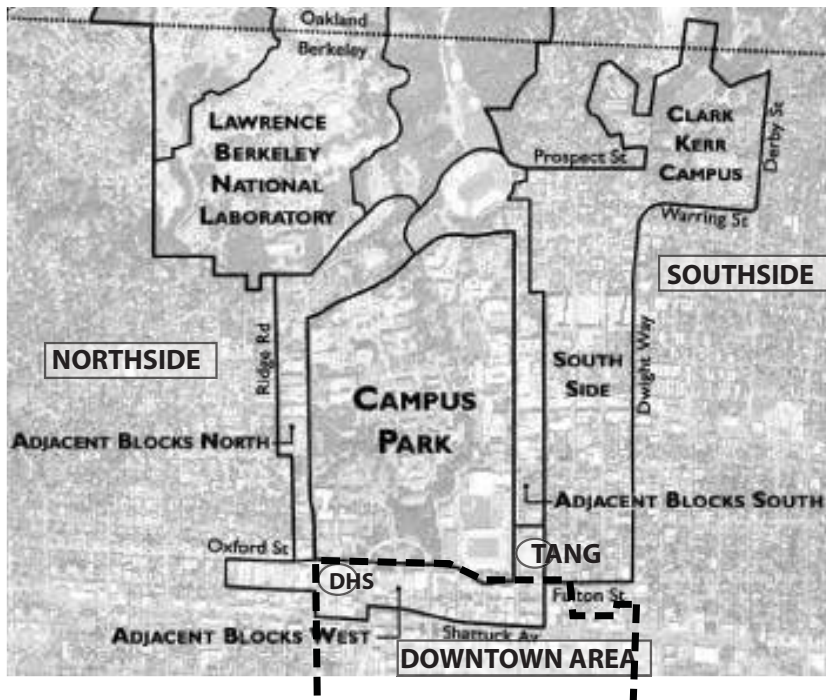
## TRANSPORTATION

Walking is the best way to enjoy Downtown and is the dominant transportation mode for local trips and after you arrive by some other mode. The quality of Downtown’s pedestrian environment promotes its position as a unique urban destination and a great place to live and work. Downtown’s walking environment also helps reduce car use and corresponding greenhouse gases. Downtown residents walk more and drive less than the City as a whole. Of roughly 2,000 households in Downtown, 40 percent do not own a car.

Downtown continues to serve, as it did originally, as a major regional transportation hub where numerous buses and BART converge.

## UC Berkeley's Long Range Development Plan

The University of California, Berkeley's 2020 LRDP provides a framework to shape future decisions on land use, enrollment, housing, parking, academic facilities, architecture, and landscape design. It defines the maximum potential growth of the campus through 2020 and encompasses the Core Campus (east of Oxford Street) and its surrounding environs – including the "West Adjacent Blocks" area in and adjacent to the Downtown Area. The LRDP promotes academic excellence, incorporates smart growth principles, encourages transit use, fosters state-of-the-art environmental policies, and calls for the creation of community spaces on and off campus.





40,000 daily transit trips begin, end, and connect through Downtown Berkeley. BART comprises 22,000 of those trips. Trips to and from UC Berkeley are a sizable part of transit trips. Many Berkeley residents use BART on their way to and from work – with higher transit ridership associated with residents who live closer.

Transit service also gives Downtown a unique advantage as an employment center and regional destination. Downtown's extensive transit resources, combined with transit passes for City and University employees, has resulted in very high ridership rates. Of the people who work in Downtown Berkeley (Berkeley residents and non-residents), about 15% get there on foot or by bicycle, about 35% get there using transit or in a carpool, and a little over half get there by driving.

It is the goal of this Plan, as with the previous Downtown Plan, to encourage more car users – and especially commuters – to get to Downtown a different way. For some people, however, the car remains the only practical means of getting to and from Downtown. Many people find walking or bicycling difficult. Transit options may not be nearby and bus service can be unreliable. Driving remains the easiest way for most Berkeley residents to visit Downtown for shorter trips, such as shopping or services, as well as for night-time activities. Parking will continue to play an important role in Downtown, and programs can make it more available for short-term users while encouraging commuters to use alternative modes.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS AND HOUSING**

Downtown Berkeley continues to grow in population, becoming an increasing share of the city-wide population. Berkeley's population shrank from 1970 to 1990, after which it grew slightly to reach its 1980 population level in 2000. While the City's population of about 102,000 has re-

mained steady since 1990, Downtown's population has grown by nearly 10 percent.

Downtown's housing tends to be more affordable and occupied by households with lower incomes than the rest of Berkeley. Sixty percent of Downtown households earn less than \$25,000, compared to 32 percent for Berkeley and 21 percent for Alameda County. Students tend to have lower incomes, and Downtown houses many of them. From 1990 to 2000, the number of Downtown residents under the age of 24 increased by nearly 40 percent. Families occupy only four percent of Downtown households and only four percent of Downtown housing units are owner-occupied (compared to 43 percent citywide).

In 2005, only nine percent of Downtown households earned more than \$75,000 annually. While residents provide support for local businesses, most Downtown businesses also rely on employees, students and visitors.

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimates that Berkeley has about 20% more jobs than working residents (Projections 2007). Between 2005 and 2020, the University alone is expected to add 2,900 jobs. Because of Berkeley's jobs, its accessible location in the region, and its overall attractiveness, the demand for housing in Berkeley is likely to continue to outstrip supply. As a result of these pressures, Berkeley's housing costs are likely to remain higher than in other nearby cities. Many long time residents cannot afford to live in Berkeley without rent controls. When tenants move out, rents increase to current market-rate, and households move in with generally higher income than those moving out. Consequently, residents with modest or fixed incomes have an increasingly difficult time finding affordable housing.

State laws mandate that cities accommodate their fair share of regional housing growth. Because of expected high demand and state requirements, there will be a continuing need for Berkeley to accommodate significant growth in its housing supply. Moreover, a recent State law in relation to sustainable development patterns (SB 375) identifies meeting housing needs within existing urbanized areas near jobs and transit as one of many critical strategies to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG).

The Downtown Area Plan has made housing growth a cornerstone strategy. Increasing the number of residents will support Downtown's economic vitality, put more eyes on the street, accommodate growing demand with less impact on Berkeley's residential neighborhoods, and minimize auto use and greenhouse gases.

## **PUBLIC SPACES**

Urban communities require attractive highly-functional public spaces. At higher residential densities, streets, plazas and small parks play a critical role in the life of a neighborhood. Public spaces offer opportunities for neighbors to meet and for recreation, thereby strengthening the fabric of community.

Faced with competition from highway-accessible commercial centers, historic downtown can remain economically relevant by offering a great urban experience provided, in large part, by exceptional streets and open spaces. In a regional economy, shoppers have myriad options, and improving Downtown's unique character is one of the critical ways that it can compete.

Berkeley's Downtown already contains a few special public places, such as the Addison Street "Poetry Walk" or, as on parts of Center Street, generous tree-lined sidewalks. Many

other streets provide only narrow sidewalks, and over one-third of street segments in Downtown have no street trees. With a few exceptions, little investment has occurred in public streets and open spaces since BART was built almost 40 years ago. Public spaces need to be enhanced, maintained and feel safe if Downtown is to thrive.

The Downtown Area presents major opportunities to enhance the pedestrian environment. In several Downtown locations, traffic lanes and inefficient parking arrangements can be eliminated, and land can be repurposed for wider sidewalks, more landscaping, bike lanes, small parks and plazas, and green infrastructure. There are also improvements that can be made throughout the Downtown area, such as enhanced lighting, public art, more street trees, and the use of a consistent aesthetic that accentuates Downtown's historic setting. Public improvement strategies are described in the Streetscape and Open Space chapter, and are set forth in more detail, including financing strategies, in the "Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan".

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainable development has been a principle of Berkeley planning for many years, and was established as a core organizing strategy for Downtown by the DAPAC. Sustainability touches every aspect of the DAP: requiring energy efficient buildings, promoting walking and transit, treating polluted urban runoff, and minimizing waste.

Downtown is also a significant resource for creating a sustainable region. The current efforts to create a Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Bay Area under the requirements of SB 375 makes clear the importance of connecting urban land use patterns and the region's transit infrastructure. Research shows that people in high-

er-density city centers with good transit drive one-third as much as people in urban neighborhoods and less than one-sixth as much as those living in suburban areas (see Figure IN-8).

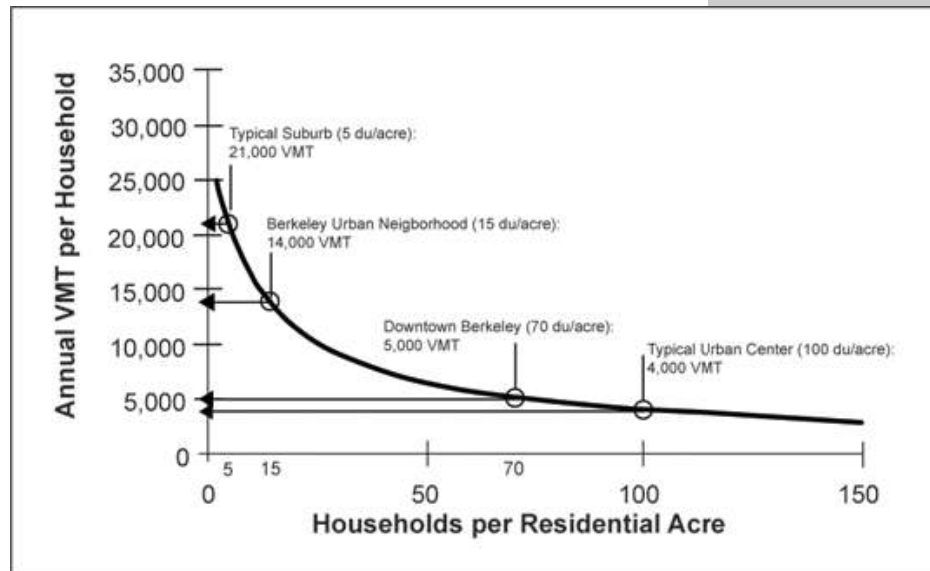
Two million more people are expected to live in the Bay Area within the next 30 years, and emphasizing growth in urban centers is a critical sustainability strategy. Urban growth near transit reduces market pressures for growth in outlying, less transit-accessible locations, and supports the preservation of open space and agricultural land.

Sustainable growth also means enhancing the character and quality of Downtown. A critical part of what makes Berkeley's Downtown a special place, is its sense of history. Care must be taken so that new development respects and enhances Downtown's historic setting – while also being authentic for the time period in which it is being built. Downtown must also be a comfortable and attractive place to live. Newer buildings must fit into the existing urban fabric in a manner that respects historic character and minimizes such impacts as shadowing on public open spaces and blank walls or wide driveways that deaden the street and conflict with pedestrian safety and comfort.

Downtown Berkeley can also distinguish itself as a leading location for green innovations. The DAP requires green building requirements and calls for ecologically beneficial features as part of street and open space improvements. Every chapter of DAP promotes sustainability, with an integrated and comprehensive approach set forth in the Environmental Sustainability chapter.

## CHAPTERS OF THE PLAN

The Downtown Area Plan contains the following chapters: Environmental Sustainability (ES), Land Use (LU), Access (AC), Historic Preserva-



**Figure IN-8: Driving and Residential Density.** People who live in high-density urban centers like Downtown drive less than people who live in other locations. Empirical research shows a consistent relationship between residential density and the household average for vehicle-miles traveled (VMT). (Adapted from research by John Holtzclaw, 2002)

tion & Urban Design (HD), Streets and Open Space (OS), Housing and Community Health & Services (HC), and Economic Development (ED).

Each chapter begins with a Strategic Statement that discusses issues of critical concern and background information, followed by goals, policies and implementing actions. Goals are a general and ultimate purpose. Policies describe a guiding strategy. Implementing actions are the tools and techniques to carry out policies.

## SUMMARY OF GOALS

Goals for each chapter are summarized here as a brief overview of the DAP.

### ***Environmental Sustainability (ES).***

- Goal ES-1: Integrate environmentally sustainable development and practices in Downtown, and in every aspect of the Downtown Area Plan.
- Goal ES-2: Model best practices for sustainability and promote Downtown to businesses, institutions, and residents who are committed to environmental sustainability.
- Goal ES-3: Encourage high density, highly livable development to take advantage of Downtown's proximity to regional transit and to improve the availability of diverse walk-to destinations – such as retail, services, culture, and recreation.
- Goal ES- 4: Promote “green” buildings.
- Goal ES-5: Promote ecologically beneficial landscaping and stormwater features throughout the Downtown, to filter pollutants found in urban runoff, protect and restore the health of connected watersheds, reduce downstream stormwater flows, and express the community's commitment to environmental sustainability.
- Goal ES-6: Minimize waste generated Downtown, and strive to make Downtown a “zero waste zone.”
- Goal ES-7: Continuously improve city standards and programs promoting sustainable practices.

### ***Land Use (LU).***

- Goal LU-1: Encourage a thriving, livable Downtown that is a focal point for

the city and a major destination for the region, with a unique concentration of housing, jobs and cultural destinations near transit, shops and amenities.

- Goal LU-2: New development shall contribute its fair share toward Downtown improvements. Coordinate development fees and other funding opportunities with public improvements for the orderly and attractive transformation of Downtown.
- Goal LU-3: Cultivate Downtown as an attractive residential neighborhood with a range of housing opportunities, and an emphasis on affordable housing and family housing.
- Goal LU-4: New development should enhance Downtown's vitality, livability, sustainability, and character through appropriate land use and design.
- Goal LU-5: Enhance Downtown as a center for employment and innovative businesses.
- Goal LU-6: Encourage University uses in Downtown that will benefit the greater Downtown area.
- Goal LU-7: Maintain the existing scale and character of residential-only areas.
- Goal LU-8: Maintain and expand community health care facilities and social services in the Downtown area.

### ***Access (AC).***

- Goal AC-1: Improve options that increase access to Downtown on foot, by bicycle, and via transit. Make living,

working, and visiting Downtown as car-free as possible.

- Goal AC-2: Give pedestrians priority in Downtown, and make walking Downtown safe, attractive, easy and convenient for people of all ages and abilities.
- Goal AC-3: Provide parking to meet the needs of Downtown, while discouraging commuter parking and encouraging motorists to park their cars and experience Downtown as a pedestrian.
- Goal AC-4: Promote transit as an efficient, attractive choice and as a primary mode of motor-vehicle travel.
- Goal AC-5: Maintain and enhance safe, attractive and convenient bicycle circulation within Downtown, and to and from surrounding areas, for people of all ages and abilities. Promote bicycling Downtown.

#### ***Historic Preservation and Urban Design (HD).***

- Goal HD-1: Conserve Downtown's historic resources and unique character and sense of place.
- Goal HD-2: Enhance areas of special character in Downtown, such as clusters of historic resources.
- Goal HD-3: Provide continuity and harmony between the old and the new in the built environment.
- Goal HD-4: Improve the visual and environmental quality of Downtown, with an emphasis on pedestrian environments that are active, safe and visually engag-

ing. Encourage appropriate new development Downtown.

- Goal HD-5: Enhance and improve the physical connection between Downtown and the University of California.

#### ***Streetscapes and Open Space (OS).***

- Goal OS-1: Enhance public open spaces and streets to benefit pedestrians, improve Downtown's livability, and foster an exceptional sense of place. In particular, create new public gathering places that support nearby uses and Downtown as a destination.
- Goal OS-2: Promote watershed health through the use of ecologically beneficial landscaping and other features. Incorporate natural features throughout Downtown to improve its visual quality, help restore natural processes, and reinforce Berkeley's commitment to environmental sustainability.
- Goal OS-3: Streets and open space improvements, maintenance, and cleaning should be adequately funded. Require that new development contribute to greenery and open space.
- Goal OS-4: Ensure that parks, plazas, streets, walkways, and other publicly accessible open spaces are safe, comfortable, and inviting.

#### ***Housing and Community Health & Services (HC).***

- Goal HC-1: Encourage Downtown as a thriving, livable, diverse residential neighborhood with a mix of supportive uses.

- Goal HC-2: Maintain good quality of life for residents of all ages during the day and at night in Downtown and in surrounding residential areas.
- Goal HC-3: Offer diverse housing opportunities for persons of different ages and incomes, households of varying size, and persons of varying abilities. Give Downtown a significant role in meeting Berkeley's continuing need for additional housing.
- Goal HC-4: Preserve existing affordable housing Downtown, and expand the supply of affordable housing to low-income, very low-income and working-class households in Downtown.
- Goal HC-5: Deliver in Downtown effective and compassionate services for seniors, parents and youth, and persons with special needs, including individuals who are homeless, have physical and/or mental disabilities, and/or suffer from substance abuse.
- Goal HC-6: Provide a safe, clean and attractive Downtown, in partnership with the community.
- Goal HC-7: Maintain and expand integrated health services available in Downtown to address health inequities.

***Economic Development (ED).***

- Goal ED-1: Serve the needs of the neighborhood and the city. Make Downtown a more attractive regional destination, by building on Downtown's unique blend of cultural, historic, entertainment,

art, educational, and community institutions – and by promoting successful retail businesses and other attractions with daytime and nighttime populations to support them.

- Goal ED-2: Maintain safe and inviting streets, parks & plazas that contribute to the success of businesses and the well-being of residents.
- Goal ED-3: To make Downtown more attractive and economically successful, encourage place-making through the preservation of historic buildings, street and open space improvements, and high-quality new construction.
- Goal ED-4: Ensure that UC Berkeley is a partner in promoting a healthy and vital Downtown.
- Goal ED-5: Incorporate sustainable practices as an essential component of economic development, and establish Downtown as a recognized center for businesses and institutions that are committed to environmental sustainability.
- Goal ED-6: Invest in civic improvements (such as streets, open spaces, and community facilities) to enhance Downtown as a place to live, work, and visit.
- Goal ED-7: Promote Downtown as a regional cultural center and visitor destination.
- Goal ED-8: Increase the number of Downtown jobs that go to Berkeley residents, and support the development of

job skills for Berkeley residents – especially Berkeley’s youth.

- Goal ED-9: Encourage local businesses that represent the city’s diverse ethnic, cultural and income groups.
- Goal ED-10: Serve the housing needs of all income groups and provide a growing base of residents who support a broad range of Downtown retail and other businesses.
- Goal ED-11: Provide access to Downtown, which supports retail, restaurants, entertainment, hotels and cultural uses.
- Goal ED-12: Invest resources Downtown to support City goals and to improve and maintain a high quality of environment.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Upon adoption, the DAP will replace and cover a larger area than the current Berkeley Downtown Plan (adopted in 1990). In addition, the Downtown Area Plan adoption was accompanied by General Plan amendments.

Each DAP chapter contains many implementing actions. Of note are four major implementing initiatives.

**Revised Zoning Provisions.** New zoning provisions translate DAP policies into standards appropriate to Berkeley’s urban mixed-use city center. New zoning addresses community character (or “form-based”) considerations with provisions for building envelopes, active street-frontages, on-site open space, while retaining

appropriate flexibility regarding use. Measurable standards facilitate administrative review and allow discretionary review to focus on issues for which public debate is essential.

**Amended Downtown Design Guidelines.** The Downtown Design Guidelines adopted in 1994 provided excellent guidance on ways that buildings should face streets in order to reinforce Downtown’s “Main Street” character. Additions seek to encourage new development that respects historic assets, minimize impacts from taller buildings, further emphasize pedestrian-oriented design, and consider sustainable design in the context of Downtown.

**Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP).** A “Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan” provides schematic designs for major improvements and guidelines for improvements that can be made throughout the Downtown Area. The SOSIP sets near-term priorities and is accompanied by financing strategies.

**Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM).** “Parking and Transportation Demand Management” programs encourage transit and other alternatives to the car, as well as more effective use of parking. Appropriate pricing will make parking more available for retail patrons and other short-term visitors, while discouraging its use by all-day commuters who have other travel options.

# 2 - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY





## 2. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

### STRATEGIC STATEMENT

*A sustainable society is one that satisfies its needs without diminishing the prospects of future generations. – Lester Brown, Founder and President, Worldwatch Institute*

*Sustainability is the capability to equitably meet the vital human needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by preserving and protecting the area's ecosystems and natural resources. – American Planning Association*

Definitions of sustainability address the essential need for maintenance of a healthy, vibrant, and ecologically functional planet into the future. To do this, sustainability must address ecological health, environmental health, economic health, and a community's social health comprehensively.

Sustainability constitutes the central vision and overarching framework for the Downtown Area Plan (DAP). Global imperatives such as climate change, increasing scarcities, and degradation of natural resources – and local demands for more livable, healthful, and equitable communities – make sustainability an essential concern.

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**Facing Page:** *Environmental Footprint. Residents and workers in Downtown's walkable transit-rich location will generally use less energy, water, and other resources than those who live in less dense areas. Staff photo.*

The concept of sustainability reflects Berkeley's values. Berkeley's General Plan emphasizes sustainability, as has Berkeley's socially and environmentally progressive history. Eighty percent of Berkeley's voters endorsed Measure G, which is the foundation for Berkeley's award-winning Climate Action Plan and calls for an 80% reduction in local greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The DAP plays a vital role in meeting Berkeley's future needs in ways that minimize our impact on ecological systems and the world as a whole. It translates broad concepts for sustainability into specific strategies and actions for getting the following results.

- 1) Reduce net energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions:
  - Make it easier for people to walk, bike, and use transit.
  - Promote energy efficient building design.
  - Use state-of-the-art green building construction.
  - Retrofit existing buildings with new windows and insulation, and energy efficient appliances.
  - Generate renewable energy using photovoltaics, rooftop wind turbines, and other emerging technologies.
  - Shift consumption toward locally generated goods and services.
  - Support transit-oriented development.
  - Improve Berkeley's jobs-housing balance.

- 2) Conserve water and help restore ecological systems:
  - Increase the number of street trees and promote other landscape features;
  - Use green infrastructure, like permeable paving and bio-retention basins, to capture and filter runoff, recharge aquifers, and steward Berkeley's watersheds; and
  - Minimize water use with drought-tolerant landscaping, low-flow appliances, and water recycling.
- 3) Minimize waste:
  - Expand convenient reuse and recycling opportunities.
  - Emphasize goods and construction that are resource-efficient.
  - Encourage the retention of historic resources and the adaptive reuse of buildings.
- 4) Support economic development and the health of community members:
  - Offer an appealing place to live, work, learn and visit.
  - Keep business and building operating costs low.
  - Make Downtown a model for green business and environmental practices.
  - Promote Downtown as an advantageous place to visit and conduct business.

- Create a highly livable place that supports social needs and features beautiful streets, parks, and architecture.

A sustainable Downtown must be "green" not only in appearance, but also in its ability to help regenerate the natural systems with which it is intertwined. Downtown's buildings, streets, plants, and activities have profound impacts locally and beyond, in terms of water and air quality, resource conservation, and reduced consumption of non-renewable energy. A sustainable Downtown will not only include an abundant tree canopy, attractive landscaping and open spaces, but also land uses and public improvements that promote walking, innovative technologies for buildings and transportation, transit-oriented intensities, and the minimization of waste and harmful activities.

#### **KEY ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENTS AND THEIR BENEFITS**

Sustainable cities provide for a broad range of factors that, as an integrated whole, support healthy, functional ecological relationships. Sustainable urban areas enjoy lasting environmental, economic, and social benefits. The DAP incorporates protections and enhancements for the natural systems to which Downtown is connected.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions.** Global climate change is arguably the defining environmental issue of this century. The City developed and adopted a Climate Action Plan after Berkeley voters overwhelmingly approving Measure G in 2006. Measure G set a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80% by the year 2050.

Goals, policies, and implementing actions contained in the DAP are expected to make significant contributions to meeting Measure G targets and Climate Action Plan objectives. The transit-oriented location and pedestrian-supportive

form of development promoted by the Downtown Area Plan will reduce per-capita transportation-related greenhouse gas generation for new residents, and contribute to the City's greenhouse gas reduction goals. DAP policies also promote the preservation and reuse of existing buildings, which avoids greenhouse gases associated with new construction. DAP policies also require new construction that incorporates cutting-edge design and technologies for reducing energy use, conserving water, and avoiding waste.

**Transit-Oriented and Pedestrian-Supportive Development.** Transportation is the single largest contributor to Berkeley's greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for roughly half of emissions.

Walk-to destinations (such as shops, services, and amenities) and easy access to transit make downtowns a place where residents, workers, and visitors can navigate easily on foot, thereby minimizing the use of GHG generating automobiles. For travel into and out of Downtown, transit service must be frequent and reliable. Higher densities support transit use and the availability of walk-to conveniences.

**Energy and Resource Efficient Buildings.** The United Nations Environment Program has estimated that 30-40 % of global energy is consumed when operating buildings. Appropriate regulations, energy saving technologies, and behavioral change can substantially reduce energy and greenhouse gas impacts resulting from buildings. For heating and cooling, energy benefits can be obtained in a variety of ways, including: super insulation, efficient mechanical systems, passive solar features (for winter), shading devices (for summer), and natural ventilation using operable vents and windows. For lighting, energy can be saved with low-energy fixtures and interior "daylighting" from windows, skylights, and light shelves to bounce sunlight into interior spaces.

Photovoltaic and wind technologies are regularly incorporated into new buildings to generate energy and offset greenhouse gases.

Green buildings also improve the health and well-being of occupants. Research links health and productivity with indoor air quality, lighting levels, and an ability to control air flow and temperature, such as with operable windows.

**Urban Forest.** Downtown Berkeley needs more trees. Trees have significant environmental, aesthetic, and economic benefits. Shaded streets are significantly cooler on summer days. Air quality authorities promote urban tree planting programs to reduce the heat absorbed by unshaded asphalt and other high-temperature "heat islands." Heat islands make urban places less comfortable, but also increase the rate at which nitrogen oxides reacts with airborne pollutants to generate ozone – further contributing to the generation of smog and the incidence of respiratory ailments. Street trees also play a major role in enhancing Downtown's character and charm – and will help give Downtown an exceptional sense of place.

**Urban Runoff.** Urban runoff includes the rainwater and other water that runs off of streets and carries pollutants, like motor oil, tire debris, and litter. Urban runoff is the largest source of degraded water in the Bay Area. Increased urban runoff is a direct consequence of unmitigated urban development and where hard impervious surfaces flush rooftops and streets directly into stormsewers.

"Green infrastructure" refers to a menu of techniques that filter pollutants before they reach the culverts that carry them to receiving water resources such as the Bay, and to other techniques for reducing the amount of paved space that can capture and concentrate pollutants. Paving can be permeable to trap pollutants and

## ***Brower Center and Oxford Plaza***

*Downtown's Oxford Plaza and Brower Center project makes extraordinary environmental and social contributions. Oxford Plaza, the southern half of the project, offers nearly one hundred new low- and very low-income units that are sized and designed for families. The David Brower Center, named for the first executive director of the Sierra Club, houses and supports world-class environmental organizations and conferences. It utilizes the latest in energy-saving technologies and recycled building materials. The US Green Building Council gave the project that group's highest rating for green buildings: LEED Platinum. Completed in 2009, the project received ABAG's "Growing Smarter Together" Urban Design Award.*



*David Brower Center from Oxford Street*

slow runoff. In several Downtown locations, paving can be reduced by eliminating unneeded traffic lanes. Vegetation and soils can filter and hold stormwater. Swales and other surface drainage can complement the stormwater pipes now in existence. Such features are becoming commonplace as standards for stormwater quality become progressively more stringent.

Green strategies can also help reduce downstream flooding. Until recently, standard practice has focused on "conveyance": moving water into a network of pipes and delivering it rapidly to a river or bay. Because water moves swiftly within a conveyance-based system, little lag time occurs between when it rains and when that rainwater reaches locations prone to flooding. Green approaches to stormwater management create a decentralized stormwater network that holds water back close to its source, and delays its progress downstream.

**Water Conservation and Recycling.** Downtown can help conserve water resources, for which there will be increasing competition statewide. For landscaped areas, drought resistant plants and low-water irrigation are essential. Conservation techniques available for buildings include using low flow fixtures and reusing shower water or other "graywater" for flushing.

**Zero Waste.** Berkeley's City Council has adopted a goal of reducing the waste that goes to landfills to zero by 2020. Reducing waste sent to the landfills reduces the miles traveled by refuse trucks and reduces the amount of methane gas (a greenhouse gas) that is generated by decomposing waste. In addition, as more waste is recycled into new products, less the energy is generally needed to produce that product. For every ton of mixed waste that is recycled, over two tons of greenhouse gas emissions are avoided.

**Coordination.** To be effective, environmental policies will require comprehensive and coordinated strategies. City departments will need to work together to implement on interrelated policies, crossing over traditional boundaries and specialties. Developers and other stakeholders will also play pivotal roles, as private capital will be needed to attain many needed improvements.

**Upfront Costs versus Long-Term Savings.** Increased cost of green design is typically offset by saving elsewhere, for example in reduced cost of heating, lighting, water, and waste management. Green buildings typically require greater up-front capital costs while reducing ongoing operating costs. Since the first years of a project present the highest financing costs and project risks, builders often emphasize near-term capital costs instead of long-term savings associated with reduced use of energy, water, and other resources. For public and private investments alike, a “life-cycle” approach is needed to realize long-term cost savings associated with energy efficiency, reduced waste, and other green actions, and to consider these savings when facing up-front capital costs.

## GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

### GOAL ES-1: INTEGRATE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND PRACTICES IN DOWNTOWN, AND IN EVERY ASPECT OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN.

**Policy ES-1.1: Sustainability as Comprehensive.** Improve the environmental performance of Downtown Berkeley. Consider and develop programs for environmental sustainability in a comprehensive way to: reduce the generation of greenhouse gases, minimize the use of non-renewable resources, minimize impacts on affected ecosystems, improve public health, promote social equity, and communicate Berkeley’s commitment to sustainability.

- a) Create a checklist of actions for promoting sustainability Downtown, consistent with this chapter, Berkeley’s Climate Action Plan, and other City policies. Accompany this checklist with priorities for implementation, potential funding/resources, and measures for performance.

### GOAL ES-2: MODEL BEST PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABILITY, AND PROMOTE DOWNTOWN TO BUSINESSES, INSTITUTIONS, AND RESIDENTS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.

**Policy ES-2.1: Promote a Green Downtown and Model Best Practices.** Promote Downtown as a model of sustainability and a place that will attract visitors who want to see how “green” a city can be. Increase public awareness of environmental features and programs Downtown.

- a) Model best practices applicable to urban centers. Encourage “state-of-the-art” features and programs within public and private projects.
- b) Develop literature and internet pages to promote public awareness of sustainability features.
- c) Develop an interpretive signage program to heighten awareness of Strawberry Creek, drainage patterns, natural areas, and sustainability features in Downtown.
- d) Create educational programs that highlight best practices for sustainability, including: green buildings, transit-oriented-development, adaptive re-use, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities and amenities. Consider establishing walking tours to highlight sustainability features and the idea of “nature in the city” (such as by offering tours of songbird or butterfly habitat, examining the effects of trees and vegetation on microclimate, or considering fish habitat in Strawberry Creek).

**Policy ES-2.2: Green Businesses & Institutions.** Encourage new “green businesses” and institutions to locate Downtown, and existing businesses and institutions to go “green.”

- a) Promote environmental business practices to reduce energy use, reduce water use, and increase recycling and composting, as provided in this chapter.
- b) Promote Downtown as a recognized location for businesses and institutions that are committed to environmental sustainability, by working with developers, real estate brokers, local companies, the University of California, the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Downtown Business Association.
- c) Develop a marketing plan to attract green enterprises by highlighting Berkeley’s reputation for innovation, Downtown’s transit-accessible location, and green practices that will be implemented.
- d) Encourage Downtown businesses to be certified under Alameda County’s green business program.
- e) Work to attract East Bay Green Corridor Partnership uses to Downtown (see Policy LU-6.3).

**Policy ES-2.3: Local Food & Businesses.** Promote strategies that connect Downtown residents, businesses and visitors with local sources of products, services, and healthful foods (see Policies ED-5.3).

- a) Retain and expand farmers markets in the Downtown Area. Support organizations that promote farmers markets, “community supported agriculture,” and buy-local initiatives.

Work with farmers’ market providers to explore opportunities to serve Downtown on more days of the week.

- b) Review City regulations and procedures to identify obstacles to sidewalk produce stands and consider eliminating such obstacles.

**Policy ES-2.4: Downtown Energy & Water Facilities.** Consider sustainable infrastructure that serves several parcels or blocks in Downtown and abutting areas.

- a) Consider creating a local electrical “cogeneration” facility to heat buildings with energy that is usually wasted when generating electricity.
- b) Consider ground-source heat pumps for heating and cooling multiple buildings in Downtown.
- c) Consider integrating management of energy systems among multiple buildings to optimize use.
- d) Consider incentives and institutional cooperation to promote greywater recycling systems that serve multiple properties and/or the larger Downtown Area.
- e) Offer Downtown businesses and residents energy conservation auditing and advice on energy retrofits at little or no cost, possibly in cooperation with PG&E.

**Policy ES-2.5: Environmental Leadership.** The City of Berkeley should demonstrate leadership in environmental sustainability through its own actions.

- a) Promote the highest possible standards for architectural and green design.

- b) Conduct design competitions and intensive design explorations to help achieve the highest possible standards for architectural and green design.
- c) Make “green infrastructure” improvements to enhance stormwater quality and watershed health (see policies under Goals ES-5 and OS-2).
- d) Evaluate the performance of City buildings in the Downtown Area, and formalize a program to continue energy- and water-conserving retrofits for such buildings.
- e) Develop and adopt a model program to certify City facilities, both owned and leased, for green building operations and maintenance.
- f) The City should encourage property owners from whom it leases space, to make water and energy efficiency improvements. Consider establishing standard lease agreement provisions.
- g) The City-owned Berkeley Way parking lot should become a “super-green” affordable housing project with zero net energy use (with enough energy generated on-site to cover on-site energy used), while simultaneously avoiding a reduction in off-street parking spaces in the area (see Policy HC-4.2).

**GOAL ES-3: ENCOURAGE HIGH DENSITY, HIGHLY LIVABLE DEVELOPMENT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DOWNTOWN’S PROXIMITY TO REGIONAL TRANSIT AND TO IMPROVE THE AVAILABILITY OF DIVERSE WALK-TO DESTINATIONS – SUCH AS RETAIL, SERVICES, CULTURE, AND RECREATION.**

**Policy ES-3.1: Land Use.** Encourage development with high intensities close to transit, and encourage a mix of uses that allows most needs to be met on foot (see policies under Goal LU-1).

**Policy ES-3.2: Streets & Open Space.** Make major enhancements and additions to sidewalks, parks, plazas, midblock pedestrian walkways, streets, and other open space, and incorporate ecologically beneficial features (see Streets & Open Space chapter).

**Policy ES-3.3: Urban Design.** Encourage exceptional, high-quality new architecture, and minimize noise, wind, glare and other impacts from development (see policies under Goals ES-4, LU-4 and HD-4).

**Policy ES-3.4: Alternative Modes.** Enhance and expand transit service, walking and bicycle use, as an alternative to the use and ownership of private vehicles (see Access goals and policies.)

**Policy ES-3.5: Pedestrian Priority.** Streets and other public improvements and programs, should give pedestrians priority in Downtown (see Access goals and policies).

**GOAL ES- 4: PROMOTE “GREEN” BUILDINGS.**

**Policy ES- 4.1: Energy and Environmental Performance.** Require environmentally sustainable “green” building with public benefits in all cases, except when “green standards” would discourage historic rehabilitations or adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Promote highly energy-efficient buildings and on-site energy generation through design and construction techniques. Buildings should have exceptional environmental performance across the full spectrum of concerns (as described in Policies ES-4.2 to

ES-4.9). Coordinate Downtown initiatives with citywide provisions.

- a) Require energy performance of LEED Gold or equivalent in all new non-UC buildings and substantial additions, except for historic rehabilitations and adaptive re-use of existing buildings. (LEED is the US Green Building Council's "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" program.) Provide incentives and programs for even greater energy and environmental performance, with LEED Platinum as a goal. Allow projects that are LEED Platinum, and "net-zero" projects that generate as much energy as they use, to defer building permit fees.
- b) Meet Title-24 energy requirements and any local green standards adopted by Council. Require commercial properties to use management tools that track building energy use and benchmark performance. Energy efficiency provisions should vary by building type, in recognition of the unique opportunities and constraints associated with each. Describe preferred development practices through amendments to the Downtown Design Guidelines. Factors to consider include but are not limited to:
  - reuse of buildings or portions of buildings;
  - super insulated walls, windows, and doors;
  - daylighting interiors;
  - passive solar heating;
  - efficient appliances and equipment;
  - making the use of stairways a more inviting alternative to the use of elevators;

- "smart-metering" to capture detailed energy usage information about a building or unit, and communicate it to occupants; and
  - credit for energy performance features not recognized by Title 24 - such as the use of natural ventilation and providing on-site renewable energy generation.
- c) Encourage UC Berkeley to go beyond its LEED Silver standard in its Downtown projects and continue its practice of outperforming California's Title 24 by a minimum of 20%.
  - d) Development projects should pay an impact fee to fund the Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP), and provide public-serving on-site open space or pay an in lieu fee for SOSIP improvements. (See policies under Goal LU-2 and OS-1.)
  - e) Procedures for verifying compliance and penalties for non-compliance should be developed, and returned to City Council for consideration before its adoption of zoning provisions to implement the DAP. With the approval of the City Council, specific requirement thresholds may be adjusted after further analysis, if significant contributions are maintained.
  - f) Green building requirements may be waived to encourage historic rehabilitations and adaptive reuse of older buildings (see Policies LU-2.1, LU-4.3 and HD-4.2).

**Policy ES-4.2: Alternative Modes.** Modify development standards to promote alternatives to the automobile by providing car share and bicycle facilities, transit passes for residents, and parking regulations that favor alternative modes, as are described in policies under Goal AC-1.



**Policy ES-4.3: Water Conservation, Reuse & Retention.** Promote best practices for substantial water conservation, re-use, & retention as part of new construction, renovations, site improvements, and landscaping.

- a) Require on-site water conservation and stormwater retention features, and establish development incentives for performance in this area.
- b) Development projects should generate no new net rainwater runoff.
- c) Work with East Bay Municipal Utility Districts to provide incentives for the installation and/or replacement of water fixtures for greater efficiency.
- d) Encourage the use of innovative water conservation technologies, such as waterless urinals and water reuse, through the development of local guidelines and/or alternative building code requirements.
- e) Encourage cisterns and devices to retain and make use of rainwater (see policies under Goals ES-5 and OS-2).
- f) Encourage water recycling through the use of graywater for flushing toilets, irrigation, and other purposes, by working to reform existing regulations that may discourage such practices, and by developing guidelines to illustrate opportunities and design considerations.

**Policy ES-4.4: Green Materials.** Encourage use of environmentally preferable materials for building construction and maintenance to: maintain healthful indoor air quality; reduce exposure to harmful materials during their production; install and dis-

posal; protect threatened & endangered species; and reduce consumption of natural resources.

- a) Establish building requirements and/or incentives for performance in these areas.
- b) Inform builders and landowners of standards and guidelines for preferable construction products, such as those developed by LEED, Green Seal, Stopwaste, and the Healthy Building Network.
- c) Encourage reused, reclaimed or recycled materials, and responsibly-harvested wood products, such as those certified by the Forest Steward Council (FSC). Provide builders with information on these options.
- d) Encourage preferable construction materials by developing a new “green building materials checklist” for Downtown projects. Consider creating a “worst in class” list of materials to avoid. Consider incentives for construction projects that conform significantly to this checklist.
- e) Inform building owners and managers of standards and guidelines for preferable maintenance products and operations, such as integrated pest management, and environmental purchasing and waste reduction strategies.

**Policy ES-4.5: Noise.** Evaluate and strengthen noise mitigation measures as appropriate to Downtown’s active mixed-use environments (see Policy HC-2.2).

**Policy ES-4.6: Longevity.** Promote long-lasting buildings and features that require less frequent maintenance or replacement.

- a) Continue to apply the Downtown Design Guidelines provisions that encourage architectural and site features that are durable materials and detailed to be long lasting.
- b) Provide public education and technical assistance to encourage private builders to factor mid- and long-term “life-cycle costs” in the design of buildings. Green buildings generally have lower on-going operating costs that should be factored when considering up-front capital investments for green features.
- c) Encourage life-cycle analysis of long-term maintenance and replacement costs for building and site features, such as by making such an analysis part of a new “green” building material checklist.

**Policy ES-4.7: Solar & Wind Impacts.** Design and locate new buildings to avoid significant adverse solar- or wind-related impacts on important public open spaces (see policies under Goals LU-4 and HD-4).

**Policy ES-4.8: Adaptive Reuse.** Encourage adaptive reuse of older buildings by promoting their rehabilitation, and by allowing intensification of the site where appropriate (see Policies ES-4.1, LU-2.1 and LU-4.3).

**Policy ES-4.9: Green Pathway Development Review Process.** Establish a voluntary “Green Pathway” development review process that would provide a streamlined permit process for buildings that move beyond the new “green” development requirements, by providing extraordinary public benefits that could not otherwise be obtained. Green Pathway projects shall conform with building height standards described in the Land Use chapter. Zoning associated with the Green Pathway shall assure adequate mitigation

of air quality, noise, and short-term construction impacts, as well as the possible disturbance of archeological resources.

**GOAL ES-5: PROMOTE ECOLOGICALLY BENEFICIAL LANDSCAPING AND STORM-WATER FEATURES THROUGHOUT THE DOWNTOWN, TO FILTER POLLUTANTS FOUND IN URBAN RUNOFF, PROTECT AND RESTORE THE HEALTH OF CONNECTED WATERSHEDS, REDUCE DOWNSTREAM STORMWATER FLOWS, AND EXPRESS THE COMMUNITY’S COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.**

**Policy ES-5.1: Stormwater Quality.** New development and public infrastructure should provide “best-practices” to protect and improve ecological quality and functions relating to stormwater, by treating urban runoff, retaining stormwater, and attaining no net increase in runoff from Downtown (see Policies LU-2.1 and OS-2.1).

- a) Address the management and retention of stormwater in a comprehensive way and recharge local aquifers to the extent feasible. Address urban runoff and stormwater quality as part of a Streets & Open Space Improvements Plan<sup>1</sup> (see OS-1.1). The strategy should look beyond the boundaries of Downtown to consider issues and opportunities comprehensively, and should engage the University as a partner in this process.
- b) Design public improvements, including streets, parks and plazas, to include appropriate “best management practices,” such

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<sup>1</sup> A draft comprehensive Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP) was developed by the SOSIP Subcommittee and has been recommended for Council adoption by the Subcommittee in September 2010.

as for retention and infiltration of urban runoff by diverting urban runoff (which contains waterborne pollutants) to bio-filtration systems (such as landscaped swales), and infiltration areas (at-grade and/or below-grade). Specific opportunities include: streets where travel lanes might be eliminated, median strips that might be retrofitted or widened, parks, and plazas.

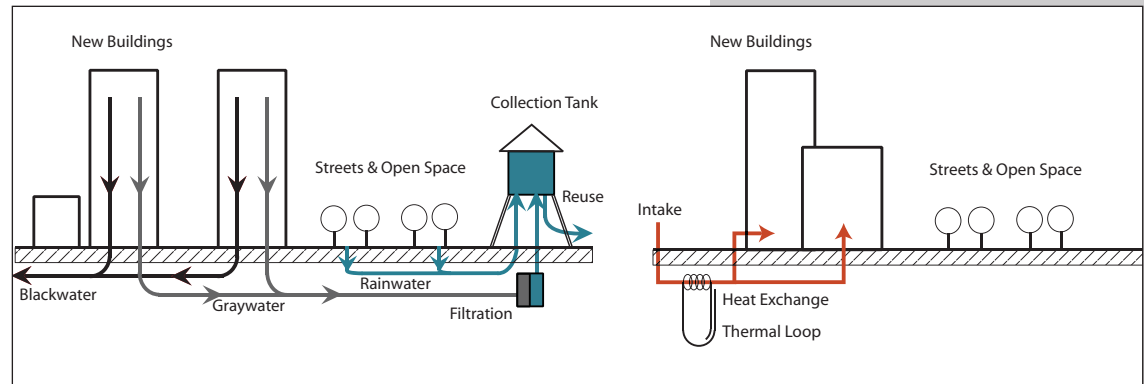
c) Develop design guidelines and development standards to encourage appropriate “best management practices” for urban runoff retention and infiltration as part of private and institutional development projects, by diverting rainwater to:

- landscaped retention features (such as swales or “rain gardens”),
- permeable paving,
- “green roofs,”
- below-grade “dry wells,” and
- rooftop and/or below-grade cisterns.

d) Consider the use of cisterns as an emergency source of water, if East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) service is interrupted.

**Policy ES-5.2: Green Infrastructure Requirements.** Promote extensive landscaping and “best-practices” for landscaping that benefit and help restore natural systems throughout the Downtown area (see policies under Goal OS-2).

a) Adopt a Streets & Open Space Improvements Plan and amend the Downtown Design Guidelines to promote landscaping,



**Figure ES-1: Recycling Water at a District Scale.** Santa Fe includes a network of swales, permeable paving, catchbasins, and cisterns. New Mexico’s Railyard Park serves as an example of rainwater reuse on a large scale. Staff images, rendering lower left courtesy Ken Smith Landscape Architect.

naturalized features and permeable paving (see policies under Goals OS-1 and OS-2).

**Policy ES-5.3: On-Site Features.** Promote beneficial landscaping and other open space features as part of private development. Adaptive reuse should be considered a significant community benefit when considering proposals for taller buildings.

- a) Private development should expand and enhance on-site open space and landscaping, and promote their use to address urban runoff and drainage issues. Amend the Downtown Design Guidelines to promote additional greenery and environmentally beneficial features on-site (see Policies ES-4.3 and OS-2.1).

**Policy ES-5.4: Natural Areas on UC Campus.** Encourage the University to maintain and enhance natural areas adjacent to Downtown, such as near Strawberry Creek (see Policy HD-5.2).

- a) Encourage the University to explore opportunities for incorporating best management practices for urban places along the western edge of the Campus, such as on “the Crescent.”

**GOAL ES-6: MINIMIZE WASTE GENERATED DOWNTOWN, AND STRIVE TO MAKE DOWNTOWN A “ZERO WASTE ZONE.”**

**Policy ES-6.1: Recycling & Reuse.** Maximize recycling and reuse opportunities for residents, workers, visitors, businesses, and institutions.

- a) Require on-site recycling services with sufficient space for receptacles, in all new construction, substantial additions, and substantial renovations, except for historic rehabilitation and adaptive re-use.

- b) Promote on-site recycling by apartment and condominium dwellers and businesses, including recycling within existing buildings. Develop guidelines for accessible storage and collection areas for the separation and collection of recyclable materials.

- c) Educate building owners, managers and tenants about techniques for on-site recycling, local recycling programs and State “recycling plan” requirements.

- d) Maintain and enhance existing programs for receiving and processing restaurant compostables.

- e) Expand recycling receptacles on street and in other public open spaces, and provide for their continued maintenance. Evaluate opportunities for composting receptacles on street and in other public open spaces, and consider their implementation.

- f) Encourage recycling programs through the University, BUSD, and other institutions.

- g) Encourage recycling at all Downtown events.

**Policy ES-6.2: Adaptive Reuse.** Encourage adaptive reuse of older buildings (see Policies ES-4.1, LU-2.1, LU-4.3, HD-1.1 and HD-1.3).

**GOAL ES-7: CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE CITY STANDARDS AND PROGRAMS PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES.**

**Policy ES-7.1: Continuous Improvement.** The City Council shall regularly evaluate the Downtown Area Plan for its impacts on environmental goals, aesthetics, livability, economic vitality, housing growth and affordability, sustainability, and other factors, and shall consider adjust-

ments to the Plan's policies and development regulations to better attain desirable outcomes and address unacceptable negative impacts.

- a) Establish progress indicators using Berkeley's Climate Action Plan and DAP policies, and regularly assess progress. City Council should be provided with an evaluation of the DAP's performance every 5 years, and may accompany the evaluation with recommendations for improving performance.

An aerial photograph of a city block, likely in Los Angeles, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings. A purple semi-transparent overlay covers the middle portion of the image, with the text '3 - LAND USE' in white. A blue outline highlights a specific area within the block, which includes a large white circular structure, a green field, and a red running track. The surrounding area is densely packed with houses and smaller commercial buildings.

# 3 - LAND USE

# 3. LAND USE

## Strategic Statement

Land use sets the framework for many aspects of the Downtown Area Plan. In its narrowest sense, “land use” identifies the amount of development and the types of uses (or permitted activities) allowed on a particular parcel of land or in a given area. But effective land use policies must go farther. Land use policies create a framework on which other planning objectives are supported. To be effective, land use policies must also focus on fundamental determinants – both obstacles and encouragements – for key uses and their intensity, such as economic feasibility, building standards, exactions and incentives, and project approval procedures. For the Downtown Area Plan, overarching intentions for the Land Use chapter include:

**Sustainability.** Downtown presents unique opportunities to appreciably reduce transportation energy use and greenhouse gas emissions associated with development. This is especially true because it is a regional transit hub. To the degree the City meets its share of regional growth in transit rich locations such as Downtown, there will be a significant reduction in greenhouse gas generation per-household relative to growth in more auto-reliant locations – such as those portions of Berkeley with less transit service. In addition, Downtown’s complementary mix of uses makes most daily needs accessible on foot. Land use intensity also plays an important role because the greater the number residents and workers, the greater the availability of lo-

cal shops, entertainment venues, and services. Land use intensity also boosts the number of transit riders in an area, and allows agencies to deliver better transit service with less subsidy.

**Livability.** Sustainability is not only measured in tons of carbon, but also by the quality of persons’ lives. Livability is enhanced when a mix of uses brings homes and workplaces within walking distance of shops, services and entertainment, especially where the walking environment is attractive. In addition, public amenities, landscaping and open space is needed to meet the recreational needs of Downtown residents. The livability of a district also depends on the general availability of sunshine and relative quiet, factors that can be maintained through regulation and mindful design. In recognition of the impacts that it may bring, new development should help pay for those amenities and open spaces. New development should also be arranged to minimize its impacts like the shading of public places, while yielding increased economic vitality.

**Economic Vitality.** Downtown must build on its competitive advantages as a destination, especially its existing (and potential future) cultural, educational and historic assets. Housing and employment growth is also needed to add residents and workers to support Downtown shops, restaurants, and services. To attain a vibrant Downtown, the City should set a target of housing an additional 5,000 residents during the 15- to 20-year timeframe of this Plan.

**Business Synergies.** Downtown is a major job center with many spin-off businesses from the University. Downtown should play a role in supporting start-up businesses, and retaining expanding businesses. New commercial development must be accompanied by new housing to avoid exacerbating Berkeley’s jobs-housing imbalance.

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*Facing Page:* Existing conditions can be seen in this 2007 aerial, except for subsequent development projects. Photo from city files

**A Great Neighborhood.** Housing sets the cornerstone for a successful Downtown, because Downtown needs lots of people, day and night, to be vibrant. Housing brings activity to Downtown streets and patrons to Downtown stores, services, restaurants, and theaters. Housing and residents also bring comfort and safety. With a special emphasis on affordability, new and diverse housing options can make Downtown a place for families and individuals of all ages.

**History.** Conserving Downtown's historic resources and main-street character maintains connections with the past, and helps give Downtown a unique sense of place. New construction can heal the scars posed by unsightly properties, but care must be taken not to overwhelm Downtown's historic jewels.

**University as Partner.** Downtown offers opportunities to celebrate the city's connections to UC Berkeley. UC Berkeley should be encouraged to strengthen Downtown by contributing new cultural uses (such as the University's Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive), community services (such as a new Health Campus), and by enlarging Downtown's workforce to support economic activity. At the same time, Downtown revitalization can better serve the UC Berkeley's faculty, students and staff.

**Development Opportunities.** The Downtown Area contains a mix of commercial, residential, cultural, and institutional uses. Most Downtown development will take place on parcels that are vacant or have a relatively low level of improvement. These underutilized development, or "opportunity sites," comprise about one-third of all parcels Downtown. These sites include vacant lots, surface parking lots, one-story buildings, and two-story buildings near BART. Not all of these opportunity sites will be built upon, and the

development that does happen will occur incrementally over many years.

Two-thirds of available land has substantial buildings that generate significant income and are unlikely to change, except for renovations and the adaptive re-use of older buildings. Very few opportunity sites have been identified in the residential areas in the northwest and southwest portions of the Downtown Area, where the DAP encourages retention of the existing character.

**Core Area.** The Downtown Area Plan allows for taller buildings in the Core Area (see Figure LU-1), because of its exceptional access to transit, shops amenities, and the UC campus. The Core Area contains BART, the convergence of over thirty bus lines, unique cultural resources, and the highest volume of foot traffic in the East Bay. The Core Area also contains two existing taller buildings that reach to about 180 feet.

Consideration was given to maximum allowable building heights that are less than permitted under the Downtown Area Plan, however an economic feasibility study showed that buildings above 75 feet (slightly more with architectural features) and below roughly 160 feet are unlikely to be built. The building code includes requirements that only apply when certain height thresholds are exceeded, and height thresholds within the building code can have a dramatic impact on construction costs. Buildings that exceed building code height thresholds often need to reach a certain size to generate enough income to justify increased code-related costs (Downtown Berkeley Development Feasibility Study, Strategic Economics, 2008). An exceptionally large construction site, an especially strong economy, and public subsidies may make otherwise infeasible heights possible, but such conditions may be rare.



Because of immediate access to BART, multiple bus lines, and walk-to conveniences, provisions for the Core Area allows the tallest buildings, including three buildings up to 180 feet. The Core Area is not near residential areas and tall buildings will not shade or crowd surrounding residential neighborhoods.

**Outer Core.** The Outer Core contains mixed-use areas within a quarter mile of BART, giving it good proximity to transit and conveniences. High densities in the Outer Core will confer a variety of economic, social and environmental benefits. 120-foot buildings are allowed in the Outer Core, and while buildings of this height may be generally infeasible for housing, office projects may be attainable.

The Outer Core contains major University-owned development sites, including most of the former Department of Health Services (DHS) site (east of Shattuck and between Hearst and Berkeley Way) and the site at the northwest corner of University and Oxford. The University is the largest landowner of opportunity sites in Downtown, and has planned 800,000 square feet of development in the Downtown Area and the adjacent Tang parking lot (east of Oxford between Durant and Bancroft). Policies in the Land Use chapter and throughout the Downtown Area Plan encourage University development that will leverage major benefits and minimize impacts.

**Corridor.** Shattuck Avenue and University Avenue form Berkeley's most prominent commercial corridors, along with San Pablo Avenue in West Berkeley. These corridors have more commercial uses and higher levels of bus service than other parts of Berkeley, which makes transit- and pedestrian-oriented development along these corridors especially advantageous. The DAP provides for buildings up to 75 feet in the Corridors. Buildings of this height will also help

frame these wide rights-of-way to create more attractive urban environments.

**Buffer.** In the Buffer areas, buildings would be required to be closer in height to surrounding residential neighborhoods. Additional height reductions will be required immediately abutting residentially-designated residential parcels, to further provide for a suitable transition.

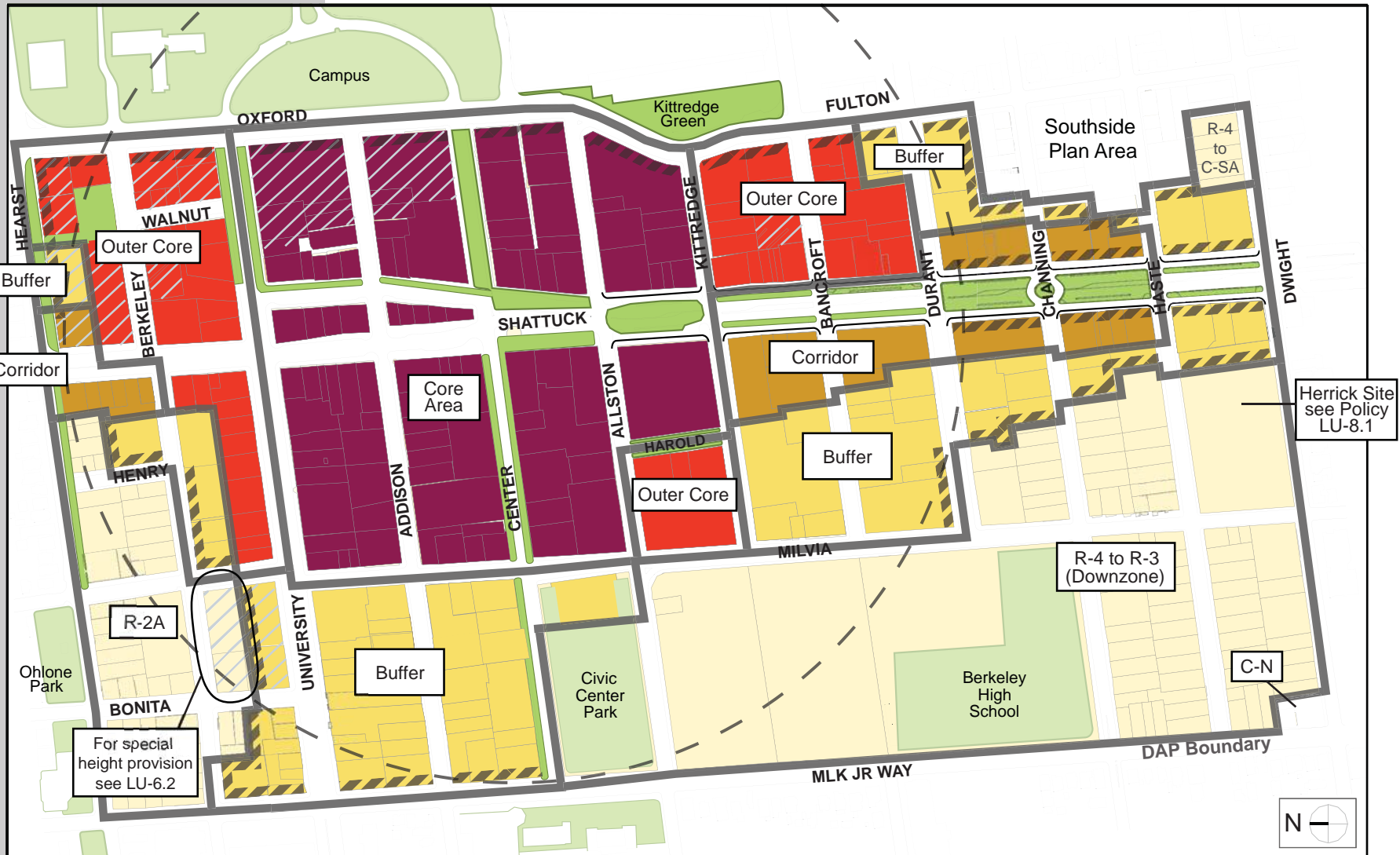
**Residential Neighborhoods.** Few opportunity sites exist in residential-only areas, but when development does occur, it will be subject to residential zoning. Many residents have expressed their desire to maintain the scale and character of these residential areas. To reduce development pressures that could result in inappropriate development, Plan policies call for downzoning the southwest portion of the Downtown Area from R-4 to R-3.

**Open Space.** The Downtown Area Plan also calls for the creation of major new public open spaces, adding to the existing opportunities afforded by Civic Center Park and the Berkeley High School playing fields. New "Park Blocks," are also proposed, which would repurpose excessive parking aisles and unneeded travel lanes with inviting, active, sun-filled spaces (see Streets and Open Space chapter). Several small plazas are also called for, most notably the creation of Center Street Plaza, on Center Street between Shattuck and Oxford.

# FIGURE LU-1A (color): Land Use & Building Heights









See Table LU-1 for height restrictions.

- Core Area**  
(180- and 120-foot exception)
- Outer Core**  
(only 120-foot exception)
- Corridor**  
(no tall building exception)
- Buffer**  
(no tall building exception)
- UC Properties**  
(height exceptions apply, see Table LU-1 footnotes)
- R-4, R-3 & R-2A** (residential zoning)
- Special Transitions / Stepbacks**  
(see Policy LU-7.2 & Table LU-1)
- Commercial-Downtown Mixed Use (C-DMU) Zoning District and Subareas**
- 1/4 mile from BART rotunda



# FIGURE LU-1B: (black & white): Land Use & Buildings Heights

See Table LU-1 for height restrictions.

-  **Core Area**  
(180- and 120-foot exception)
-  **Outer Core**  
(only 120-foot exception)
-  **Corridor**  
(no tall building exception)
-  **Buffer**  
(no tall building exception)
-  **R-4, R-3 & R-2A**  
(residential zoning)
-  **Special Transitions / Stepbacks**  
(see Policy LU-7.2 & Table LU-1)
-  **Commercial-Downtown Mixed Use (C-DMU) Zoning District**
-  1/4 mile from BART rotunda



Revised: December 2011  
Suggested by Staff.  
Recommended street and open space improvements also shown.

## GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

**GOAL LU-1: ENCOURAGE A THRIVING, LIVABLE DOWNTOWN THAT IS A FOCAL POINT FOR THE CITY AND A MAJOR DESTINATION FOR THE REGION, WITH A UNIQUE CONCENTRATION OF HOUSING, JOBS AND CULTURAL DESTINATIONS NEAR TRANSIT, SHOPS AND AMENITIES.**

**Policy LU-1.1: Downtown Uses.** Encourage uses that allow people who live, work and learn in Downtown to meet daily needs on foot.

- a) Allow the following uses in the mixed-use Core Area, Outer Core, Corridor, and Buffer areas, except as noted below.
  - commercial uses (such as retail, restaurants, offices, cinemas, nightclubs, hotels, personal services, professional services, fitness centers);
  - multifamily residential uses (such as apartments, condominiums, townhouses, and “live-work” lofts/townhouses);
  - cultural & community uses (such as libraries, theaters, museums, art galleries, visitor services, supportive services, childcare, government, health care & health-related facilities);
  - educational uses (such as classrooms, student and staff services, recreation facilities, and research facilities); and
  - public and private open space.

A detailed list of allowable, conditionally allowed and excluded uses shall be defined by zoning provisions.

- b) For use provisions applying to residential designations, refer to Berkeley’s Zoning Ordinance.
- c) Along sidewalks where it is desirable to have high levels of foot traffic and visual/physical connections between public and interior space, not all allowable uses are appropriate at street-level. Where designated by “Figure LU-3, Public-Serving Frontage Required,” appropriate street-facing street-level uses are defined below.
  - active commercial uses (such as retail, restaurants, offices, nightclubs, hotels, and personal services);
  - active cultural & community uses (such as libraries, theaters, museums, art galleries, visitor services, supportive services, and childcare);
  - active educational uses (such as student and staff services, but not recreation, research or classrooms);
  - “live-work” lofts & townhouses with entry to office, art studio, or similarly active street-level use; and
  - similarly intensive pedestrian-/visitor-/customer-based activities.
  - Lobbies and reception areas (including those that serve uses that are generally not appropriate).
- d) Residential uses, parking garages, and parking lots are not appropriate at the street-level where Public-Serving Frontages are required. A detailed list of allowable, conditionally allowed and excluded uses shall be defined in revised Zoning provisions.

- e) Minimize discretionary review for street-level uses that are appropriate to Public-Serving Frontages (see Figure LU-3), except when needed to address negative impacts.
- f) Non-residential uses may not be appropriate on upper floors in some Buffer locations. Consider whether upper-story uses in certain locations should be limited to multi-family residential and supportive services for residents. Allow community-serving uses such as health care and health-related facilities with findings and conditions to minimize impacts of such uses on nearby residentially-zoned areas (see policies under Goals LU-7 & HC-2).
- g) Encourage a full-service grocery store in or near Downtown by working with property owners and real estate brokers and by considering incentives, such as modifications to Zoning standards and impact fee waivers (see policies under Goal ED-1).
- h) Encourage day care facilities in and near Downtown by: working with property owners, real estate brokers, and UC Berkeley to promote Downtown childcare facilities; by maintaining development fees for child care (see Policy LU-2.1); and by allowing increased floor areas for providing child care as is provided under a State density bonus. Consider incentives for other neighborhood services.
- i) Create new public open spaces such that a park or plaza becomes available within a few blocks of every resident (see chapter on Streets and Open Space).
- j) Encourage hotels in the Core Area through incentives and height exceptions allowed under Table LU-1.



**Figure LU-2: Civic Center Area.** Government buildings, Berkeley High School, Berkeley Historic Society's History Center, and social services border Civic Center Park, as does an outdoor Farmers' Market every Saturday.

- k) Parking and other transportation provisions should support this Policy (see Access chapter).

**Policy LU-1.2: Culture & Entertainment.** Encourage unique cultural and entertainment uses that serve the city and region, including museums, live theater, and cinemas (see Economic Development chapter).




- a) Adopt incentives to retain and support the expansion of culture and the arts, especially in the "Arts District."
- b) Retain and support Downtown's cinemas. Consider incentives for retaining existing movie theaters and upgrading their facilities.

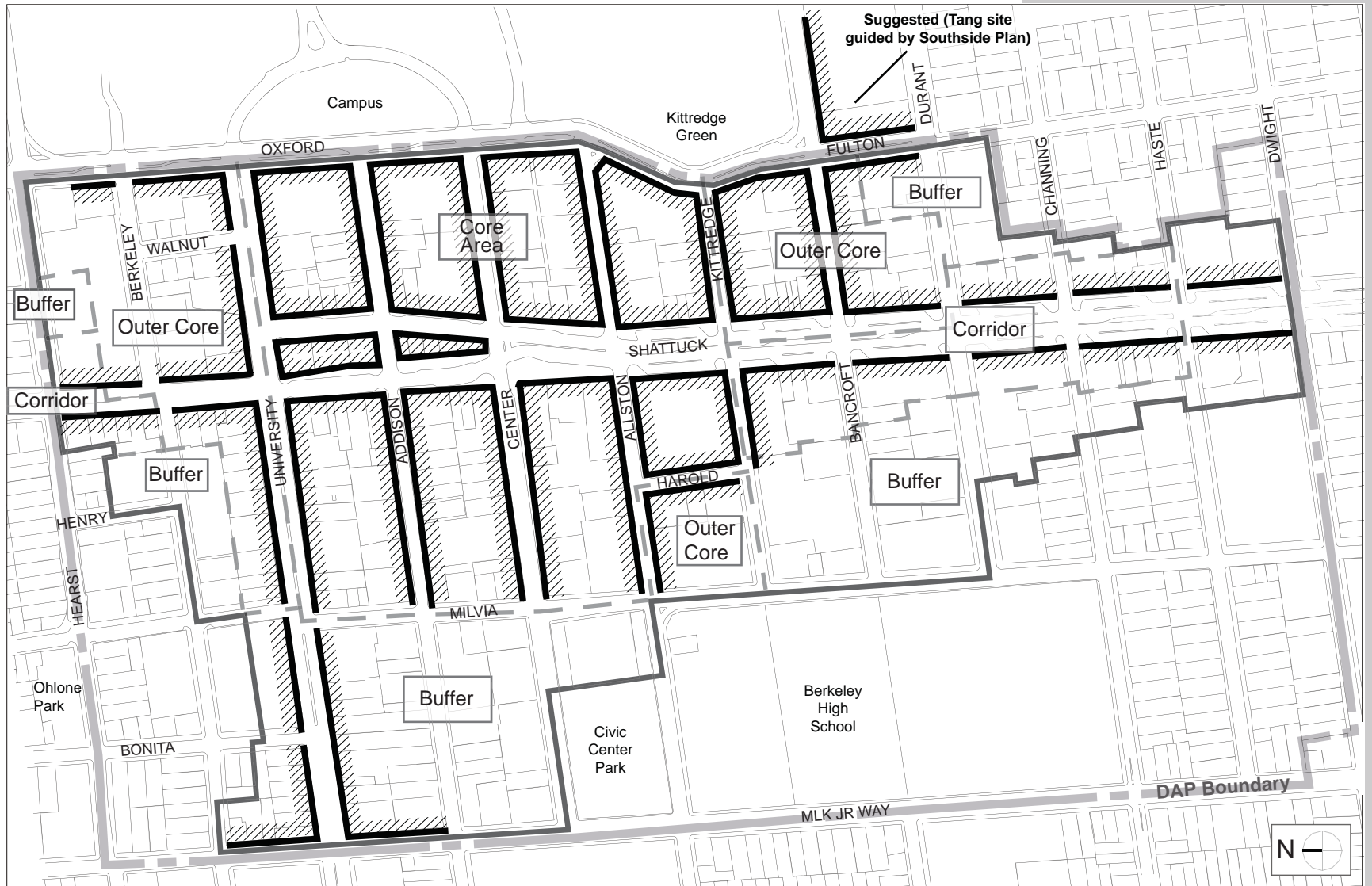
**FIGURE LU-3:  
Existing Public  
Serving  
Street-Level Uses**

- Retail and Restaurants
- Hotel
- Customer Services and Adult Education
- Cultural: Theater, Cinema, Museum



**FIGURE LU-4:  
Public-Serving  
Frontage  
Required**

-  Commercial-Downtown Mixed Use (C-DMU) Zoning District
-  Subareas
-  Street frontage where street-level public-serving uses required. See Policy LU-1.1



Subarea		Minimum Building Height (4,5)	Generally Allowed Maximum	With Use Permit for Increased Height (6)	Limited Number of Buildings Allowed to Exceed Generally Allowed Height (7, 8, 9, 10)
Mixed-Use	Core Area	50'	60'	75'	<u>Core Area Only:</u> Maximum of 2 residential buildings (with commercial groundfloor) that are no taller than 180 feet. Maximum of 1 hotel (with conference & related commercial) that is no taller than 180 feet. <u>Core Area and/or Outer Core Only:</u> Maximum of 2 office or residential buildings (with commercial groundfloor) up to 120 feet (non-UC). And maximum of 2 UC buildings up to 120 feet
	Outer Core	40'			
	Corridor (11)				
	Buffer (11)	None	50'	60'	None.

**Table LU-1: Allowable Building Heights (1, 2).**

- c) Recruit uses that complement Downtown as an evening destination, including new cinemas, restaurants, and art and entertainment venues.
- d) Support the Convention & Visitors Bureau and Downtown Berkeley Association in promoting events and festivals that capitalize on Downtown's unique cultural strengths.

**Policy LU-1.3: Complementary & Active Businesses.** Cultivate synergy between restaurants, shops and other businesses, combined with Downtown's focus on cultural and educational uses, to encourage a thriving and diverse retail environment (see policies under Goal ED-1).

- a) Strengthen retail by supporting an increase in the number of: people working and living Downtown, cultural and art uses, connections to UC Berkeley, and attractive streets and public spaces.
- b) Implement and coordinate public improvements, historic preservation, and other efforts to emphasize Downtown as a pedestrian-friendly environment with a strong sense of place (see Historic Preservation and Urban Design chapter).
- c) Evaluate alternatives for a vacancy tax and other provisions that incentivize the productive use of land and street-level space Downtown.



- (1) *All new buildings must provide significant public benefits. Buildings over 75 feet must provide additional benefits, as described in Policies under Goal LU-2.*
- (2) *Height dimensions are to roof, and do not include parapets, mechanical penthouses, appurtenances, & decorative features.*
- (3) *Theater and museum buildings are exempt from minimum height requirement, as are historic rehabilitations and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings.*
- (4) *The minimum building height may not be attained by using parapets, pitched roofs, or floor-to-floor heights that exceed typical dimensions for proposed use(s).*
- (5) *UC projects are not subject to Use Permit provisions or local land use controls. UC buildings may be built to 100 feet and without stepbacks in Core Area and Outer Core, on parcels controlled by UC Berkeley as of July 2009.*
- (6) *Taller exceptions must contribute significant additional community benefits (see Policy LU-2.3).*
- (7) *Portions of buildings that are over 85 feet above grade shall be subject to solar, visual, or wind analysis, and possible modifications to project design (see Policies LU-1.5 & LU-4.2).*
- (8) *Use restrictions apply to upper floors (3rd floor & above). Mixed uses permitted at street level & 2nd floor.*
- (9) *Along Shattuck between Durant and Dwight, buildings shall be stepped back 15 feet where the building to not to exceeds 65 feet.*
- (10) *Along Martin Luther King Jr. Way, limit height of new buildings adjacent to or confronting existing residential buildings to 45 feet within 10 feet of the sidewalk.*
- (11) *Stepback provisions apply where projects abut or confront residentially-designated parcels (see Policy LU-7.2).*

**Policy LU-1.4: Civic Focus.** Focus City government and civic activity in the Civic Center area, and recognize Downtown's central role in providing community services.

- a) Maintain the present assemblage of civic buildings (including the High School) in the Civic Center area. Require new buildings in this area to face Civic Center Park and abutting streets with active, community-serving street level uses.
- b) Encourage governmental, social service and other community uses that serve all Berkeleyans in and near the Civic Center area, so that they are centrally and conveniently located.

- c) Maintain and enhance Civic Center Park with physical improvements and enhanced maintenance (see Goal OS-3).
- d) Seek funding to retrofit the Veterans Building to resist earthquakes and, in addition to supporting veterans' activities, recruit a community-serving use for its main floor.

**Policy LU-1.5: Downtown Intensities & Building Heights.** To advance Downtown as a vibrant city center and encourage car-free options near transit, accommodate urban intensities by using building heights that are appropriate and feasible, as indicated in Table LU-1 and "Figure

LU-1, Land Use & Building Heights.” All new buildings shall deliver significant public benefits, many of which should be in proportion to building height (see Policy LU-2.1). Buildings exceeding a height of 85 feet shall be subject to shadow studies and visual analysis, – and buildings exceeding a height of 120 feet shall be subject to wind analysis – to avoid detriment to residential areas, public streets and public open spaces, and if necessary require modifications to the project design including setbacks and stepbacks to reduce view and shadow impacts (see policies under Goals ES-4, LU-2, and HD-1, as well as footnotes in Table LU-1). Provide appropriate transitions to Residential areas that surround Downtown as described in Policies LU-4.2.

**GOAL LU-2: NEW DEVELOPMENT SHALL CONTRIBUTE ITS FAIR SHARE TOWARD DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS. COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT FEES AND OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE ORDERLY AND ATTRACTIVE TRANSFORMATION OF DOWNTOWN.**

**Policy LU-2.1: Contributions Required of All Development.** New buildings and substantial additions, regardless of height, shall provide the following public benefits, except as noted for historic rehabilitations and adaptive re-use of existing buildings.

- a) Green Buildings (see policies under Goal ES-4).
  - Meet LEED Gold or equivalent.
  - Meet Title-24 energy requirements and any local green standards adopted by Council.
  - Provide on-site recycling services.

- b) Open Space and Green Infrastructure (see also Streets and Open Space chapter).
  - Pay an impact fee to fund the Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP).
  - Provide on-site open space. On-site open space requirements may be reduced by paying an in lieu fee to be applied toward Downtown SOSIP improvements.
  - Ensure no new net water runoff on-site or through in lieu payment for Downtown improvements (see policies under Goal ES-5).
- c) Alternative Transportation (see policies in Access chapter).
  - Provide car sharing opportunities.
  - Provide on-site bike parking.
  - Provide transit passes for project’s residents and/or employees.
  - Make pretax transit commuter benefits available to residents and/or employees.
  - Parking spaces shall be rented separate from dwelling units.
  - Residents in new downtown buildings shall be ineligible for Residential Preferential Parking permits.
  - Pay a fee for Downtown SOSIP improvements.
  - Provide on-site parking. Required parking may be reduced by paying into a

fund to provide enhanced transit services, which may be contained within the Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan. (See Policy AC-1.3.)

- d) Housing and Community Services (see policies in Housing and Community Health & Services chapter).
  - Pay an affordable housing mitigation fee and/or provide affordable housing per City policy.
  - Pay child care mitigation fee.
- e) Before new zoning provisions for new building heights are adopted, specific requirements will be defined in the context of citywide provisions and returned to City Council for approval.
- f) At the recommendation of the Landmarks Preservation Commission and at the discretion of the Zoning Adjustments Board, requirements may be waived to encourage the adaptive reuse of older buildings. Also consider zoning provisions to define thresholds where substantial renovations and substantial additions to existing buildings may be exempt (see Policies ES-4.1, LU-4.3, HD-4.2 and HD-4.3).
- g) The applicable public benefit requirements shall be included as conditions of approval and the owner shall enter into a written agreement that shall be binding on all successors in interest.

**Policy LU-2.2: Additional Community Benefits for Buildings Exceeding 75 Feet.** Developers of buildings in excess of 75 feet must provide significant community benefits beyond

what would otherwise be required. These may include: affordable housing, supportive social services, green features, open space, transportation demand features, job training, and/or employment opportunities. The applicable public benefit requirements shall be included as conditions of approval and the owner shall enter into a written agreement that shall be binding on all successors in interest.

**Policy LU-2.3: Voluntary Green Pathway.**

Establish a voluntary “Green Pathway” development review process that would provide a streamlined permit process for buildings to get extraordinary public benefits that could not otherwise be obtained. Provisions for implementing the Green Pathway shall include requirements to mitigate air quality, noise, and short-term construction impacts, as well as the possible disturbance of archeological resources. Public Benefit and labor compliance shall be monitored and verified, with violations subject to penalty.

- a) Concessions from Green Pathway projects with buildings at or below 75 feet should include:
  - Provide 20% affordable rental housing onsite or in a building located in the Downtown Area, or paying a fee to the Housing Trust Fund.
  - Waive the right to the State Density bonus.
  - Employ approximately 30% of a project’s construction workers from Berkeley, and if qualified persons are not available in Berkeley, from cities in the East Bay Green Corridor. A contractor may gain credit for a locally hired worker who is employed on another project.

- b) Green Pathway streamlined entitlement process for buildings at or below 75 feet would include:
    - Submit Landmarks Request for Determination application to City staff including funds for City-conducted analysis of historical value.
    - Submit completed analysis to Landmarks Preservations Commission (LPC) for determination. LPC shall complete its determination within 90 days. LPC determination shall be in effect while in an active pursuit of the use permit. If LPC designates a Landmark, the project reverts to standard zoning review process. LPC action appealable to City Council.
    - Design Review Commission has up to 90 days to assess whether the project conforms to Downtown Design Guidelines, subject to appeal directly to City Council.
    - Zoning Certificate is issued upon completion of this process. No Zoning Adjustment Board review is required.
  - c) Green Pathway buildings over 75 feet would have the following additional requirements and limitations:
    - Buildings with more than 100 units of housing or office buildings above 75' will pay prevailing wages for construction workers and employ approximately 16% of total employees as apprentices from State Certified Apprenticeships with a record of graduating apprentices.
    - Hotels above 75 feet will pay prevailing wages for hotel employees.
- Green Pathway Project applications will receive priority status to meet approval deadlines.
  - New process for submitting application to determine landmark status, with final determination by Landmarks Preservation Commission within 90 days, with possible option to pay for City-conducted analysis of historical value. If LPC issues negative determination, it shall be in effect while in an active pursuit of the use permit. If LPC designates a positive determination, the project reverts to standard zoning review process. LPC action appealable to City Council.
  - Design Review Commission and Zoning Adjustment Board (ZAB) process not to exceed a combined total of 210 days; ZAB action appealable to City Council.

**Policy LU-2.4: Developer Contributions for Open Space.** New development shall help pay for streetscape and public open space improvements and maintenance.

- a) Adopt a Streets and Open Space Improvements Fee for recreation and open space, and dedicate it to improvements in the Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP) and consistent with California law.
- b) Developers shall provide adequate on-site open space for public use at street-level and for capturing run-off or pay an in-lieu fee for public open space improvements. Street-level open space requirements are in addition to private open space requirements for occupants of residential projects (see policies in Goals ES-5 and OS-1 to 3).

- c) Require developers to make improvements to abutting streets as a condition for approval. Required improvements should conform to the SOSIP.
- d) Contributions from institutional and non-profit uses should be pursued in a manner consistent with requirements on all projects developed by “nonprofit” institutions.
- e) See Policy ED-12.1 – Revenues for Downtown, regarding revenue for Downtown streetscape and open space improvements.
- f) Coordinate developer contributions with other funding opportunities and priorities.

**Policy LU-2.5: DAP Evaluation & Updates.**

The City Council shall regularly review the Downtown Area Plan for its impacts on environmental goals, aesthetics, livability, economic vitality, housing growth and affordability, sustainability, and other factors, and shall consider adjustments to the Plan’s policies and development regulations to better attain desirable outcomes and address unacceptable negative impacts.

- a) The City Council should review the Downtown Area Plan five (5) years after adoption. City Council may consider adjustments to DAP policies and development regulations to better attain desired benefits and address unacceptable impacts. Prior to this review, the Planning Commission should undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the DAP. Based on this evaluation, the Planning Commission may recommend DAP revisions to the City Council for consideration and possible adoption.
- b) The Planning Commission should undertake a comprehensive evaluation every five (5) years thereafter. Based on each evaluation, the Planning Commission may recommend

that the City Council adopt changes to DAP policies and development regulations.

**GOAL LU-3: CULTIVATE DOWNTOWN AS AN ATTRACTIVE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD WITH A RANGE OF HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES, AND AN EMPHASIS ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND FAMILY HOUSING.**

**Policy LU-3.1: Housing Needs.** Accommodate a significant portion of Berkeley’s share of regional housing growth as defined by Regional Housing Needs Assessments (RHNA) within the Core Area, Outer Core, Corridor, and Buffer areas, as compared with other appropriate areas in Berkeley.

**Policy LU-3.2: Housing Diversity & Affordability.** Offer diverse housing opportunities for persons of different ages and incomes, households of varying size and the disabled, and give Downtown a significant role in meeting Berkeley’s continuing need for additional housing, especially affordable housing (see Housing and Community Health & Services chapter).

**GOAL LU-4: NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD ENHANCE DOWNTOWN’S VITALITY, LIVABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND CHARACTER THROUGH APPROPRIATE LAND USE AND DESIGN.**

**Policy LU-4.1: Transit-Oriented Development.** Encourage use of transit and help reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions, by allowing buildings of the highest appropriate intensity and height near BART and along the Shattuck and University Avenue transit corridors (see Goal ES-3).

- a) Require efficient use of available sites and help attain goals related to vitality. Adopt minimum building heights as provided in Table LU 1.



**Figure LU-5: 1952 Oxford.** University vehicles used to be maintained in this 1940 Mission Revival building designed by Walter Ratcliff. Staff photo.

**Policy LU-4.2: Development Compatibility.** Encourage compatible relationships between new and historic buildings, and reduce localized impacts from new buildings to acceptable levels. The size and placement of new buildings should: reduce street-level shadow, view, and wind impacts to acceptable levels; and maintain compatible relationships with historic resources (such as streetwall continuity in commercial areas). See policies under Goals ES-4 and HD-1, and Policy LU-1.5.

- a) Revise zoning provisions and amend the Downtown Design Guidelines to provide for appropriate controls on setbacks and building bulk (such as through the use of floor area ratios and maximum horizontal dimensions), and rules for street-level open space and other devices. Emphasize measurable standards that are easy to understand and apply.
- b) Strengthen zoning and the Downtown Design Guidelines to better address solar access and wind impacts. For buildings exceeding 85 feet, use solar, visual and wind simulations to evaluate and refine design alternatives.

**Policy LU-4.3: Historic Resources.** Preserve historic buildings and sites of Downtown, and provide where appropriate for their adaptive reuse and/or intensification (see Policies ES-4.1, LU-2.1 and HD-1.1).

- a) Allow flexibility in parking, green building, and other zoning standards, such as exemption from on-site parking and open space requirements, when buildings are substantially and appropriately preserved or restored as part of a development project. At the recommendation of the Landmarks Preservation Commission and at the discretion of the Zoning Adjustments Board, green building requirements may be waived to encourage historic rehabili-

tations and adaptive reuse of older buildings (see Policy LU-2.1). Review and, if necessary, revise standards that may discourage historic rehabilitation and adaptive reuse.

**GOAL LU-5: ENHANCE DOWNTOWN AS A CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND INNOVATIVE BUSINESSES.**

**Policy LU-5.1: Office Space.** Encourage new office space to serve the growth needs of existing and start-up businesses, recruit private-sector spin-offs from the University, and provide jobs for Berkeley’s workforce, such as professionals and high-tech workers who now commute elsewhere (see Economic Development chapter).

- a) Encourage new office and research space that has floor plates of a size that will help retain growing local businesses within Berkeley. Review zoning provisions for possible encumbrances to the creation of contiguous floor areas exceeding 10,000 square feet, and consider their elimination.
- b) Review zoning provisions for possible encumbrances to creating small offices and research spaces suitable for start-up businesses, and to the sharing of equipment among multiple tenants, and consider their elimination.
- c) Encourage start up businesses.

**GOAL LU-6: ENCOURAGE UNIVERSITY USES IN DOWNTOWN THAT WILL BENEFIT THE GREATER DOWNTOWN AREA.**

**Policy LU-6.1: University Land Uses.** Encourage the University to use its Downtown sites for uses that serve the public or are of general interest, such as creating a new public health campus and relocating the Berkeley Art Museum / Pacific Film Archive to Downtown. To the extent pos-

sible, UC buildings should line streets and public open spaces with retail and other public-serving uses that encourage activity and meet the needs of Downtown residents, workers, and visitors (see policies under Goals HD-5 and OS-1).

- a) **Museums.** Encourage UC to move museums (such as the Lawrence Hall of Science and the Hearst Museum of Anthropology), satellite museums and/or museum collections into Downtown. Support the relocation of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive to the UC Printing Plant building and adjoining garage (bounded by Center, Oxford, and Addison). Locate museum entrances, cafes, and retail stores in ways that strengthen existing retail and cultural uses.
- b) **Retail Frontages.** Encourage the University to locate retailing activities along the Shattuck and University Avenue frontages that it controls. Encourage UC to open branches of affiliated retail stores into Downtown, such as the Scholars Workstation and UC museum stores, and make these stores open to the general public. Retail frontages are encouraged along Shattuck and University Avenues at a depth of 100 feet, if feasible. Prior to development, the City and University should jointly consider how deep the retail space should be and work together to attract tenants to strengthen retail activity.
- c) **Community Health & Services.** Encourage the University to move programs that serve the general public to Downtown, such as health clinics, an optometry clinic, social work, community-based research, community outreach, auditoriums available for community events, and other community services.
- d) **University Avenue Gateway – South Side.** To provide a new sense of arrival and gateway at the east end of University Avenue

and to help transform Oxford Street, the City recommends additional development on the University Hall site and adjacent UC property just to the west. University Hall could be modified and/or additional building area could be added to contain visitor oriented uses such as a joint Visitor Center, an information center for UC and non-UC events, a multicultural center, and/or branches of University museums that would contribute to Addison Street as a cultural destination. If UC develops consolidated parking Downtown, the site west of University Hall is appropriate for this use (see Policy AC-1).

- e) **University Avenue Gateway – North Side.** The City recommends near-term development of UC properties on the block bounded by Oxford, Walnut, Berkeley Way, and University Avenue, possibly for University “surge” space (to house functions as they undergo reconstruction or repair). The University is encouraged to seek unified development of this block by acquiring non-UC properties – with the exception of the apartment building at Berkeley Way and Walnut Street, and with the integration and preservation of a meaningful portion of the exterior of the landmarked garage building its forecourt at 1952 Oxford Street.
- f) **Department of Health Services Site (between Shattuck, Hearst, Oxford, and Berkeley Way).** Encourage near-term development of the former Department of Health Services (DHS) site, between Shattuck, Berkeley Way, Hearst and Walnut. In addition to retail along Shattuck (see “b”), pedestrian-friendly, and have frequent windows and entrances. The scale of new University buildings on the DHS site should be lower building heights across from existing residences along Hearst as provided in Figure LU-1: Land Use & Building Heights map.



**Figure LU-6: Residential Neighborhoods.** The Downtown Area includes residential neighborhoods with single-family homes and apartment buildings. As shown, the character of many residential buildings is noteworthy. Staff photos

Health services are encouraged on the site (see LU 8.2).

- g) **Health Services** in Downtown (see policies under Goals LU-8 and HC-7).
- h) **Tang Center Parking Lot.** The parking lot site adjacent to the Tang Center between Bancroft and Durant is associated with UC planning in the Downtown Area, but is guided by the Southside Plan. Relative to sites located in the Downtown Area, encourage UC to make the Tang Center site a relatively low priority for near-term development. A multicultural center is encouraged on the site, which could bring together Berkeley High School students, UC students and other young adults. Office and storefronts are considered appropriate ground floor uses for the site facing Bancroft. The south side of the site is appropriate for housing at a scale that relates to nearby existing residential uses.
- i) **Activity Facilities.** Encourage the University to retain the Edwards Field track, tennis courts, and similar activity facilities near Downtown. Also encourage new activity facilities that will bring activity and amenities to locations in or adjacent to Downtown.
- j) **Childcare.** Encourage the University to add childcare facilities for faculty, staff, and students to its Downtown properties, and to consider making these facilities available to the general public.

**Policy LU-6.2: UC Housing.** Encourage the University to create more housing Downtown, possibly in cooperation with private developers.

- a) Encourage the University to replace the Banway building on Bancroft in the long term with housing for faculty, students (in-

cluding undergraduate and graduate), or families (see Policy HC-3.6).

- b) For the northern portion of the Golden Bear site, the R-2A height limit of 35 feet should be retained, except for affordable housing projects, but no commercial space, in which case a maximum height of 65 feet and modified development standards shall be allowed.

**Policy LU-6.3: Business Synergies.** Encourage University uses in Downtown that will enhance it as a center of employment and innovative businesses (see Policies LU-5.1 and ED-8.2).

- a) Encourage University uses in Downtown to enhance it as a center of employment and innovative businesses. Encourage UC Berkeley to site office, laboratory, cultural, and associated space (as anticipated in UC's Long Range Development Plan) in Downtown on sites already owned by the University.
- b) Encourage the University to locate East Bay Green Corridor Partnership uses in Downtown (see Policy ES-2.2).

### **GOAL LU-7: MAINTAIN THE EXISTING SCALE AND CHARACTER OF RESIDENTIAL-ONLY AREAS.**

**Policy LU-7.1: Neighborhood Protections.** Seek to reduce development pressures in residential-only areas, to promote the preservation and rehabilitation of older structures – and to conserve the scale of their historic fabric (see Policy HD-1.5).

- a) Maintain the R-2A zoning designation and downzone R-4 areas to R-3 (as shown in Figure LU-1), except for the north side of Dwight Way east of Shattuck Avenue.



- b) Development on parcels that remain residentially zoned shall be controlled by applicable residential zoning provisions. Private development should not be subject to DAP private development requirements or procedures unless explicitly called for in the DAP.
- c) Consider creation of design guidelines and public improvements that maintain and enhance the special character of residential neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-7.2: Transitions.** Avoid abrupt transitions between residential-only neighborhoods and development projects built in Corridor and Buffer areas.

- a) Zoning provisions should be developed so that projects that are across the street from residentially-designated parcels respect the predominant scale of existing buildings on the confronting block. For projects that abut or confront residentially designated property, the new building should not exceed 45 feet at the sidewalk or 60 feet where a 10-foot “stepback” is provided (see Table LU-1).
- b) No project should exceed 60 feet within 40 feet of any residentially designated property (see Figure LU-1). The required depth of this “stepback” shall be evaluated and determined as Zoning provisions are revised, and be sufficient for mitigating significant shadow and privacy impacts on abutting residentially zoned parcels.

**GOAL LU-8: MAINTAIN AND EXPAND COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE FACILITIES AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA.**

**Policy LU-8.1: Herrick Site.** Encourage the retention of community-serving health services

on the Herrick Hospital site. Work with Alta Bates Summit Medical Center to retain all or a portion of the Herrick site for health services to the extent feasible.

- a) The City should redesignate the Herrick site as “Buffer,” if the proposed project incorporates health care for the community on the Herrick site or in its general vicinity, such as through the provision of a community-serving health clinic, primary care, or similar facility, on the Herrick site or in its general vicinity.
- b) If only housing is proposed on the Herrick site, the housing should be consistent with its residential neighbors.

**Policy LU-8.2: UC Health Services.** Encourage UC to move health services and programs that serve the general public into the Downtown Area, such as a new public health campus on Shattuck at Berkeley Way.

- a) Work with the University as it considers moving health services and programs into the Downtown Area, such as health clinics, an optometry clinic, social work, community-based research, community outreach, auditoriums available for community events, and other community services.
- b) Consider the DHS site as a campus for providing a range of health services and health-service activities in the same location (see Policies LU-6.1 and HC-7.1).

**Policy LU-8.3: Other Care Providers.** Support public, non-profit and for-profit agencies in Downtown that provide health-related and social services (see Housing and Community Health & Services chapter).

# 4 - ACCESS



# 4. ACCESS

## STRATEGIC STATEMENT

Downtown's transportation system must serve Downtown's three principal roles: a vibrant city center, a livable neighborhood, and a regional destination for employment, education and culture. Interdependent and complementary transportation management strategies set forth in the DAP address the following themes.

- Emphasize and enhance Downtown as a destination.
- Give priority to transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists, while reducing automobile use, especially by commuters.
- Improve connectivity between Downtown and Berkeley neighborhoods, and between Downtown and the Bay Area.

## PRIORITIZE PEDESTRIANS

Downtown's advantages spring first and foremost from having complementary uses close together and connected by pedestrian environments that are convenient, safe, and attractive for all ages and abilities. Inviting pedestrian environments are the foundation for attaining many Downtown goals. Pedestrian-oriented environments serve the needs of Downtown residents who can meet most daily needs on foot and for whom Downtown's streets are the social space at their front door. Walkable

*Facing Page: Bikes, pedestrians, buses, shuttles and taxis come together at the Downtown Berkeley's BART station, a major Bay Area transit hub. Staff photo*

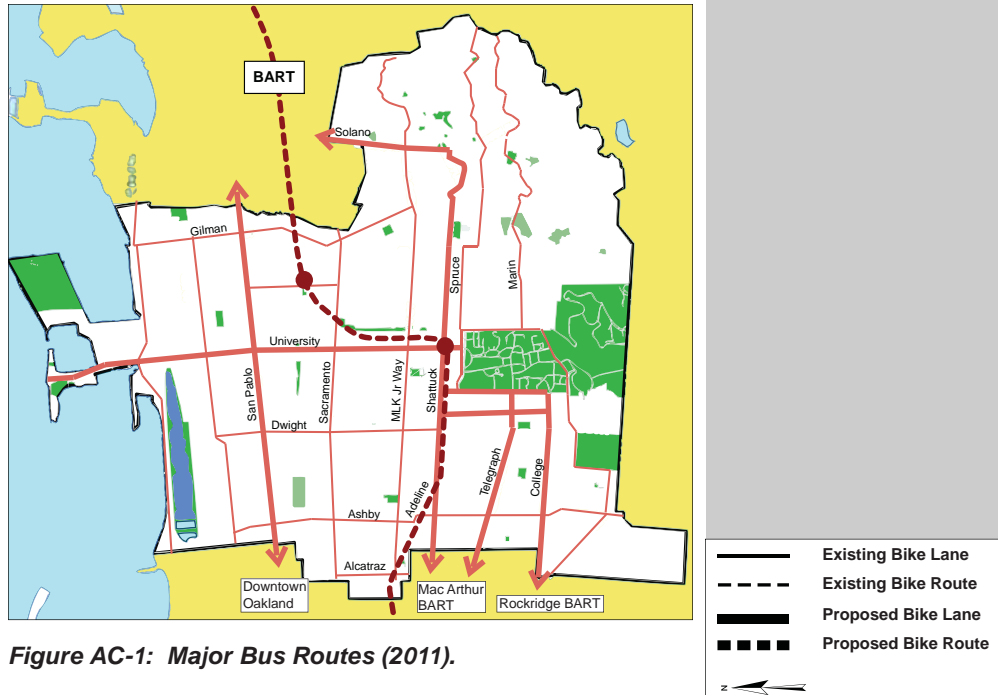


Figure AC-1: Major Bus Routes (2011).



Figure AC-2: Bike Paths and Routes Serving Downtown (2011).

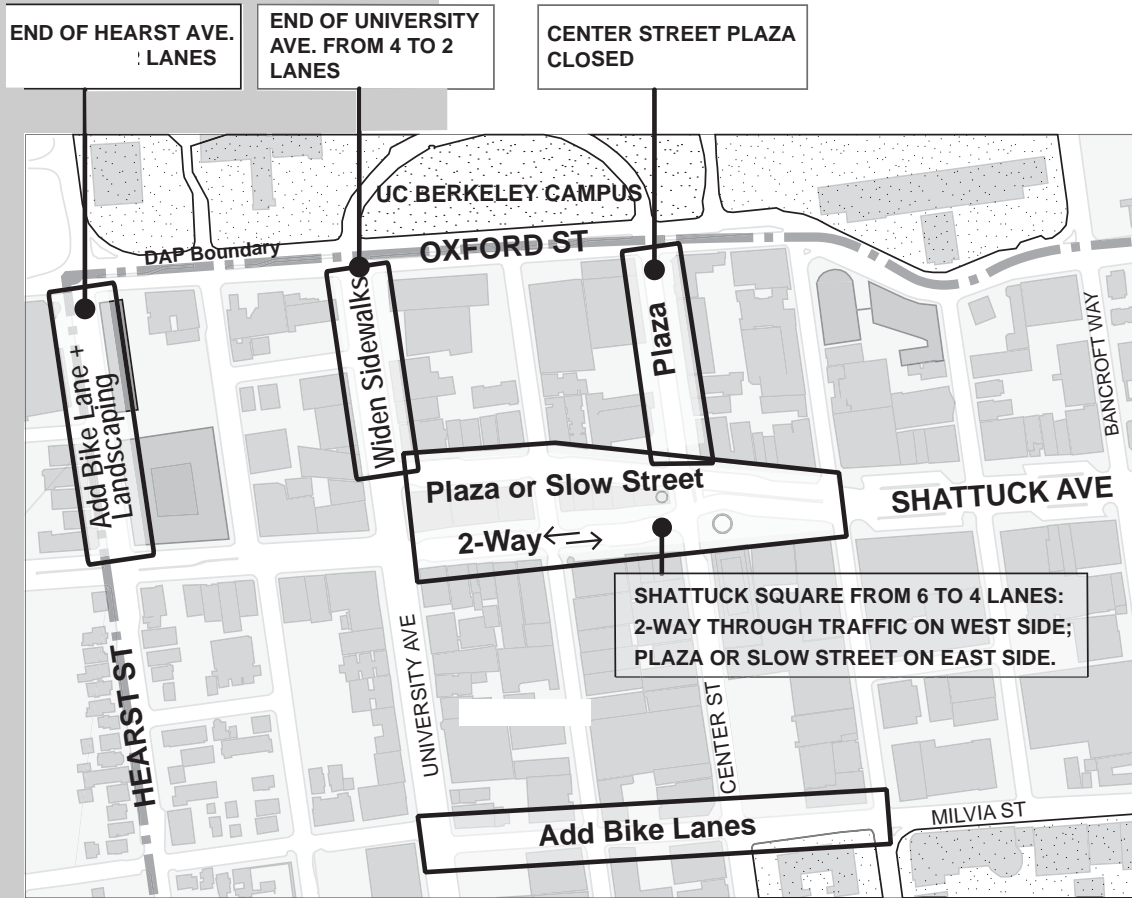


Figure AC-3: Potential Travel Lane Modifications.

environments also serve daytime denizens: Downtown employees, shoppers, students, and visitors who walk around and through Downtown.

Downtown has high levels of foot traffic already. Between BART and UC Berkeley's campus, Center Street has more foot traffic than any other street in the East Bay. Citywide, seventy percent of Berkeley residents say that they sometimes walk to shop or run errands (2001 City of Berkeley General Plan). 15 percent of Berkeley residents walk to work, five times the rate for Alameda County (Census, 2000), and the highest walk-to-work rates are in Downtown Area census tracts.

An attractive downtown walking environment can play a critical role in economic revitalization. Retail patrons, cultural uses, businesses, and new development can be attracted to Downtown with especially inviting pedestrian places. For retail, Downtown's success as a pedestrian-friendly place can distinguish it and help it compete with other regional destinations.

With residential growth, Downtown's streets will increasingly serve as community open spaces where residents can sit outside and meet neighbors. Pedestrian improvements anticipate Berkeley's increasingly aging population, for whom Downtown offers car-free housing options. Twenty one percent of Americans aged 65 and older do not drive (STPP Aging Americans: Stranded without Options: April, 2004). Downtown Berkeley offers an ideal location for aging baby-boomers interested in active lives near conveniences, transit, the University and other attractions.

While Downtown retains many strengths, many Downtown streets do not provide a high-quality walking environment, in spite of high pedestrian volumes and City policies focusing on pedestrian environments. Many sidewalks are relatively narrow; one-third of Downtown sidewalks lack street

trees; and street elements like street lights and furnishings have an inconsistent and sometimes unattractive appearance. Blank walls and parking lots front onto some streets, making them less inviting and less safe. Unsightly utility boxes add to a cluttered sidewalk. Concrete and asphalt characterize most of Downtown and date from public improvements that emphasized the convenience of motorists over the comfort of pedestrians.

While some of the existing environment is not attractive for the pedestrian, the opportunity to enhance that environment is also evident. By repurposing space now used for cars, sidewalks can be expanded, landscaping enhanced and bicycle lanes. Engineering standards of the past fifty years have traditionally focused on vehicle flow and minimizing vehicular conflicts, and less on the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. While Downtown contains some features that protect pedestrians and cause drivers to slow (such as curb extensions at some crosswalks), many additional opportunities are available for more generous pedestrian environments. Traffic modeling indicates that several street segments can lose traffic lanes with no significant impact on congestion. Traffic lanes can also be reduced in width, thereby slowing traffic and enhancing pedestrian safety.

Programs that promote alternative modes can also benefit pedestrians by reducing and calming traffic. Contemporary transit improvements emphasize the need for “complete streets” that emphasize all travel modes and is an important tool for enhancing pedestrian access to transit. Programs that promote alternative transportation modes reduce the need for parking on and driveways to private parcels, thereby reducing potential conflicts between pedestrians and cars.

## **BICYCLING**

Bicycling offers an excellent way to get around Berkeley. Six percent of Berkeley residents bike to work in Berkeley every day (2000 United States Census), four times the Alameda County average. In addition, UC Berkeley’s students and staff regularly bike through Downtown to get to the campus destination as 21 percent of University bike trips originate in Berkeley (UC Berkeley Bike Plan, 2006).

While there are many bike lanes and routes in Downtown, there are also discontinuities in the bike network in Downtown. For example, Milvia, Berkeley’s first “Bicycle Boulevard,” offers a protected route for bicyclists traveling from the north and south, except between University Avenue and Allston. Oxford-Fulton Street carries over 1,400 peak hour bicyclists (UC Berkeley Bike Plan, 2006) but bike lanes end at Durant. Bicyclists traveling on the “Ohlone Greenway” bike path, can access the bike lanes along Hearst Avenue to Shattuck, but the bike lanes two blocks short of to the UC Campus.

Downtown also needs more parking for bikes. Downtown BART Bike Station has helped meet some demand since it opened in 2010, but the demand for bicycle parking exceeds the supply near major destinations like the YMCA, central library, and blocks with high levels of commercial activity.

## **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

Downtown Berkeley is the second largest transit hub in the East Bay, and has extraordinary access by bus and BART. Thirteen AC Transit bus lines (2008) and several shuttles (for UC Berkeley, LBNL and Summit/Alta Bates) converge Downtown. At a local and regional scale, transit

presents an important alternative to the single-occupant car.

Transit also provides an essential service to persons who do not or cannot drive. A 2000 survey of AC Transit riders showed that 61% of adult riders were transit-dependent (AC Transit 2002 On-Board Passenger Survey), over one-quarter of whom live in low-income households without access to a car (Transportation and Land Use Coalition 2002 Urban Habitat presentation). Many disabled and elderly individuals are unable to drive.

Transit also reduces impacts traffic generated by the University of California and Downtown employment. UC Berkeley's 2020 Long Range Development Plan requires that all new University housing be accessible to the central campus within 20 minutes on foot and using transit. To meet this goal the University provides students with free "Bear Passes" for unlimited local bus service. The City of Berkeley provides each employee with AC Transit passes. Transit subsidies have proved so successful that communities like Boulder CO have avoided the need to build new expensive parking garages by giving each downtown employee a free pass for local bus service.

The DAP encourages the City to work closely with BART and AC Transit to maintain attractive transit options with service that is frequent and reliable, such as by giving buses priority at traffic lights. Other possible improvements include the use of platforms to speed boarding and real-time arrival/departure information. Safe and convenient pedestrian routes to and from transit stops also support transit use.

## REDUCING AUTO USE

Berkeley has long supported policies that reduce vehicle use in order to reduce impacts on the community and the environment. At the same

time, automobiles are likely to remain the dominant transportation mode in the foreseeable future (even if they are mostly electric or hybrid), and trucks will continue to deliver most goods. While Berkeley's population stayed constant from 1990 to 2000, traffic on Berkeley streets increased and Berkeley households owned more cars.

This Plan seeks to balance a strong desire to minimize the use of autos, while also accommodating them to the degree necessary and mitigating potential negative impacts on pedestrians and bicyclists. Accommodation of cars must be consistent with the City's priorities for pedestrians, bicycles and transit. To achieve this balance, multiple strategies are needed to promote alternative modes, manage parking and traffic more effectively, and make street- and parking-related improvements that support DAP goals.

Motorists are comprised of different user groups with different needs and patterns of use. To simultaneously reduce car use while making Downtown a more attractive destination, each user group requires different and multiple transportation management strategies.

**Commuters.** Of all user groups, commuters present the best opportunities for encouraging alternative modes, especially for those who do not need regular access to their car during the day. Long-standing City and University policies have successfully discouraged many commuters driving, but more needs to be done. Strategies can be employed that increase the cost of parking all-day, while decreasing the cost and inconvenience of using transit. Berkeley has excellent transit access, which presents better transit options than most other communities. Programs like "Guaranteed Ride Home" and access to car-sharing vehicles can also play an important role in that they provide the flexibility of a car when occasionally needed. A lasting

strategy to reduce commuting is to build more housing near UC Berkeley and Downtown, so that more people can walk or bicycle to work.

**Shoppers and Short-Term Visitors.** People who come Downtown to shop or conduct other short-term business are less likely to use alternative modes because they place a premium on convenience and transit can seem unreliable and time consuming (especially at off-peak times). At the same time, shoppers and other short-term visitors are vital to Downtown's economic health and attractiveness as a destination. To maintain a thriving shopping district, Downtown must rely on people from outside of the area, and retailers must compete with other shopping options in Berkeley and surrounding communities. For retail, the availability of short-term parking – especially convenient on-street parking – plays a critical role, as does a safe and attractive pedestrian environment. Convenient parking is also important to persons with disabilities and families with small children. Accordingly, one of the key strategies for this group is adequate management of the parking supply to ensure that short-term parking is available and convenient (as described below).

**Residents.** The average resident in Downtown Berkeley today is much less likely to own an automobile than residents in other parts of Berkeley or the region, but may need a vehicle occasionally. As more housing is built Downtown, some accommodation of cars will be needed but residents' use of cars can be minimized by leveraging the proximity of walk-to conveniences, ensuring excellent accessibility by transit, making it easy to bike, and providing carshare opportunities.

**Global Climate Change.** In 2005, automobile gasoline and diesel consumption accounted for 47 percent of Berkeley's total greenhouse gas emissions, almost 293,000 tons of greenhouse

gases, and contributed to the region's air pollution and rates of respiratory disease. While less polluting vehicles could become more available, they will still generate off-site greenhouse gas and environmental impacts from generating electricity. High rates of car use also alter the character of Berkeley, including pedestrian safety, noise, and the use of limited Downtown land resources for parking and streets. Reducing car use can best be achieved by increasing the numbers of people living near good public transit, and at intensities that support shops and services within walking distance.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM).** Using a menu of strategies, TDM programs discourage car use (especially commuting) and encourage transit, bicycling, ridesharing, and walking. TDM programs include:

- cash equivalent to the cost of parking given to those who do not drive alone;
- pre-tax commuter benefits;
- free or low-cost transit passes;
- car-/van-pool coordination and free car-/van-pool parking;
- showers for bicyclists and vouchers for bike repairs;
- car-sharing opportunities; and
- a "guaranteed free-ride-home" when people who didn't drive are faced with emergencies.

Generally implemented by larger employers and institutions, TDM programs typically offer incentives relating to cost and convenience. A UC sur-

vey determined that “convenience” (at 37%) and “travel time” (at 30%) were most often cited as reasons why faculty and staff drive rather than use alternate modes. Through TDM programs, government can help “even the playing field” and make TDM programs workable for smaller employers and residents and more competitive with the cost and convenience of auto usage.

## PARKING

Just as with auto use described above, parking needs can be divided into three types: long term parking generally used by commuters; long-term parking used by residents, and short term parking generally used for shopping, services, recreation and cultural activities. Each need is addressed with a different set of strategies. Fundamentally, the City’s policy has been to discourage long term parking for commuters, manage the available parking supply so that it can be more readily available for short-term users, and have relatively low minimum parking requirements for residential development. While the DAP continues many of these same policies, it recommends a different set of strategies to achieve those goals.

**Commuter Parking.** City policy has discouraged commuters from parking in Downtown for some time. A 2004 survey of Downtown workers led by UC Professor Elizabeth Deakin found that 37% of Downtown Berkeley workers said they drive alone or with others and park in Downtown. Of those who arrive by car, 70% reported parking in parking garages. The remaining workers said they parked on-street and avoided citations by moving their cars and “feeding” meters. Consequently, on-street parking spaces are occupied every day by about 700 employees (2004 Transportation Research Board, Deakin et al).

City policy can alter parking behavior through careful management of the parking supply. Information technologies can direct motorists to parking garages with available parking spaces. By increasing the price of on-street parking, some commuters will chose to park in a parking garage or get to downtown some other way – and make on-street spaces more available to other users. Strategies that discourage commuter parking in Downtown can lead some commuters to seek parking in surrounding neighborhoods which must be managed through on-street parking restrictions and enforcement.

**Parking for Restaurants, Shops and Entertainment.** The availability of readily-available on-street parking can be critical to the livelihood of shops and restaurants. Downtown’s on-street parking can be priced and enforced to discourage long-term use and to encourage use of lower-priced parking garages for those who are willing to walk farther. In his book, *The High Price of Free Parking*, Donald Shoup, a UCLA professor observes that the price of parking is a minor factor for retail competition, but that its availability and convenience plays a major role. Shoup recommends parking ordinances that price on-street parking to attain a vacancy rate of about one parking space on each block face (a vacancy rate of about 15%). Since demand for parking can vary by time of day or location, prices might be adjusted accordingly and the technology for variable pricing is already installed. Although retailers often object to increases in the price of parking, other cities have found them much more accepting of it if the increased revenue from parking is invested in things that benefit the retail district, such as street improvements and sidewalk cleaning.

While enforcement of parking restrictions has traditionally ended at 6 PM in Berkeley (and most other cities), evening parking requires the



same strategies to manage short term and long term demand. IBI Group's 2006 transportation background analysis for the DAP EIR found that evening on-street parking "had an overall higher occupancy when compared to the midday period [and] revealed that parking on select blocks was fully occupied" close to cinemas and theaters. Shorter-term evening entertainment venues can therefore benefit from price-based supply-and-demand strategies. On-street parking would become more available for restaurants and shops if metered hours were extended (2006 MTC Downtown Berkeley Parking Study).

**Parking Garages.** While perceptions prevail that parking is not available in Downtown, surveys show that many publicly accessible parking garages are only 80% full during the early afternoon when demand peaks. Parking garages would be better utilized if their price of parking was lower than on-street parking, which is not the case today. The public could also be provided with information on where garage parking is available by using "real-time" signs that indicate how many parking spaces are available at each major garage.

**Residential Parking.** To promote Downtown's revitalization, development in the Downtown's Core Area (the blocks around the Downtown BART station) already has some of the lowest parking requirements in the Bay Area outside of San Francisco: one space for every three dwelling units if a Use Permit is obtained. Actual demand corresponds closely with this requirement, testifying to the reduced driving rates of Downtown residents. (Wilbur Smith Associates).

Current Zoning provisions require on-site parking for each project, and while it allows a fee to be paid in-lieu of on-site parking, the City does not have a consistent vehicle for collecting these fees and spending them on Downtown parking or other transportation improvements.

An in-lieu fee option could help make adaptive re-use of existing buildings and new development on smaller sites more feasible. In addition, the City could promote bicycle and transit use by requiring that new developments provide bicycle parking, carshare opportunities, and transit passes in lieu of parking.

Parking demand in the Downtown Area has the potential to "spillover" into surrounding neighborhoods. Berkeley's "Residential Preferential Parking" program (RPP) seeks to limit parking in surrounding neighborhoods to residents and short-term use. Residents in new downtown buildings shall be ineligible for Residential Preferential Parking permits. Residents in surrounding neighborhoods benefit from enforcement of the RPP, along with other tools with which to better management of transportation demand Downtown.

**Parking & Transportation Demand Management Program (PTDM).** Parking management and transportation demand programs are complementary: TDM encourages people to use alternatives to the automobile, especially commuters, while parking management programs can ensure that parking is available for those that need it most, while discouraging it for those for whom transit and other modes are viable options. Together, these programs allow the City to better utilize available parking, and minimize the need to build expensive new parking garages. A comprehensive Parking and Transportation Demand Program that coordinates these two strategies has the potential to maximize the efficient use of available parking and the use of alternatives to the personal vehicle, such as using transit, riding a bike, or by car sharing.

**UC Berkeley Parking & TDM.** The University has its own parking management program to address demand and meet TDM goals. According to UC Berkeley's Long Range Development Plan,



*Figure AC-4: Rhino Meters. For better administration and attractive streets, "rhino meters" replaced individual meters. Rhino meters track whether parking is over- or under-utilized, making them an important parking management tool. Staff photo.*

The University may add over one thousand additional parking spaces in Downtown to address its growth needs. However, as UC Parking fees do not currently cover the cost of providing structured parking, the University also has a significant incentive for University parking built in Downtown to share with non-UC users, as has been the case during evenings and weekends. In addition, the University and City are working in concert to implement a range of TDM strategies.

**Carsharing.** Carsharing programs have recently been established in many urban areas, which provide affordable short-term car rentals to members. Carsharing eliminates the need to own a car (or a second car) for occasional trips by making low-cost and convenient short-term car rentals easily available. Carsharing also allows commuters who regularly bike or use transit to use a car to meet infrequent or unexpected needs.

## GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

*Note: Policies under Goal AC-1 focus on integrated multimodal strategies to strengthening Downtown as a place for people to enjoy. Policies relating specifically to walking, transit, and bicycling are found in Goals AC-2, AC-4 and AC-5, respectively.*

**GOAL AC-1: IMPROVE OPTIONS THAT INCREASE ACCESS TO DOWNTOWN ON FOOT, BY BICYCLE, AND VIA TRANSIT. MAKE LIVING, WORKING, AND VISITING DOWNTOWN AS CAR-FREE AS POSSIBLE.**

**Policy AC-1.1: Street Modifications.** Modify Downtown's streets and street network to better serve the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit (see policies under Goal OS-1). While recognizing that automobiles will be an important transportation mode for the foreseeable

future, reduce and avoid negative impacts from the private automobile on pedestrians, transit, and bicycles (see policies under Goals AC-2, AC-4 and AC-5). Development projects that are adjacent to designated street improvements should finance a fair-share of these improvements as condition of project approval.

- a) Encourage potential motorists to access Downtown using other modes (as described in multiple policies below).
- b) Modify streets to slow automobile traffic to speeds appropriate to the function and character of each street, and emphasize the needs and comfort of pedestrians, transit and bicycles.
  - Modifications should encourage traffic to flow at speeds under 25 miles per hour.
  - Monitor traffic volumes and speeds on residential streets in and near Downtown using established standards, and improve traffic calming and enforcement until General Plan targets are attained.
- c) Implement street improvements that benefit pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit. Reallocate parts of public rights-of-way that give unneeded capacity to motor vehicles and can be repurposed to yield pedestrian, bicycle, and/or ecological benefits. Travel lanes should not be eliminated until analysis has determined that safety, transit, and traffic operations can be adequately addressed, however the DAP EIR has indicated that traffic lane reductions appear to be feasible in the following locations:
  - Shattuck Avenue and Shattuck Square between University Avenue and Allston;

- University Avenue between Shattuck Square and Oxford;
  - Hearst Avenue between Shattuck and Oxford; and
  - closing Center Street to regular traffic between Shattuck and Oxford.
- d) Adopt a Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan that establishes policies and actions relating to street improvements that can occur throughout the Downtown Area (such as sidewalk bulb-outs, suitable travel lane widths, bicycle parking, street trees, street lighting, furnishings, etc.), as well as major projects (including Center Street Plaza, Center Street Greenway and Civic Center Park, Shattuck Square, University Avenue Gateway, Shattuck Avenue, and Hearst Street). See Policy OS-1.1.
- e) Evaluate street network changes from the perspective of the needs, safety and comfort of bicyclists and pedestrians, including changes to lanes and turning movements. Where accommodations for private automobiles and accommodations for pedestrians are in conflict, decisions should reflect the priority of the pedestrian. Accept that improvements may result in slowing down vehicular traffic. Reconfigure automobile traffic on Shattuck Square, so that the west side of Shattuck Square accommodates two-way through traffic, and the east side of Shattuck Square can become a slow street or plaza with a high level of pedestrian amenity.
- f) Once the design of improvements is conceptually approved, private and public developers adjacent to designed improvements should implement them as part of the

development project, whenever feasible and as described in Policies (see policies under Goals LU-2 and OS-3).

- g) Engage merchants, property owners, transit agencies, the University and other stakeholders to emphasize Downtown as a shared destination. Work with AC Transit and other transit agencies to evaluate the impact of proposed street and street network changes on transit vehicle operations, and to identify suitable bus stop and layover locations (such as to replace those displaced by a new Center Street Plaza). Bus stops and layover locations should not degrade transit service, and should not negatively impact pedestrian environments.

**Policy AC-1.2: Single-Occupant Vehicles.**

Discourage the use of single-occupant vehicles (SOVs) by commuters to Downtown and encourage commuting with transit, ridesharing, bicycles, and on foot.

- a) Require larger development projects to provide ridesharing parking and support their on-going operations. Strive to serve subareas where ridesharing locations are not convenient by identifying potential ridesharing locations and working with ridesharing providers.
- b) Promote ridesharing to and from Downtown by employers and institutions. In public parking garages, continue to discount parking prices for organized ridesharing, and provide preferential parking locations. Encourage private parking garages to make similar accommodations.
- c) Strengthen parking policies that discourage all-day SOV parking while encouraging alternative modes (see policies under Goal AC-3).

- d) Consistent with the Urban Environmental Accords endorsed by Berkeley, strive to reduce single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) to be no more than 40% of all commute trips by 2020. Monitor peak period trips to the extent feasible, and adjust measures to meet these targets.

**Policy AC-1.3: Alternative Modes & Transportation Demand Management (TDM).** New development and on-going programs should reduce Downtown car use, support alternative travel modes, and consolidate publicly-accessible parking facilities and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs (see requirements under Policy LU-2.1).

- a) A fee requirement should be established to support alternative modes (i.e. transit, walking & bicycling) and Transportation Demand Management programs. Parking requirements for new development may be reduced by paying an in lieu fee into a fund to enhance transit, which might be contained within the Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP); in lieu payments for parking should be encouraged.
- b) See Policy ED-12.1 – Revenues for Downtown, regarding revenues to reduce Downtown car use, while simultaneously supporting the parking needs of local merchants and cultural/entertainment uses. Consider raising on-going TDM revenues through the creation of a Downtown Transportation Benefits District.
- c) Develop a finance strategy to evaluate potential transportation-related revenues and compare their financial capacity with the costs of potential Downtown improvements, maintenance and services. The finance strategy should set near-term priorities for

improvements based on public input and other considerations.

- d) Require that new buildings and substantial additions support alternative transportation as identified in Policy LU-2.1c. The City should help small businesses and smaller development projects qualify for discounted transit passes, such as by working directly with AC Transit or by encouraging the formation of an association assigned with this mission.
- e) Develop a TDM “toolbox” for new development that explains TDM requirements, and encourages other TDM features such as: showers for bike commuters, bicycle sharing kiosks, and plug-in facilities for electric vehicles.
- f) Encourage all Downtown businesses to reward customers and employees who arrive by transit, by bicycle, or on foot, or who use off-street garages instead of on-street parking, such as with merchant validation programs and other incentives.

**GOAL AC-2: GIVE PEDESTRIANS PRIORITY IN DOWNTOWN, AND MAKE WALKING DOWNTOWN SAFE, ATTRACTIVE, EASY AND CONVENIENT FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES.**

**Policy AC-2.1: Pedestrian Safety and Amenities.** Improve the safety, attractiveness and convenience of pedestrian routes within Downtown – and to and from surrounding areas. Encourage a wide range of pedestrian amenities to meet the needs and interests of those who live and work in and near Downtown (see policies under Goals HD-4 and in the Streets and Open Space chapter).

- a) Adopt a Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan with policies and implementing

actions, including provisions for adequate sidewalk width, shortening pedestrian crossing distances at intersections, and new mid-block pedestrian crosswalks where justified by high volumes of pedestrians and a long distance between intersections.

- b) To reduce pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, minimize driveway curb cuts to the extent feasible, and where they must occur: avoid making driveways too wide or creating uneven surfaces where driveways cross sidewalks.
- c) Maintain sidewalks, crosswalks, plazas, and other pedestrian environments so that they are safe, clean and in good repair.
- d) Regularly evaluate indicators of pedestrian safety, and adjust implementation priorities to improve pedestrian safety.

**Policy AC-2.2: Universal Access.** Provide safe access to all Downtown streets and pathways for people of all abilities.

- a) Use regulation and incentives to require and/or encourage universal accessibility upgrades for private businesses when significant modifications to structures are made.
- b) Consider grants, low-cost loans, technical assistance and/or other incentives for businesses to correct unacceptable conditions, where significant modifications to existing buildings are not expected.

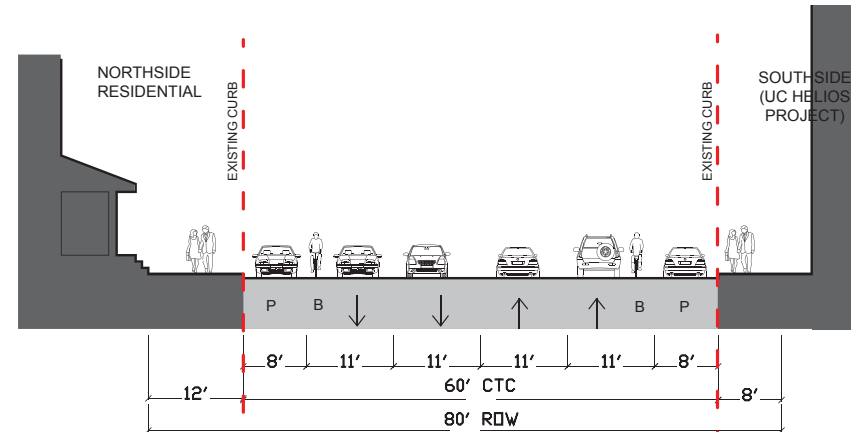
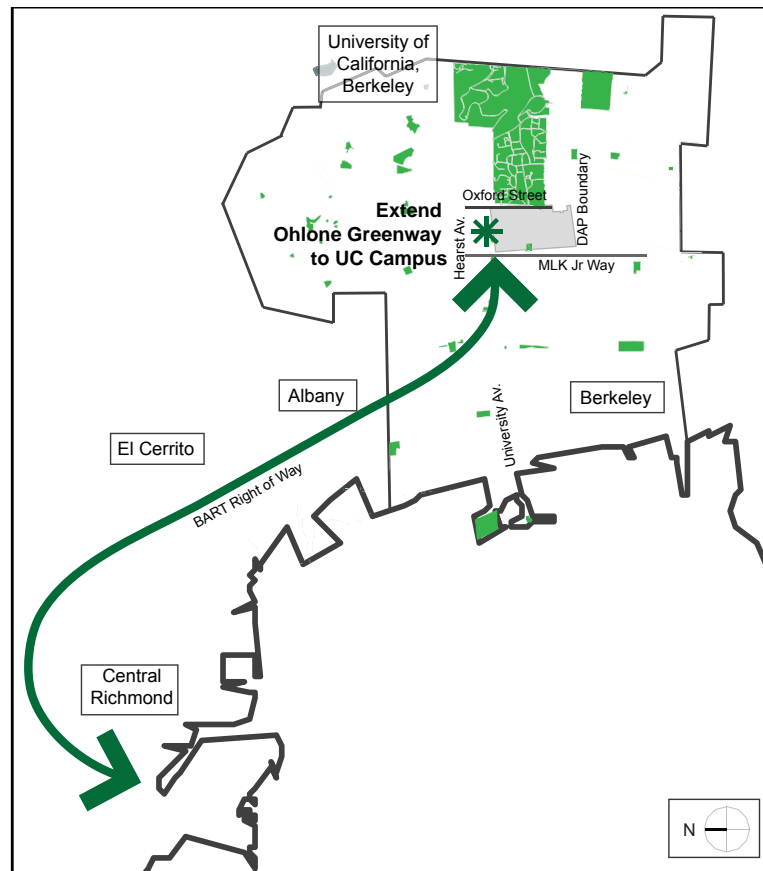
**GOAL AC-3: PROVIDE PARKING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF DOWNTOWN, WHILE DISCOURAGING COMMUTER PARKING AND ENCOURAGING MOTORISTS TO PARK THEIR CARS AND EXPERIENCE DOWNTOWN AS A PEDESTRIAN.**

**Policy AC-3.1: Effective Parking.** Manage parking more effectively to promote Downtown economic vitality while simultaneously discouraging all-day parking. Parking standards should support the continued health of Downtown's retail and cultural uses.

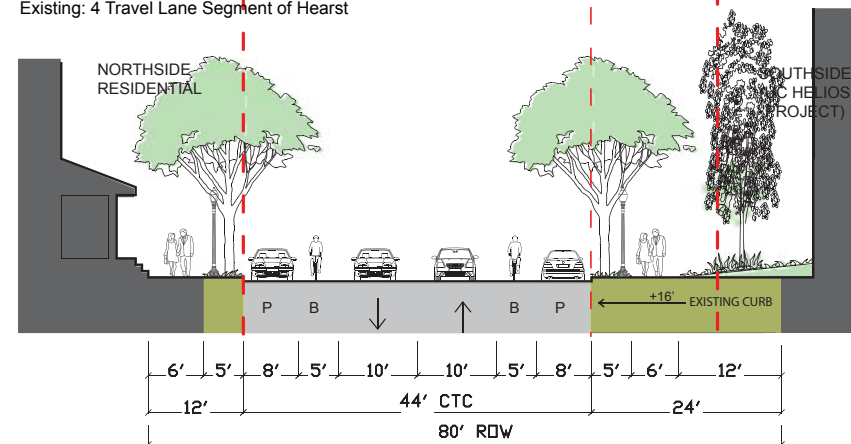
- a) Effective parking management should be encouraged by developing a consolidated Parking/Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) program. Employ pay-and-display meters and/or other technology to increase the City's ability to manage the demand for on-street parking spaces.
- b) Promote efficient use of parking by using technologies that communicate the location of available parking, such as dynamic and static signage that directs motorists to where garage parking is available. Consider technologies that provide real-time information on parking space availability and location.
- c) Use pricing strategies that increase the availability of on-street and short-term parking for retail and cultural uses – while simultaneously discouraging all-day parking by commuters. Increase pricing at on-street meters throughout Downtown until an acceptable vacancy rate is attained (such as a 15% vacancy rate). Authorize the Transportation Division to adjust parking rates whenever necessary to reach and maintain the established vacancy-rate target. Price public garages and encourage private parking vendors to make off-street parking more affordable and convenient relative to on-street parking, and favor short-term (less than 4 hours) over all-day use. Phase out monthly parking permits in City-owned Downtown parking facilities.
- d) Encourage employers who provide free parking as an employee benefit to promote a cash allowance instead. (State law requires

## Ohlone Greenway

The Ohlone Greenway stretches more than three miles from the intersection of Hearst and MLK to central Richmond. The eastern portion of the Greenway runs through land that was acquired for the construction of BART, and then runs along a former rail line right-of-way through Albany, El Cerrito, and Richmond. The path is named for the Ohlone Indians, the pre-European inhabitants of the area.



Existing: 4 Travel Lane Segment of Hearst



Design Concept: Travel Lanes with New Bike Lane + Landscaping

employers who subsidize employee parking to offer a cash allowance to each employee in lieu of an assigned parking space.)

- e) Off-street parking spaces for new housing units shall be leased or sold separately from the residence.
- f) Encourage the City Manager to phase out parking assigned to City staff for their privately-owned vehicles, and to park vehicles needed for City business in locations outside of the Downtown Area or on the upper floors of off-street facilities.
- g) Continue and expand flat prepaid rates (i.e., paid upon entrance) to prevent long queues upon exiting public and private parking garages after evening performances.

**Policy AC-3.2: New Parking.** Provide sufficient parking for expected growth by evaluating future parking needs, funding parking facilities, and promoting alternatives to the car. In addition, replace on-street parking lost to street and other improvements within off-street garages. Consolidate parking in shared facilities to the extent possible.

- a) Parking facilities should be planned as part of a Parking/TDM program to address future parking needs, replace on-street parking lost to improvements, and evaluate locations for potential parking garages, and encourage visitors to park once and experience Downtown on foot and/or via low-cost shuttles/transit (see Policy AC-4.5).
- b) Allow fees to be paid in lieu of on-site parking, and apply revenues toward transit enhancements (see Policy AC-1.3). Encourage developers to pay fees in lieu of on-site parking, especially commercial projects that bring large numbers of new commuters Downtown.

- c) Consider revisions to parking standards and programs to better accomplish policies of the DAP. Analyze such revisions as part of a consolidated Parking/TDM program and as a way to reduce impediments to the preservation and the adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
- d) Prohibit new driveways on Shattuck and University Avenues in Downtown except when it can be demonstrated that no other site-access options exist or where other alternatives would have greater negative impacts.
- e) Monitor the amount of on-site parking that new development includes and, if excessive, develop standards for maximum allowable on-site parking.
- f) Expand electric car and hybrid plug-in location through standards and guidelines, and encourage their connection to local renewable energy sources.
- g) New development should provide effective parking and TDM measures (see Policy LU-2.1 and AC-1.3).

**Policy AC-3.3: Pedestrian Impacts.** Locate and design new parking in ways that minimize negative impacts upon the pedestrian quality of Downtown (see Policy HD-4.1).

- a) With new development, discourage parking on-site to increase space available for street-level retail and activity.
- b) Minimize driveway curb cuts to make Downtown more safe and attractive for pedestrians. Locate, design, and size entrances and exits to parking to minimize impact on the pedestrian realm, such as through traffic management, exit mirrors, and warning lights.



**Figure AC-5: First Curb Cut.** The first curb cut in the United States was pioneered by the disability rights leader Ed Roberts in 1970, and is situated on the street corner adjacent to the Wells Fargo Bank.

Curb cuts allow someone in a wheelchair to move onto or off a sidewalk without difficulty. The Berkeley community continues to play a pivotal role in advocating for universal access by people of all abilities. Staff photo.

- c) Consolidate parking to minimize visual and other negative impacts from parking. Enlarge the capacity of existing parking garages as feasible, through management practices and/or physical improvements.
- d) Discourage use of more than 25% of a building's street-level area for parking. Place parking below grade when feasible. When below-grade parking is deemed infeasible, above-grade parking structures should face streets and public open spaces in ways that support pedestrian safety and activity. Surface parking should be prohibited along streets.

**Policy AC-3.4: University Cooperation.** Encourage the University to review existing parking programs, and work with the University in developing comprehensive parking strategies for: planning parking facilities, managing parking more effectively, and making more UC parking available to the public (see Policies AC-3.1).

- a) Work with the University to coordinate optimum parking rates and locations, and possible development of shared facilities at: the DHS site, the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive site, the Tang site, University property west of University Hall, and the site at the corner of Oxford and University.
- b) Encourage underground parking in all locations considered by UC, to maximize use of above-ground space for other uses.
- c) Encourage the University to locate replacement parking for parking eliminated on campus to a Downtown site where parking can be shared, but not in excess of what is called for under UC Berkeley's Long Range Development Plan.

**Policy AC-3.5: Equitable Access.** Mitigate impacts of transportation measures that make access to Downtown more difficult for low-income Berkeleyans.

- a) Consider provisions for transit passes, bicycles, and subsidized carsharing to low-income residents as an affordable alternative to driving to Downtown.
- b) To accommodate low income Berkeley households and individuals accessing social and health services, consider transit or parking vouchers for off-street public parking facilities.

**Policy AC-3.6: Residential Parking.** In residential neighborhoods near Downtown where parking demand by non-residents is high, maintain an adequate supply of on-street parking for use by residents and reduce impacts of parking by non-residents.

- a) Establish measures for managing parking demand by non-residents more effectively, such as: installation of metered parking, the use of residential parking permits or placing residential permit parking on one side of the street with parking meters on the other side.
- b) See Policy ED-12.1 – Revenues for Downtown, regarding improvements in residential neighborhoods.

**GOAL AC-4: PROMOTE TRANSIT AS AN EFFICIENT AND ATTRACTIVE CHOICE – AND AS A PRIMARY MODE OF MOTOR-VEHICLE TRAVEL.**

**Policy AC-4.1: Transit Priority.** Promote transit as the primary mode for commuting to and from Downtown, and give transit priority over personal vehicles. Encourage use of transit by area businesses, institutions, and residents.



The City strongly supports improved local and regional transit service to and from Downtown.

- a) Require that new development provides bus passes and promotes use of alternative modes (see Policies LU-2.1 and AC-1.3).
- b) Work collaboratively with Downtown employers, institutions, and organizations (including major employers such as the City of Berkeley, UC Berkeley, Berkeley Unified School District, Berkeley City College, Berkeley Unified School District, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and Alta Bates Medical Center) to adopt aggressive TDM programs and facilities that reduce automobile use by staff, faculty and students.
- c) Require that Downtown businesses provide bus passes to employees and pre-tax commute-by-transit vouchers. Work with businesses and institutions to expand guaranteed-ride-home programs for employees who use transit. Encourage Downtown employers to provide other subsidies for bicycling, walking and public transit use. Encourage Berkeley Unified School District and Peralta Community College to participate in such programs or to establish their own programs to reduce automobile use by faculty and staff.
- d) Encourage retail, restaurant, theater, cinema, and cultural uses to promote transit, possibly by providing transit refunds or vouchers. Examine examples of transit validation programs for these uses, and consider implementation of similar programs Downtown. Encourage AC Transit, BART, and other transit providers to increase evening service to Downtown. Work with these providers to improve nighttime conditions near transit stops that affect safety, such as lighting and visual access.

**Policy AC-4.2: Attractive Transit.** Make transit an efficient and attractive choice by improving speed, reliability, pedestrian safety, and comfort. Improve transit options and give transit priority over personal vehicles.

- a) Give consideration to transit-supportive street and facility improvements in the Downtown Area, in collaboration with AC Transit, other transit providers and community stakeholders. Implement “complete streets” concepts that enhance pedestrian and bicycle routes to transit. Other beneficial improvements might include: transit signal priority, queue jump lanes, left turn phasing, improvements to bus shelters, bus curb extensions, bus stop amenities, pre-pay fare vending machines, superior bus stop locations, concrete bus pads, and raised platforms. Address daytime and nighttime conditions that may discourage transit use.
- b) Consult with AC Transit about Downtown circulation proposals that could degrade transit service, so that potential impacts can be evaluated and addressed. Street improvements should be designed to avoid an appreciable decline in bus travel times and reliability.
- c) Work with AC Transit and shuttle providers to identify suitable bus stops and layover locations. Consider the integration of bus facilities within City, University, and/or private projects.
- d) Avoid bus stop and layover locations that interrupt pedestrian movement or block clear views of sidewalks, plazas or storefronts. Give careful consideration to trade-offs between facilitating bus turning movements and other operations versus reductions in on-street parking supply, landscaping, and sidewalks.

- e) Engage community stakeholders, especially those representing Downtown interests.
- f) Work with AC Transit and shuttle providers to maintain safe, attractive and weather-protected bus stops. Encourage frequent maintenance, graffiti abatement, and the elimination of unsafe conditions. Alert responsible agencies when bus stops may be unsafe or are in poor repair.
- g) Support citywide and regional efforts to improve transit service:
  - Encourage AC Transit, BART, and other transit providers to improve transit reliability and shorten travel times and headways (i.e., the wait time for buses and trains).
  - Encourage BART to improve the frequency of weekend service to and from Downtown, and to consider late night service.
  - Encourage AC Transit to implement a pre-pay fare system and other improvements that will shorten boarding times.
  - Consider the possibility of a transit fare-free zone in Downtown or a larger area, potentially funded through a local tax measure.
  - Consider how enhanced bus service might be extended west on University Avenue and/or north on Shattuck Avenue, and avoid improvements that might preclude such options.
  - Work with transit providers to improve access to Downtown from eastern Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, and other locations where large num-

bers of Downtown-bound trips originate. For example, AC Transit might consider park-and-ride facilities in locations that will encourage people who start their trip by car to transfer to transit before reaching Downtown.

- Support AC Transit and BART in their efforts to receive increased federal and state funding.
- Encourage AC Transit and BART to make transit as affordable as possible.

**Policy AC-4.3: Transit Center.** Improve access to BART and enhance the Downtown BART Station as a transportation hub for AC Transit and other transit providers.

- a) Explore alternatives for creating a Downtown Transit Center to link AC Transit to other modes, including shuttles, taxis, bicycles and bike rentals, arrival by car, and walking. Consider how bus turn-around, boarding platforms, and visitor information facilities might be incorporated. The transit center should speed boarding and transfers, but should not be used for bus layovers. Transit center improvements should result in an inviting, pedestrian-friendly place with negative impacts from buses mitigated to the extent possible.
- b) Enhance access to BART on foot and by bike (see Policy AC-4.2). Improve the BART Plaza's function as a transit hub by implementing improvements that make it more pedestrian-friendly (see Policy OS-1.1).

**Policy AC-4.4: Transit and Bikes.** Encourage bicycle access to Downtown for local and regional transit trips.

- a) Increase high-capacity bicycle parking near BART and other major transit stops.
- b) Support the expansion of the Downtown Berkeley bicycle station and high-quality bicycle storage facilities in other transit-accessible locations.
- c) Encourage transit providers to expand bicycle access on transit vehicles, including increased storage on trains and buses.

**Policy AC-4.5: Local Transit & Shuttle Connections.** Improve transit and shuttle connections between Downtown, University destinations, and Berkeley neighborhoods, especially connections to: neighborhood commercial areas, facilities for transit-dependent residents, concentrations of potential but poorly-served riders, and areas with concentrations of single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips.

- a) Work with AC Transit, UC Berkeley, LBNL, Alta Bates, and lifeline service to improve shuttle service and consider ways that they can:
  - attract users now driving regularly to the UC campus and/or Downtown thereby reducing parking demand;
  - connect multiple points Downtown with each other and with other local destinations, including Telegraph retail, north Shattuck retail, and University destinations;
  - build upon existing shuttle systems to expand shuttle service sooner;
  - undertake an effective public information campaign to advertise new service as it is made available; and

- schedule shuttles on regular routes and/or make them demand-responsive, depending on the needs of users.
- b) Consider how Rapid Bus and other service enhancements can be extended west on University Avenue and/or north on Shattuck Avenue.
- c) Consider the possibility of a transit fare-free zone in Downtown or a larger area (such as Telegraph Avenue), potentially funded through a local tax measure.
- d) Collaborate with AC Transit and shuttle providers to identify and obtain funds to improve service to areas with high-concentrations of transit-dependent residents, as well as underserved areas where large numbers of commuters drive regularly to the UC campus and/or Downtown.
- e) Develop a shuttle funding and operations strategy with the University. Funding sources might include:
  - replacement or reassignment of some existing services;
  - mitigation funds from new development;
  - assessments in lieu of new parking;
  - a surcharge on fees for off-street parking; a charge for multiple car ownership;
  - capital grants for carbon neutral vehicles;
  - jobs or work/study program funding for drivers' salaries;

- fares prepaid by institutions/employers; and/or
  - a parking benefits district.
- f) To the extent feasible, use low-carbon fuels and promote shuttles as a way for people to reduce their carbon footprint and meet Climate Action Plan goals.

**Policy AC-4.6: Paratransit.** Accommodate taxi service and on-demand transport service providers.

- a) Incorporate a location for taxis when making improvements near BART.
- b) Consult with on-demand transport service providers- such as public transit agencies, community groups, hospitals, and businesses, especially those serving Berkeley's disabled community- to see how their needs can be better met.

**Policy AC-4.7: Events.** Give priority to transit during major events so as to reduce traffic congestion, such as during Cal football games, Berkeley High School morning drop-off, cultural events, etc.

- a) Work with AC Transit and other transit operators to consider how transit operations, measures, and programs might be refined to reduce acute short-term traffic congestion.
- b) Pursue joint marketing campaigns with transit agencies and event sponsors promoting alternative ways to get to city events in Downtown.

**Policy AC-4.8: Transit-Supportive Uses.** Concentrate housing, jobs, and cultural destinations within Downtown, to be near transit, shops and amenities, while simultaneously enhancing

Downtown's character and livability (see policies under Goals LU-1 and ED-1).

**GOAL AC-5: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE SAFE, ATTRACTIVE AND CONVENIENT BICYCLE CIRCULATION WITHIN DOWNTOWN, AND TO AND FROM SURROUNDING AREAS, FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES. PROMOTE BICYCLING DOWNTOWN.**

**Policy AC-5.1: Bike Network Improvements.** Give bicycles priority over personal vehicles on many streets Downtown. Make bicycling safer and more convenient in and through Downtown by making improvements to Berkeley's and Downtown's bicycle network. Provide bikeways on low-speed low-traffic streets and bike lanes where appropriate. Address the needs of bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

- a) Adopt a Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan with specific policies and actions relating to bike network improvements.
- b) Consider locations in Downtown where bike-activated traffic lights would improve safety and convenience along streets with higher levels of bicycle use.

**Policy AC-5.2: Bicycle Parking.** Increase the availability of convenient, secure and attractive short- and long-term bicycle parking throughout Downtown.

- a) Increase the availability of secured bicycle parking throughout Downtown, particularly in areas of high use, including bicycle parking options that are sheltered and/or attended.
- b) Increase availability of bicycle racks throughout Downtown, especially where parking meter poles are removed.

- c) Provide sufficient bicycle parking near transit centers and major destinations (see Policy AC-4.4).
- d) Promote the creation of an at-grade attended or automated bicycle-parking service. Work with BART to consider replacing the existing bicycle station with a joint City/BART aboveground facility, perhaps in a storefront on Shattuck Avenue.
- e) Require the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities by new development projects (and major renovations), both public and private.

**Policy AC-5.3: Bike Sharing.** Promote convenient “bike sharing” options (i.e., short-term bike rentals) and their use by employees, residents, and visitors – especially near BART.

- a) Publicize available bike rentals in Downtown, such as at the Berkeley Bike Station.
- b) Identify criteria for the design, program and location of new bike sharing facilities. Solicit proposals from bike share providers for facilities consistent with these criteria. Give special consideration to locations near BART.

**Policy AC-5.4: Business & Institutional Support.** Make it easier for Downtown employees to commute by bike, especially employees of the City, University, and BUSD.

- a) Require new office and retail construction and substantial renovations to provide showers and lockers for employees, so that bicyclists can change into work clothes at their destinations.
- b) Study the feasibility of subsidizing the cost of bicycles for Downtown employees. Work with Downtown employers and bicycle mer-

chants to explore the potential for discounts for the purchase of bicycles.

- c) If bike sharing is established, consider reducing the cost of bike sharing for Downtown employees and others.
- d) Enhance the City’s own bicycle program for City employees.



# 5 - HISTORIC PRESERVATION & URBAN DESIGN

# 5. HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND URBAN DESIGN

## STRATEGIC STATEMENT

Berkeley has one of the few examples in California of a substantially intact pre-World War II downtown of its size. Sections of Downtown remain much as they were in the 1920s and 1930s. Our Downtown has an exemplary and vital heritage of historic buildings in a wide variety of architectural styles and scales. The scale, massing, and visual character of many historic buildings remain. Downtown buildings also relate to streets in traditional ways, with commercial ground floors fronting directly onto the public sidewalk and thereby maintaining continuous intimate pedestrian scale, in contrast to deep setbacks found in suburban settings.

While Downtown's historic assets are significant, Downtown is an incomplete and unfinished cityscape. It has many underused and non-descript properties, and it needs many public improvements. New development can bring many benefits, including new residents, affordable housing, environmental sustainability, and a renewed sense of vitality.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND NEW DEVELOPMENT

Policies of the Downtown Area Plan seek to harmonize and balance the twin goals of preserving

and enhancing historic resources, and encouraging new and complementary development. It is fundamental to this Plan that, with appropriate design guidelines and regulations, both goals can be achieved and complement each other. The character of new development must be considered through the lens of good urban design and consideration for Downtown's historic settings. Context – geographic and cultural – presents critical design considerations that help lead to projects that fit the place. In addition, through continued care and investment, historic buildings and good urban design will continue to contribute continuity and character to Downtown's changing yet principled cityscape.

Preservation planning and the continued utilization of historic resources are critical in the following ways:

- Preservation helps retain a community's distinct character and sense of place, and creates a tie with the past that establishes community and builds roots. The tangible presence of historic buildings and places speaks of other times and people and enables us to chart paths to the present and future.
- Berkeley can capitalize on Downtown's potential for cultural tourism by celebrating its historic character through civic improvements and ongoing programs and activities.
- Conserving existing buildings can be part of a "green" strategy, as preservation and rehabilitation use fewer natural resources and less "embodied" energy than new construction, and keep demolition waste out of landfills.

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**Facing Page:** *Downtown features taller buildings, including the Wells Fargo Building built in 1925 (at left), and may include new buildings of similar height or somewhat greater height in the case of hotels (at right). Images courtesy BAHA (left) and Cambridge Seven Associates (right).*



**Figure HD-1: Berkeley Station Looking Southwest in 1910.** Image courtesy of BAHA.

- Studies show that historic preservation is good for the economy and for property values.
- Older buildings tend to offer distinctive retail spaces with special facade character, taller ceiling heights, and deeper retail space.
- Older buildings provide much of Berkeley's most affordable and most family-friendly housing.

Appropriate new development and urban design policies also offer critical benefits:

- New construction can fill the gaps within our historic Downtown, heal the scars posed by unsightly properties, and strengthen and help energize the cityscape.
- New construction, and the renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, can provide needed new housing.





*Figure HD-2: Shattuck Avenue Looking North circa 1940. Image courtesy of BAHA.*

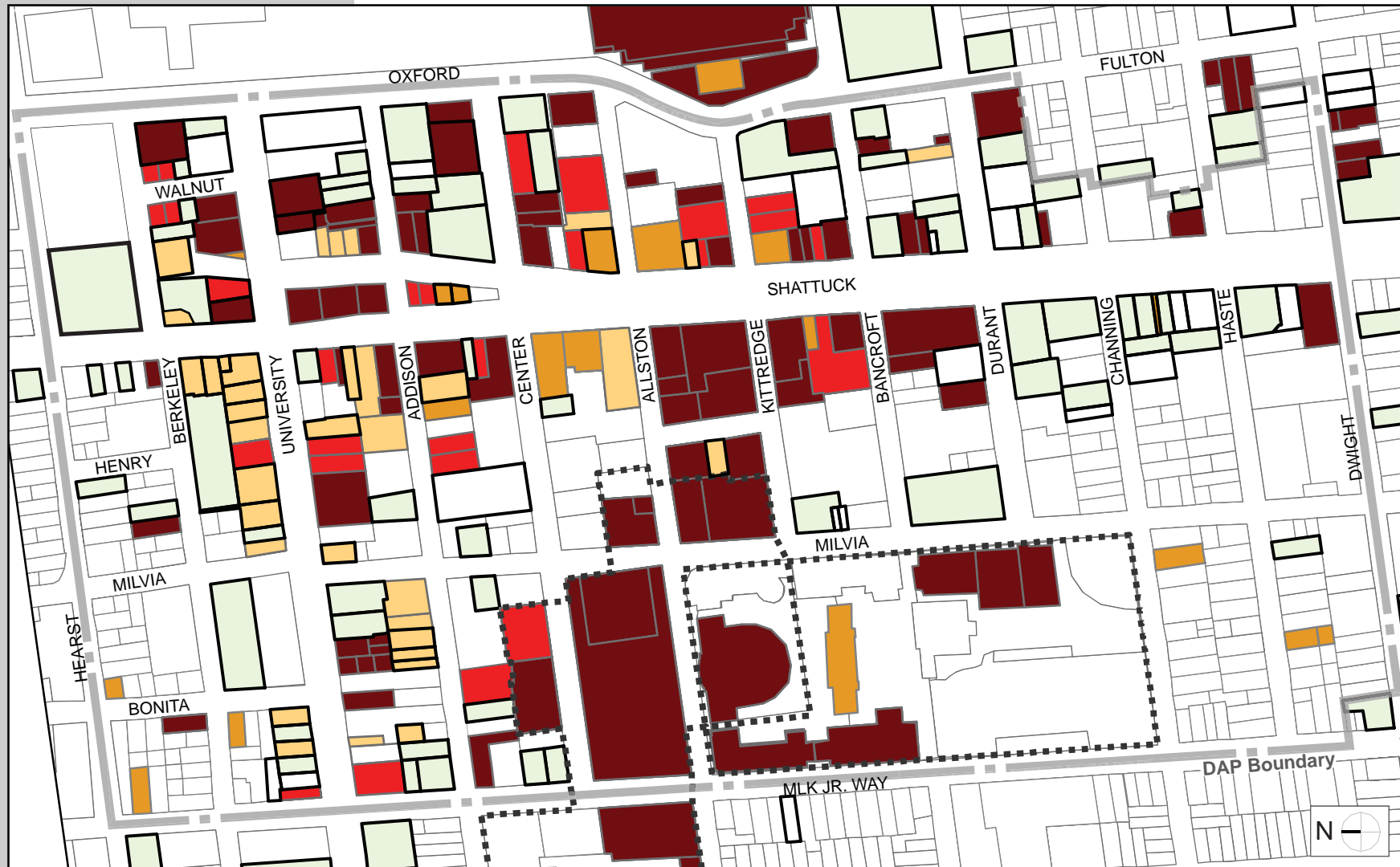
- New construction, renovation, and adaptive reuse can embody and exemplify new ideas such as energy-saving designs or innovative construction techniques.
- New construction, renovation, and adaptive reuse give needed scope for the exercise of design talents and creativity.
- New construction, renovation, and reuse can help revitalize Downtown's economy by bringing people who will support local shops and cultural uses.
- Street and open space improvements can enhance Downtown, by complementing the best aspects of its present character and by offering public places for our enjoyment.
- Through fees and taxes that it generates, new development can support public street and open space improvements and help to finance affordable housing.

**FIGURE HD-3:  
Historic Resources,  
Noteworthy  
Buildings and  
Potential  
Development  
Opportunity Sites**

- Designated Landmark or Structure of Merit
- Significant per both 1993 LPC List and 1994 Design Guidelines
- Building on SHRI
- Other Building called Contributing or Significant by BAHA Report, 1990 Downtown Plan, LPC List, or Design Guidelines

- Development Opportunity Site (indicated by heavy outline around site)
- Development Opportunity Site apparently containing no Historic Resource
- Civic Center Historic District and Berkeley High School Campus

As of March 25, 2009. While the map is generally accurate the status of any individual parcel should be verified. (For site-specific information see the DAP Reconnaissance Survey Matrix.)



## **DOWNTOWN'S HISTORICAL EVOLUTION**

In the mid-19th century Francis Kittredge Shattuck and George Blake acquired large landholdings, flanking today's Shattuck Avenue, that would include most of the 2011 Downtown Plan area. Downtown's early development was stimulated especially by the opening of a railroad branch line in 1876 to stations that were located at Dwight Way and at what is now known as Berkeley Square. Shattuck Avenue's unusual width accommodated the train tracks in addition to horses, carriages, and pedestrians. The City of Berkeley was incorporated in 1878, by which time most of Downtown's street pattern had been established.

In the 20th century's first three decades, dramatic growth and rebuilding were stimulated by electric rail service, which linked Berkeley to Oakland and (by ferryboats) San Francisco; by resettlement of San Franciscans to the East Bay after the 1906 earthquake and fire; and by growth of the University. There was much less development during the Great Depression, although some of Downtown's finest historic buildings such as the Public Library and the Kress building date from the 1930s.

Downtown Berkeley escaped the wholesale redevelopment that scarred many California cities during the 1960s and 1970s. Some demolition and new construction did occur along Shattuck during the BART construction era, from about 1966 to 1973, when two early-1900s large structures at Shattuck and Center were torn down and replaced by the present high-rise Great Western building and suburban-style Bank of America building. But recent development has occurred mainly on side streets east and west of Shattuck, or on Shattuck's lower portion south of Durant. The scale, massing, and visual character of most of Shattuck's own frontages – and many other parts of the plan area – remain much

as they were in the 1920s or 1930s. Downtown's character is largely due to the fact that so many of its buildings were constructed between 1900 and 1941 and so many of them have basically retained their historic appearance. They also relate to the street in traditional urban ways in keeping with the character of their time.

## **PRESERVATION CONTROLS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Partially in response to the demolition of some important historic buildings in Downtown, the City adopted the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO) in 1974. This ordinance authorizes the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to designate properties as Landmarks, Structures of Merit, or Historic Districts and gives it regulatory power over the properties it designates. Many properties within the expanded Downtown Plan area have been designated as Landmarks or Structures of Merit.

Nine properties (all of them also City-designated Landmarks) have gone through the separate process to be individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The City has under the LPO designated the Civic Center Historic District, which is also listed on the National Register. The high school's campus constitutes the Berkeley High School Historic District, which is on the National Register but has not been designated as a district under the LPO.

In 1994 the Planning Commission adopted "Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines". This document has continued to provide valuable guidance on diverse aspects of both alterations and new construction.

## SURVEYS AND LISTS

Several surveys of historic resources have been conducted for Downtown.

In 1977-1979 the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) in conjunction with the City, with grants from the State Office of Historic Preservation and the San Francisco Foundation, did a well-regarded, representative but not exhaustive survey and documentation of historic resources in Berkeley. It gathered significant information on many Downtown buildings.

In 1987 BAHA assembled available information on Downtown historic resources into a report entitled "Historic Survey of Downtown". The report included maps, one of which showed properties it classified as:

- "City Landmarks" (and in some cases also "National Register"),
- "Included on State Inventory [but not landmarked]," or
- "Contributing."

"Contributing" properties were defined in BAHA's 1987 report as "Properties [that] could be considered contributing to the existing fabric of downtown by virtue of age, scale, height, massing, materials."

The 1990 Downtown Plan referenced BAHA's "Historic Survey of Downtown" report, and included a map with three resource categories:

- "Landmark Building – City and/or National Register,"
- "Significant Structure (BAHA)," or

- "Contributing Structure (BAHA)."

In 1993 the Landmarks Preservation Commission adopted a list entitled "Historically Significant Buildings in the Downtown" that "have been either officially designated City of Berkeley Landmarks or appear to be eligible for designation, based on preliminary research...because of their cultural, architectural or historic contribution to the city, state or nation".

The 1994 Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines contains lists of "Landmark Buildings" and "Significant Buildings," and a map depicting these.

In 2006, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) was selected by the City to evaluate and advise regarding historic resources in the expanded Downtown Area. ARG produced a set of "Context Statements," organized by historic themes such as "Transportation," "Commercial Architecture," "Residential Development," and "Health and Medicine." ARG also conducted a "Reconnaissance Survey" involving roughly 500 structures within the Downtown Area, as well as about 100 located just outside its boundaries. ARG provided a preliminary evaluation of the integrity of potential historic resources.

## SUMMARY MAP

Figure HD-3, Historic Resources, Noteworthy Buildings and Potential Development Opportunity Sites, provides a partial summary of the overall situation as of March 2009. It indicates the following classes of individual properties:

- "Designated Landmark or Structure of Merit." This includes the properties so designated by March 2009.
- "Significant per BOTH 1993 LPC List and 1994 Design Guidelines." These

are properties (other than those that have been designated as Landmarks or Structures of Merit) that were included in the 1993 LPC list of significant buildings as well as in the 1994 Design Guidelines' list of significant buildings.

- "Building on the SHRI." This consists of buildings (other than those in the map's above two categories) that were recorded by the State Historic Resources Inventory of 1977-1979.
- "Other Building Called Contributing or Significant by BAHA Report, 1990 Downtown Plan, LPC List, and/or Design Guidelines." Many of these are buildings were identified as "contributing" by the 1990 Downtown Plan.
- "Development Opportunity Site Apparently Containing No Historic Resource." The mapping of these sites is tentative and illustrative. Nearly all of them involve one-story buildings, parking lots or other open uses, or vacant land. A few properties with two-or-more-story buildings are shown in special cases, including some buildings that are very near the BART station or that have serious seismic problems.

Figure HD-3 also depicts the boundaries of the Civic Center Historic District and the Berkeley High School Historic District.

In the future, additional properties will be designated or documented as historic. On the other hand, some of the properties that were noted as "contributing" or "significant" only by the 1987 BAHA report and/or 1990 Downtown Plan may – upon further analysis – be deemed to be not historic.

## SUBAREAS AND CONTEXTUAL DESIGN

The cityscape of Downtown contains numerous and diverse subareas. Some of them have a strong visual identity, and these involve noticeable concentrations of historic buildings. Downtown's most important historic subarea generally includes the buildings along Shattuck Avenue from about University to Durant, as well as some buildings on side streets. Despite some unfortunate remodelings, this "main street" has retained its basic visual character. Another particularly important historic subarea is the Civic Center.

Some other parts of Downtown contain fewer historic buildings and lack a strong visual identity. Substantial demolition and rebuilding has occurred since 1950 along many side streets, where parking lots and other underutilized sites interrupt the urban fabric.

A balanced urban design strategy should include both preservation and infill, and should:

- conserve the character of subareas that have a strong historic identity, while recognizing that sensitive infill development and, in appropriate cases, additions to designated Landmarks can occur; and
- channel much of Downtown's new development into sections now lacking a strong visual identity.

The answer to "What should a new building look like?" will vary from place to place.

Two different urban design approaches are needed: one for subareas that have a strong historic character, and one for Downtown development outside those subareas.

In subareas where historic resources are concentrated, designers should pay special attention to a project's context, including the character of adjacent properties and the subarea as a whole. The Downtown Design Guidelines should be strengthened to better protect and reinforce the overall character of these subareas. In addition, the Landmarks Preservation Commission should evaluate subareas, including residential ones, to determine whether any additional subareas should be designated as Historic Districts. Recent years' additions to the Berkeley Main Library and the Francis K. Shattuck Building (at 2100 Shattuck) illustrate how sensitive design and development can both respect and enhance a historic subarea.

For subareas without historic character, historic evaluations, design review, and landmarking should be used to protect individual historic buildings and the general Downtown cityscape, while allowing for a lively variety of good architecture.

In all commercial and mixed-use subareas, the Downtown Design Guidelines should be amended and applied to attract demographic diversity, encourage economically viable retail space, provide on-site open space, mitigate impacts from parking garages, promote public safety, and promote resource-efficiency and sustainable practices (see Goal HD-4). Development should reinforce the character of Downtown's commercial and mixed-use streets by bringing buildings up to the sidewalk, maintaining continuous storefronts, continuing dominant rhythms for structural bays or bay windows, and continuing dominant cornice lines. While contextual design can be perceived as limiting, solutions can be highly creative.

#### **URBAN DESIGN THROUGH BUILDING STANDARDS AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

DAP urban design objectives should inform zoning regulations, not the least of which ad-

dress building heights, setbacks, and street-level uses. New "character-based" provisions should spell out desirable and measurable urban relationships, such as the ways that buildings should face streets and make them more active, safe, and attractive.

Improvements to Downtown's public realm of streets and open spaces are also vital. Public improvements should be appropriate to Downtown's historic settings and enhance Downtown as a place to live, work, shop, learn, or play (see Streets and Open Space chapter).

#### **THE UNIVERSITY'S ROLE**

The University, as with any developer within Downtown, should support urban design objectives through its development, to the joint benefit of town and gown. UC development should be integrated closely and sensitively into the traditional urban fabric of Downtown.

Where it owns historic buildings, the University should maintain the significant parts of these buildings' character and integrate any remodeling and/or additions following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Where it plans for new buildings, the University should itself include suitable landscape features that relate Downtown to the main campus's green features.

Furthermore, significant open space and streetscape opportunities exist for coordinating City actions and University actions. One such opportunity is to reduce the number of auto lanes on the east-of-Shattuck segment of Hearst Avenue, create bicycle lanes there, and provide truly substantial adjacent landscaping (see what the Streets and Open Space chapter says about extending the Ohlone Greenway).

## GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

### GOAL HD-1: CONSERVE DOWNTOWN'S HISTORIC RESOURCES AND UNIQUE CHARACTER AND SENSE OF PLACE.

#### Policy HD-1.1: Historic Buildings & Sites.

Preserve historic buildings and sites of Downtown, and provide where appropriate for their adaptive reuse and/or intensification.<sup>2</sup>

- a) Retain Landmarks and Structures of Merit in Downtown. Designate, where appropriate, additional properties as Landmarks or Structures of Merit.
- b) When evaluating potential modifications, adaptive reuse or intensification of designated or sufficiently documented historic resources, in addition to applying the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance, the proposed work must also be evaluated for conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. Where applicable, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the

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<sup>2</sup> Additional analysis will be needed to determine with certainty the merit of resources that were noted as "Contributing" (and in some cases noted as "Significant") in the 1990 Plan but that have not been designated as Landmarks or Structures of Merit, or documented as historic resources. Ongoing efforts and analysis may elevate some of these to be designated Landmarks or Structures of Merit. Other undesignated properties that were noted as "Contributing" or "Significant" in the 1990 Plan may be deemed to be not historic after evaluation required under CEQA and vetting through local procedures.

Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, must also be applied. At a minimum, historic facades should be maintained and/or rehabilitated and the scale and character of additions must be compatible with the historic building.

- c) For the most common practices and alterations, compile reference materials that describe appropriate maintenance and façade improvements document, and where additional information can be obtained. Develop materials using community participation. Make these materials available to property owners, contractors, and architects.



**Figure HD-4: Adaptive Reuse & Intensification.** The bottom three stories of the Francis K. Shattuck Building were built in 1901 and were renovated in 2000 at the same time as when a new fourth story was added. Staff photo



**Figure HD-5: Historic Context & Green Features.** *The Fine Arts Building furthers a tradition of Art Deco buildings Downtown, and incorporates in a sympathetic way green features for energy efficiency, such as light shelves that bounce daylight deeply into interior spaces. Staff photos*

- d) Allow flexibility in parking and other standards, such as exemption from on-site open space requirements, when such buildings are substantially and appropriately preserved or restored as part of a development project. Review and, if necessary, revise standards that may discourage historic rehabilitation and adaptive reuse. Identify potential sources of financing, tax relief (such as through the Mills Act), grants, and a full range of other incentives and resources for historic preservation, such as those relating to accessibility and seismic upgrading. Provide this information to owners of historic resources (see Policies ES-4.1, LU-2.1 and LU-4.3).

**Policy HD-1.2: Evaluation of Potential Resources.** Encourage historic resource surveys evaluating properties that may qualify as a Landmark or Structure of Merit – especially on underutilized parcels that are potential sites for future development.

- a) Complete a historic resources survey for Downtown with information on significant building and site attributes, such as: building age, dates of alterations and/or additions, architect and/or builder, architectural integrity, building height. Also cite historic registrations and/or designations, and classifications from prior surveys and previously adopted plans. Update this survey as construction or demolition occurs. Use the historic resources survey as an additional tool for evaluating resources that may qualify as a Landmark or Structure of Merit, especially those called out as historic or potentially historic in previous plans and surveys. Update this survey as construction or demolition occurs.

**Policy HD-1.3: Repairs & Alterations.** When substantial repairs or alterations are proposed for buildings over 40 years old, the City will encourage the restoration and repair of any lost or damaged historic features when feasible and appropriate.

- a) Allow flexibility in parking, open space, and other standards (see Policies ES-4.1, LU-2.1 and LU-4.3).
- b) Evaluate and, if needed, strengthen recommendations relating to substantial alterations contained within the Downtown Design Guidelines.
- c) Encourage property owners, developers, and other stakeholders to use archives and other resources to guide the design of appropriate restorations and repairs. Support the maintenance of and encourage public access to archives with information on older Downtown buildings.

**Policy HD-1.4: Public Awareness.** Enhance community awareness of Downtown's unique history and architectural heritage.



- a) Use public communications to promote Downtown’s history and architectural heritage. Refer users of the City’s web pages to materials of interest at the City’s libraries.
- b) Refine Downtown’s “Historic Context Statements” (prepared in 2007) for the use and enjoyment of a general audience. Make it available at a nominal price. In this publication, use the historic resources database and add maps to describe Downtown’s historic contexts.
- c) Work with the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) to update and expand its “Downtown Walking Tour” brochure. Encourage distribution of this brochure by the Downtown Berkeley Association, the Berkeley Convention and Visitors Bureau, UC Berkeley, and other organizations.
- d) Promote the use of plaques, signage, murals, and other ways to increase citizen awareness of Downtown’s history.
- e) Encourage invited artists to install art in Downtown to refer to Downtown’s historic features and events.

**Policy HD-1.5: Residential Character.** Conserve the scale of residential-only neighborhoods within the Downtown Area, and reduce development pressures that lead to the loss of older buildings that contribute to the overall character of these neighborhoods (see policies under Goal LU-4).

**GOAL HD-2: ENHANCE AREAS OF SPECIAL CHARACTER IN DOWNTOWN, SUCH AS CLUSTERS OF HISTORIC RESOURCES.**

**Policy HD-2.1: Special Subareas.** Identify areas with special character that might be high-

lighted with streetscape improvements and other public and private design features.

- a) Recognize subareas having a unique and/or historic character by making street and open space improvements that reinforce the character of these subareas – while also encouraging overall design continuity for some features throughout Downtown.

**Policy HD-2.2: Historic Subareas.** Protect and reinforce the character of discrete subareas where historic resources are concentrated, while also recognizing that sensitive change may occur within such subareas. Make sure that within subareas where historic resources are concentrated, building alterations, new construction and public improvements are designed with particular concern for compatibility with their surroundings.

- a) The Landmarks Preservation Commission may designate one or more historic subareas as Historic Districts to protect historic resources and promote compatible new development – while acknowledging the importance of creativity, and continued growth and increased building densities in Downtown’s mixed-use areas.

- Newly designated Historic District should be accompanied by development design guidelines to describe how new development can complement the District’s historic character.

- Encourage the analysis of known and potential historic resources as a part of considering Historic District designation(s) by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

- Consider creating a “Shattuck Avenue Historic District” that would generally

include buildings along Shattuck Avenue, between University Avenue and Durant Avenue.

- Use criteria pertaining to historic district designations in Berkeley's Landmark Preservation Ordinance (LPO) and applicable guidelines in the National Register Bulletin "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation".

- b) Evaluate and, if needed, strengthen the existing Downtown Design Guidelines to encourage designs that are contextual to subareas where historic resources are concentrated (see Figure HD-3, Historic Resources, Noteworthy Buildings and Potential Development Opportunity Sites). Use available survey findings to inform this process.

**GOAL HD-3: PROVIDE CONTINUITY AND HARMONY BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT.**

**Policy HD-3.1: Contextual Design.** To promote continuity between old and new, new construction and building alterations should meet streets and public spaces in contextual ways that line streets with building streetwalls and support a pedestrian-oriented public realm.

- a) Review and, if needed, strengthen the Downtown Design Guidelines to further encourage continuity and harmony between old and new construction. Promote ways to complement Downtown's historic context through: materials, cadence/modulation, color, fenestration & entry patterns, cornice lines, massing, roof form, building "build-to lines," and other appropriate architectural devices.
- b) Consider new and/or revised Zoning standards and Design Guidelines that will help

support and maintain Downtown's traditional main-street character. Specifically, modify the Zoning provisions and Design Guidelines to better address continuity and relationships between buildings (see Policy HD-4,1).

- c) Amend the Downtown Design Guidelines to address how taller buildings can be made compatible with Downtown's context and historic resources (see policies under Goal LU-4).

**Policy HD-3.2: Continued Variety.** Recognizing building height, massing and scale, allow for continued variety that respects Downtown's context.

- a) The review of development proposals, and resulting refinements, should consider Downtown's traditional context and respect Downtown's historic resources while also considering DAP policies relating to building height and envelope (see Land Use chapter).

**GOAL HD-4: IMPROVE THE VISUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE ACTIVE, SAFE AND VISUALLY ENGAGING. ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE NEW DEVELOPMENT DOWNTOWN.**

**Policy HD-4.1: Pedestrian-Oriented Design.** Improve the pedestrian experience and the aesthetic quality of Downtown's environments through appropriate design. New construction and building alterations should promote pleasing public open spaces and streets with frequent street-level entrances and beautiful facades. In commercial areas, buildings should encourage activity along the street and generally maintain the urban tradition of no street-level setbacks.

- a) Continue to apply the Downtown Design Guidelines to new development and building alterations, and strengthen them to:

- include contextual provisions specific to where historic resources are concentrated;
  - help attract a variety of people to live Downtown through the design of appropriate multi-family housing;
  - encourage economically viable and physically adequate retail spaces (see Policies ED-1.3 and ED-1.6);
  - better guide the design of on-site open space, including publicly accessible courtyards, plazas, and midblock walkways, and the inclusion of ecological site features (see Policy OS-3.1);
  - address the design and adequacy of open space for residents;
  - mitigate potential impacts of parking garages on streets and publicly accessible open spaces;
  - provide adequate lighting and safety features in garages, in bus shelters and at bicycle parking;
  - promote resource-efficient design and emerging sustainability practices (see Environmental Sustainability chapter); and
  - encourage on-site greenery and ecologically beneficial features (see policies under Goals ES-5 and OS-2).
- b) Consider new and/or revised development standards that will help promote active, interesting and pleasing pedestrian environments. Specifically, modify the zoning code to better address issues of continuity, compatibility, sustainability, and the special

existing qualities of Downtown, such as: frequent building entrances, street-level transparency/windows, on-site open space, etc. Emphasize measurable standards that are easy to understand and apply. Zoning provisions should be developed with extensive input from the public.

- c) Evaluate and improve public signage to reduce visual clutter and help visitors navigate Downtown (see Policy ED-1.12).
- d) Encourage outdoor dining, street fairs, and other beneficial yet limited use of public space by private concerns (see policies under Goal ED-1)
- e) Establish new and enhance existing convenience facilities including publicly accessible restrooms and drinking fountains (see Policy OS-4.3).

**Policy HD-4.2: Solar, Visual & Wind Impacts.**

Design and position new buildings to avoid significant adverse solar-, visual- or wind-related impacts on important public open spaces. Also provide for adequate natural light in residential units through appropriate building form (see Policies ES-3.3 and LU-4.2, and Table LU-1).

- a) Strengthen standards and guidelines to better address potential solar access and wind impacts.
- b) For buildings exceeding 85 feet, use solar, visual and wind simulations to evaluate and refine design alternatives.

**Policy HD-4.3: Urban Open Spaces.** Create, enhance and maintain streets, plazas, midblock open spaces, and other urban open spaces to enhance the pedestrian environment and in-

crease the number of people who will use Downtown. The design of streets and open spaces should complement the character of Downtown as a whole and the character of nearby architecture – especially in subareas where historic resources are concentrated (see Policy OS-1.1).

**Policy HD-4.4: Design Creativity & Excellence.** Continue Berkeley’s tradition of architectural excellence. Support design creativity during the development approval process and in the resulting construction. All new construction and building alterations should be of the highest quality and promote sustainability (see policies under Goal ES-4).

- a) Strengthen the existing Downtown Design Guidelines to:
  - further promote excellence in design;
  - encourage visually interesting buildings;
  - promote appropriate methods for intensification and adaptive reuse (see Policy HD-1.1);
  - encourage architectural and site features that use durable materials and are detailed to be long-lasting promote excellence in design;
- b) Promote and, where appropriate, require buildings that have resource-efficient design and emerging sustainable design practices (see Policies ES-4.1 and ES-4.4).

**GOAL HD-5: ENHANCE AND IMPROVE THE PHYSICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN DOWNTOWN AND THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.**

**Policy HD-5.1: Appropriate Buildings.** Encourage the University to use the Downtown Design Guidelines and Downtown Area Plan to guide the character and scale of its future development. Strongly encourage the University to design buildings that are appropriate to Downtown and make streets that about University property pedestrian-friendly, in a manner required of any Downtown developer. Along street frontages of University buildings Downtown, the ground floor should be pedestrian-friendly and have windows and entrances, and avoid blank walls. Encourage active street-level uses. Provide retail or other active public-serving uses along Shattuck Avenue and University Avenue (see policies under Goal LU-6).

- a) Encourage the University to use the Downtown Design Guidelines and Downtown Area Plan to guide the character and scale of its future development.
- b) Encourage the University to make development at the east end of University Avenue (between Walnut and Oxford) a priority to bring more retail and pedestrian activity, and for the creation of an important “Gateway” for persons arriving to the Campus or Downtown.
- c) Active pedestrian-friendly ground floor uses should be maintained on all three sides of the proposed new Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA). The proposed primary entry of the museum should be located on Center Street, with a secondary entry provided from Oxford or the corner of Oxford and Addison. Consider modulated edges and pockets of open space. Loading docks should be carefully designed to contribute positively to the pedestrian environment.

**Policy HD-5.2: Public Improvements.** Encourage the University to enhance streets and public open spaces in Downtown (see Streets and Open Space chapter). Urge the University to make substantial and fair contributions for street improvements adjacent to their properties, and engage the University on how to fund other Downtown improvements.

- a) Urge the University to make substantial and fair contributions for street improvements adjacent to their properties.
- b) Work in partnership with the University to implement the Streets & Open Space Improvements Plan (see Policy OS-1.1), especially in locations of mutual interest. Engage the University on how to fund improvements benefiting all of Downtown.
- c) Encourage University efforts to enhance open spaces along the Oxford-Fulton edge of the main campus, including “the Crescent” and the new open space referred to as “Kittredge Glade” in UC Berkeley’s 2020 Long Range Development Plan.
- d) Celebrate the seam between the park-like campus and the urban Downtown. Partner with the University on the design and implementation of Oxford-Fulton as a green boulevard, through both street improvements and active building fronts.
- e) Encourage the University to help extend the Ohlone Greenway along its Hearst Avenue frontage.
- f) Maintain public access along the Walnut Street passage between Hearst and Berkeley Way.

- g) Encourage midblock pedestrian connections between University Avenue and Center Street, as part of UC development.

**Policy HD-5.3: Historic Buildings.** Encourage the University to respect historically important buildings, and strive to integrate them within its development.

- a) When proposed UC development includes or adjoins historically important buildings, consistent with provisions of the UC Berkeley 2020 Long Range Development Plan, the City expects that the University will consult early in the development design process with appropriate City entities, and use the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.
- b) Encourage the University to preserve a meaningful portion of the landmarked garage building and forecourt at 1952 Oxford Street, and integrate it within future development.



# 6 - STREETS & OPEN SPACE



# 6. STREETS AND OPEN SPACE

## STRATEGIC STATEMENT

**Benefits from High-Quality Streets and Open Space.** Downtown streets and open spaces provide Berkeley with important public gathering places. Public spaces support Downtown's continuing role as Berkeley's social, cultural and economic center. Parks, plazas, and streets make Downtown more livable, enhance connected watersheds, and promote economic development. The physical and psychological health of residents and workers depend on the availability of green and attractive open spaces. Streets and open spaces provide places to relax and rejuvenate.

Well-designed streets and public open spaces promote social interaction and connections, and can help Downtown become a more inviting and livable place. In these places, people of all ages can come together to celebrate, debate, and participate in the choreography of urban life.

The economic health of Downtown also depends on the quality of its pedestrian environments. Downtown must compete among other commercial and cultural destinations. Inviting and interesting public places can give Downtown a special advantage.

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**Facing Page:** Civic Center Park is the largest public open space in the Downtown Area and is used for rest, recreation, festivals, and political protests (Also shown is Old City Hall that lies just outside of the Downtown Area.). Staff photo

Parks, plazas, and streets should reflect the highest aspirations of a community. With thoughtful design and careful programming, streets and open space address complex functional challenges relating to transportation, ecological restoration, regular and occasional activities, and community life. Benefits of well-designed public spaces include:

- new recreation opportunities, whether to jog around a park or enjoy ice cream on the grass;
- accelerated economic revitalization by making Downtown a more attractive destination;
- increased tourism if Downtown's open spaces are remarkable, such as by promoting sustainability with innovative features; and
- improved water quality, by filtering polluted "urban runoff" while simultaneously beautifying Downtown.

Pedestrian-friendly streets encourage higher levels of physical activity, especially when paired with local destinations such as shops and restaurants. Communities with inviting sidewalks, safe bike lanes, nearby parks, and pedestrian amenities support active living. Walkable streets improve physical health, reduce mental stress, and increase social interaction.

Parks and plazas also promote physical activity when they are nearby. Open spaces and play areas are especially important for children because early habits influence health later in life. Active lifestyles also benefit elderly persons by helping to maintain mental acuity, physical abilities, and healthy hearts.

The Trust for Public Land's 2006 white paper "The Benefits of Parks" cites concrete reasons to create and enhance parks, plazas, and walking environments, including:

- increased physical activity and perceived energy;
- lower rates of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes;
- decreased levels of anxiety;
- increased mental alertness and cognitive performance; and
- cooler temperatures on hot days.

**Streets & Public Open Space.** Downtown contains significant open spaces, but needs more. Ideally, a park or plaza should be within walking distance of every Downtown residence. Civic Center Park is Downtown's largest open space and was recently improved to add a tot lot and skateboarding area. Berkeley High School's track provides opportunities for community recreation when it is not being used for School activities. BART Plaza (also known as Constitution Square) serves Downtown and received a grant in 2010 to improve its function as a transportation hub and community open space. "The Crescent" on the UC Campus offers a large grassy slope.

Street right of ways are themselves valuable public open spaces and determine the character of urban places in large part. The City has direct control over streets and can, through its investments, dramatically transform Downtown. Street rights-of-way serve many functions. Not only do they move traffic, bicycles and pedestrians, but they are also vital for supporting community life. Attractive, beautiful, active streets support

abutting uses and help make Downtown a commercial and cultural destination. Wide sidewalks, frequent street trees, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and beautiful landscaping also promote Downtown as a highly livable residential neighborhood. Enhanced pedestrian environments also make transit use more attractive.

There are many opportunities for street and open space improvements throughout Downtown which are addressed in the ***Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP)*** draft that was developed by a Subcommittee of interested Commissions and was recommended to City Council for adoption in September 2010.<sup>3</sup>

Significant improvements can be made in the streetscape by reducing travel lanes or reconfiguring parking. Center Street, Shattuck Avenue, Hearst, and the east end of University Avenue have great potential for being remade as exceptional pedestrian-friendly places. In addition, improvements along Milvia and Shattuck can support bicycling in and through Downtown.

Establishing a consistent design for street and open space features, such as light poles and street furniture, can help give Downtown a stronger sense of identity and complement its historic setting. There are also opportunities to accentuate the character of distinct subareas within Downtown, such as has been done for the "Arts District" along Addison Street and the Civic Center Historic District.

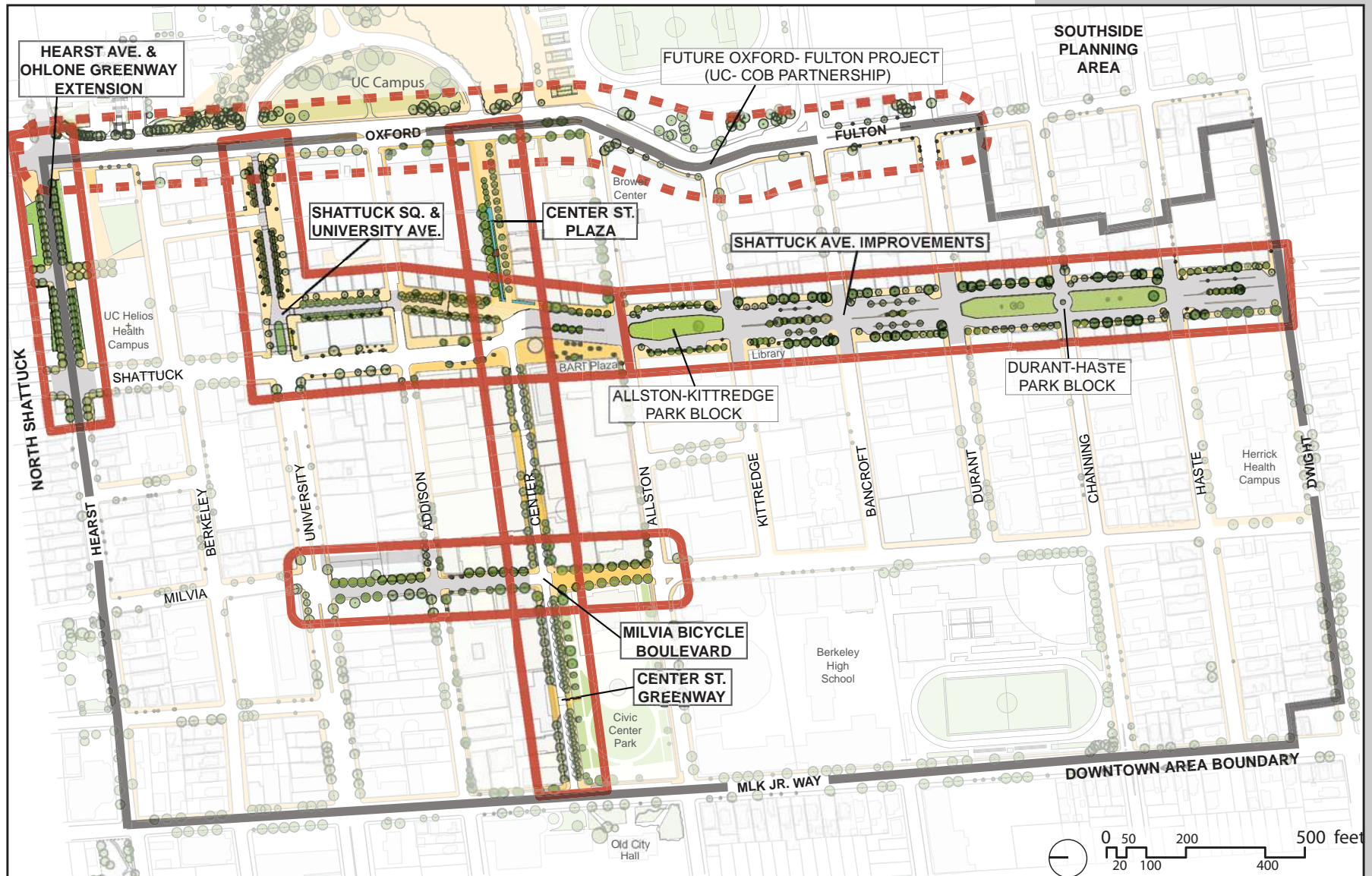
Street trees and landscaping play a critical role in making downtown's more attractive and invit-

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<sup>3</sup> *The draft SOSIP is expected to be before City Council around the same time as, or soon after the 2011 DAP.*



**FIGURE OS-1:  
Major Projects for  
Streets and Open Space**



See Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP).

ing. People derive psychological benefits by having access to green spaces and feeling a connection with nature. Street trees also eliminate heat from unshaded asphalt, thereby reducing smog and respiratory ailments.

Streets and open spaces will need to be carefully designed and well programmed, however, in order to maximize benefits, discourage unwanted behavior, and avoid excessive costs. Taken as a whole, parks and plazas should meet the needs of people of all ages, and encourage their use by a broad cross-section of the community. Downtown open spaces can offer modest recreation options, locations for community events, and a chance to rest outdoors.

New development can help to finance street and open space improvements, and can add areas for people to enjoy through publicly-accessible open space on private land.

**Open Spaces on Private Property.** Downtown open spaces also include plazas, courtyards and walkways on private land. Streetside plazas provide active gathering places connected to public life. Midblock courtyards offer intimate and protected environments that complement the bustle of streets and street-side spaces. Midblock walkways provide “short cuts” that make Downtown more walkable.

Open space can also be shared among residents within a building or complex of buildings. Shared open spaces include courtyards and roof gardens that offer protected spaces for the enjoyment of residents.

**Watershed Health & Green Infrastructure.** Streets and open spaces, both public and private, can enhance the health of the watershed to which Downtown is attached. “Green infra-

structure” features like bio-retention basins and permeable paving treat pollutants in urban runoff before they head downstream. Features can also retain rainwater, thereby reducing peak stormwater runoff volumes and rates. In addition, green infrastructure features can make Downtown more attractive by adding distinctive landscaping, special pavers, and “rain gardens” where small amounts of rainwater are intentionally gathered. Landscaping should be designed to conserve water, however, through the use of drought resistant plants and low-water irrigation systems. Greenery and green infrastructure give subtle reminders that – even in urban areas – we are connected with nature.

## GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

**GOAL OS-1: ENHANCE PUBLIC OPEN SPACES AND STREETS TO BENEFIT PEDESTRIANS, IMPROVE DOWNTOWN’S LIVABILITY, AND FOSTER AN EXCEPTIONAL SENSE OF PLACE. IN PARTICULAR, CREATE NEW PUBLIC GATHERING PLACES THAT SUPPORT NEARBY USES AND DOWNTOWN AS A DESTINATION.**

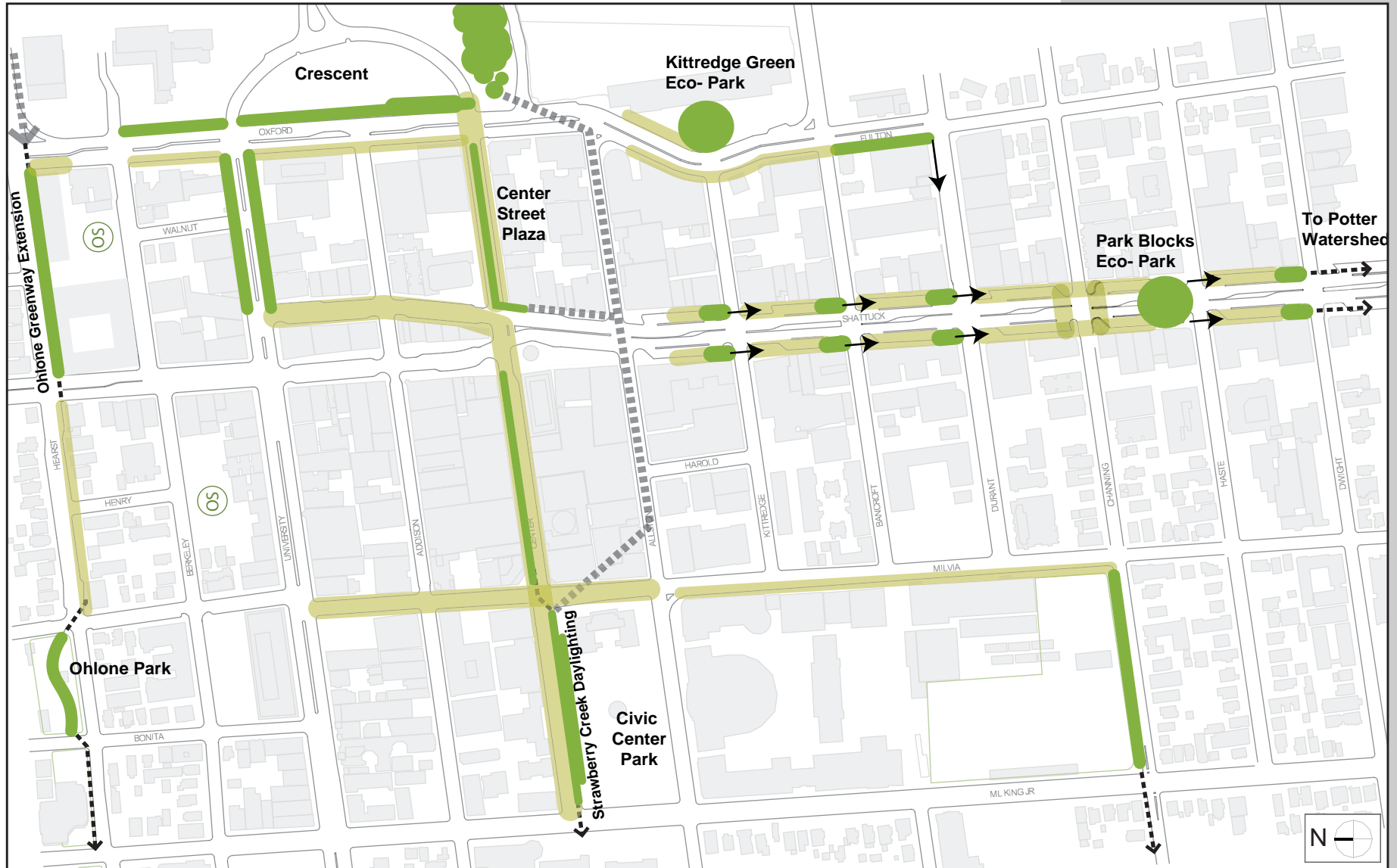
**Policy OS-1.1: Streets & Open Space Improvements.** Make significant additions and improvements to Downtown’s parks, plazas, and streets to be aesthetically pleasing, and support pedestrians and abutting uses. Use consistent features to help make Downtown distinctive. Special subareas and conditions may call for unique treatments. Emphasize the creation and enhancement of public gathering places.

a) Adopt a Streets & Open Space Improvements Plan (SOSIP) to guide the comprehensive design of significant positive alterations and additions to Downtown’s parks, plazas, and streetscapes. The SOSIP will identify

**Potential features**

- Rain Garden/ Swale Opportunity
- Permeable Paving Opportunity
- Pipe Connections
- Outflow From Area

**FIGURE OS-2:  
Green Stormwater  
Infrastructure Concept.**



See Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP).

objectives and develop design concepts to depict how the community intends to:

- increase recreational opportunities;
- create space for gathering and performances;
- increase street trees and vegetation using a consistent and appropriate palette;
- widen sidewalks in areas of high pedestrian activity;
- improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians, such as through the use of flashing crosswalk lights;
- reduce pedestrian crossing distances through the use of curb extensions, median refuge areas, and appropriate travel lane widths;
- improve public lighting for nighttime safety;
- offer street furniture and other amenities for pedestrians;
- encourage appropriate behavior;
- introduce flashing crosswalk lights;
- select light standards and other street features to complement Downtown's pedestrian scale and traditional main-street character; and
- promote lighting that is energy efficient and minimizes light intrusion into residential units;

- develop signage and strategies to help visitors navigate Downtown, while reducing visual clutter;
- incorporate green infrastructure features to treat "urban run-off" and retain rainwater (see policies under Goals ES-5 and OS-2);
- establish a palette appropriate tree species for streets, with consideration of native species.

- b) Include improvements that heighten awareness of subareas having a unique character, such as where historic resources are clustered. Relate design features to the special character and predominant uses along each street and around each open space (see Policy HD-2.1).
- c) Seek to incorporate public restrooms and drinking fountains, so they are distributed across Downtown.
- d) Evaluate street and open space recommendations, including potential lane eliminations, from the perspective of the needs, safety and comfort of bicyclists and pedestrians. Consider their potential impact on merchants, residents, transit providers, bus service, and other affected stakeholders. For recommendations that involve changes to traffic lanes and turning movements, consider traffic impacts in light of pedestrian- and transit-oriented priorities described in the Access chapter.
- e) Prioritize street and open space recommendations by engaging the public, and considering factors such as visual prominence, benefit to retailers, levels of pedestrian ac-

tivity, proximity to historic resources, and meeting the recreational needs of residents. Match top priorities with available resources.

**Policy OS-1.2: Street & Open Space Opportunities.** Develop appropriate design options for the following street segments, and existing and potential open spaces (see Policy AC-1.1 and the Streets & Open Space Improvements Plan).

- a) Center Street Plaza. Close Center between Shattuck and Oxford to create a pedestrian plaza with public gathering space, and sustainable features referencing Strawberry Creek.
- b) Center Street Greenway and Civic Center Park. Create a continuous green corridor and pedestrian connection between Civic Center Park, BART and Center Street Plaza.
- c) University Avenue Gateway. Establish a “Gateway” at the east end of University Avenue by widening sidewalks, increasing landscaping, and encouraging visitors information facilities.
- d) Shattuck Square. Transform the east side of Shattuck Square into a public open space with a high level of pedestrian amenity. Do this by accommodating two-way traffic on the west side of Shattuck Square.
- e) Shattuck Avenue. Make Shattuck a world-class tree-lined “boulevard” that is exceptionally attractive, emphasizes pedestrians and bicyclists, and models sustainability. Dedicate a significant portion of Shattuck’s right of way to be park or similarly active space.
- f) Ohlone Greenway Extension. Extend the Ohlone Greenway from where it ends to






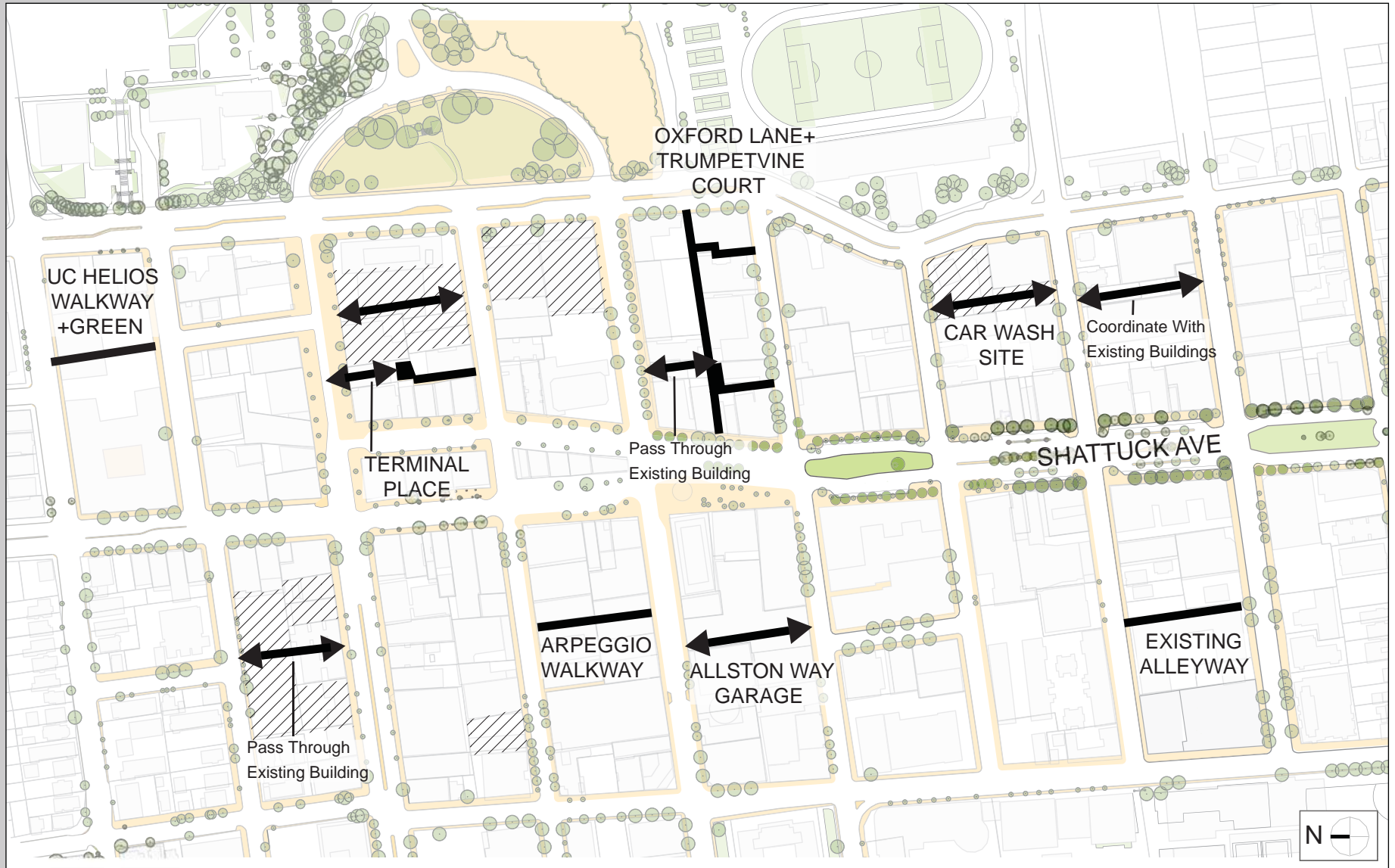
**Figure OS-3: Kittredge Green.** Edwards Stadium lies just outside of the Downtown Area on the UC campus, at the corner of Fulton and Bancroft. Its historic Art Deco façade will become more visible when land just to the west is cleared and improved as a University-owned open space, named in the DAP as Kittredge Green. Staff photo

the UC Campus by adding bicycle facilities, street trees and greenery.

- g) Allston Way as a Special Civic Street. Celebrate Allston Way and abutting community uses by installing decorative special features and making it more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly.
- h) Harold Way. As a connection between the Library and the YMCA, consider making Harold Way a slow-street.

**FIGURES OS-4:  
Existing & Conceptual  
Midblock Connections**

-  Existing Midblock Walkway
-  Conceptual Addition
-  Associated Development Site



- i) Terminal Place. Consider improving Terminal Place, a public alley off of Addison near Shattuck, to become an active and attractive public open space.
- j) Oxford-Fulton & UC Open Spaces. Create a “green boulevard” that complements Downtown, enhances abutting open spaces, and improves connections between the Campus and Downtown.
- k) Kittredge Green. Support University plans to create a publicly-accessible open space between Edwards Field and Fulton Street – at the end of Kittredge Street.

**Policy OS-1.3: Residential Area Improvements.** Enhance the residential character and livability of Downtown’s residential areas – and surrounding residential areas – through street and open space improvements.

- a) Work with residents to understand and address their recreational needs.

**Policy OS-1.4: Maintenance.** Maintain clean, safe and attractive streets, parks, and plazas (see Policy LU-2.4).

- a) Maintain sidewalks, crosswalks, plazas, and other pedestrian environments to be safe, clean and in good repair.
- b) Establish standards for the maintenance of public spaces, and develop funding mechanisms and City priorities that maintain adequate budget at all times. Emphasize durability and “life-cycle” costing in the design of new construction.
- c) Encourage public utilities to underground overhead wires, as development and street improvements occur.

**GOAL OS-2: PROMOTE WATERSHED HEALTH THROUGH THE USE OF ECOLOGICALLY BENEFICIAL LANDSCAPING AND OTHER FEATURES. INCORPORATE NATURAL FEATURES THROUGHOUT DOWNTOWN TO IMPROVE ITS VISUAL QUALITY, HELP RESTORE NATURAL PROCESSES, AND REINFORCE BERKELEY’S COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.**

**Policy OS-2.1: Green Infrastructure.** Promote green infrastructure and other ecologically beneficial features within the design of public open spaces, streets and on private property (see policies under Goal ES-5).

- a) The SOSIP should describe a program for significant near-term “greening” of Downtown by planting street trees and landscaping. Recommend appropriate and consistent tree and plant species for Downtown’s streets and open spaces. Consider the use of native tree species.
- b) All street tree installations should be accompanied by appropriate soil and drainage to encourage each tree’s healthy maturation.
- c) On public land, maintain healthy mature trees wherever possible (see Policy OS-2.3 & 2.4). Eliminate mature trees only in instances of disease, public safety, or overriding public benefits. Use clear criteria for the retention of trees and the replacement of trees for instances when tree removal is unavoidable. Permit the elimination of trees only after findings have been made according to established criteria and only after opportunities for public comment, except in cases when unsafe conditions or property damage may result.
- d) Establish new, and strengthen existing, landscaping standards and guidelines for sub-

stantial water conservation and recycling in new landscaping and retrofits. Specify appropriate plants for use Downtown, and ways to reduce waste, nourish the soil, conserving energy, and protect water and air quality. When developing provisions, consider guidelines used by Berkeley’s municipal projects and Stopwaste’s “Bay Friendly Guidelines” ([www.stopwaste.org](http://www.stopwaste.org)). See Policy OS-2.5.

**Policy OS-2.2: Nature in the City.** Highlight “nature in the city” and its benefits.

- a) Maximize greenery, such as trees, shrubs, landscaping, and “micro-habitats” that support bees and birds.
- b) Reference natural environments when making landscaping and ecologically beneficial improvements, on public and private property.
- c) Promote programs, literature and signage to enhance awareness of ecologically beneficial features in Downtown and just outside of Downtown (see Policy ED-5.2).
- d) Consider the design and creation of connected stormwater retention features, not just to filter urban runoff, but also to create water features that during heavy rains reveal Downtown’s topography and our connection with nature (see Figure OS-2.2, Green Stormwater Infrastructure Concept).

**Policy OS-2.3: Street Trees.** New street trees should be planned and planted in ways that will encourage their healthy maturation. When planning, anticipate future streetscape improvements that could affect street tree placement and retention.

- a) All tree installations should use appropriate soil and drainage to encourage each tree’s

healthy maturation. Address the long-term health of new trees when developing the SOSIP (see Policy OS-1.1). Develop standards and guidelines in consultation with urban forestry experts and organizations, and utility companies.

**Policy OS-2.4: Existing Trees.** Maintain mature trees growing on public land, wherever possible.

- a) Permit the elimination of mature trees only in instances of transmissible disease, public safety, or overriding public benefits.
- b) Establish standards and guidelines for the retention of trees – and the replacement trees for instances when tree removal is unavoidable.
- c) Permit tree elimination only after findings have been made using established criteria and after opportunities for public comment, except in cases when unsafe conditions or property damage may result.

**Policy OS-2.5: Water Conservation.** New landscaping and retrofits should incorporate effective water conservation and water reuse features.

- a) Establish water conservation and recycling standards for new landscaping. Require use of drought tolerant plants and advanced irrigation systems to substantially reduce water usage.

**GOAL OS-3: STREETS AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS, MAINTENANCE, AND CLEANING SHOULD BE ADEQUATELY FUNDED. REQUIRE THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTE TO GREENERY AND OPEN SPACE.**



**Policy OS-3.1: Private Contributions to Beneficial Open Space.** Private development should expand and enhance open spaces that serve the public, both on-site and as part of public improvements. Public serving open spaces that can be provided on-site include: plazas, courtyards, landscaped setbacks, rainwater retention and urban-runoff features, and mid-block walkways and open spaces (see Policies LU-2.1 and OS-3.3).

**Policy OS-3.2: Open Space for Residents.** Housing projects should serve residents' needs by providing adequate on-site open space, such as by providing courtyards, roof gardens, community gardens, etc.

**Policy OS-3.3: Public Funds.** See Policy ED-12.1 – Revenues for Downtown, regarding paying for street and open space improvements and upkeep of the public realm.

**GOAL OS-4: ENSURE THAT PARKS, PLAZAS, STREETS, WALKWAYS, AND OTHER PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACES ARE SAFE, COMFORTABLE, AND INVITING.**

**Policy OS-4.1: Safe Environments.** Encourage safe environments by addressing unsafe conditions and inappropriate behavior.

- a) Provide adequate pedestrian-scaled lighting in public parks, plazas, and streets. Amend the Downtown Design Guidelines to further promote building-mounted lighting to enhance safety (see Policy HD-4.1).
- b) Promote safety in publicly-accessible open space by encouraging activity and deterring unwanted behavior, through thoughtful design and programming. Encourage outdoor dining, street fairs, outdoor merchandising, and other private uses, as appropriate.

- c) Maintain a high level of visual and physical connections from public streets into open spaces.
- d) Monitor locations and conditions where aggressive, abusive and unsanitary behavior occurs frequently; and engage merchants, the Police Department, mental health and social service providers, and homeless advocates in defining critical issues and actions.

**Policy OS-4.2: Cleaning & Maintenance.** Maintain clean and well-maintained streets, parks and plazas, as well as attractive street furnishings and other amenities (see policies under Goal HC-6).

- a) Strengthen standards and provide resources for the frequent cleaning of streets and open spaces, the prompt repair of street furnishings and other features, and the immediate removal of graffiti.
- b) See Policy ED-12.1 – Revenues for Downtown, regarding on-going maintenance and repair of public spaces in Downtown.

**Policy OS-4.3: Public Conveniences.** Establish new and enhance existing publicly accessible convenience facilities such as 24-hour restrooms, drinking fountains, and other amenities throughout Downtown.



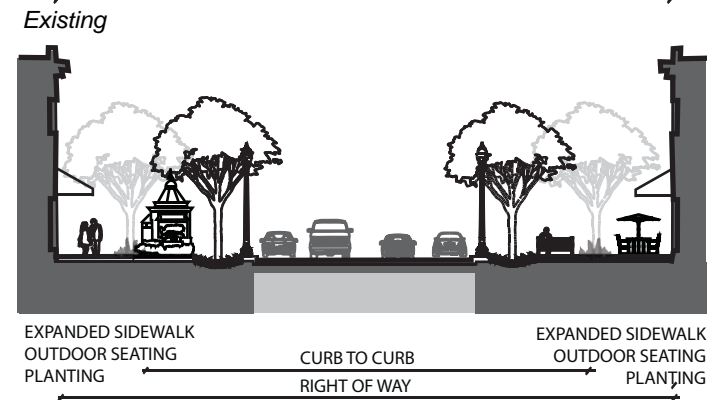
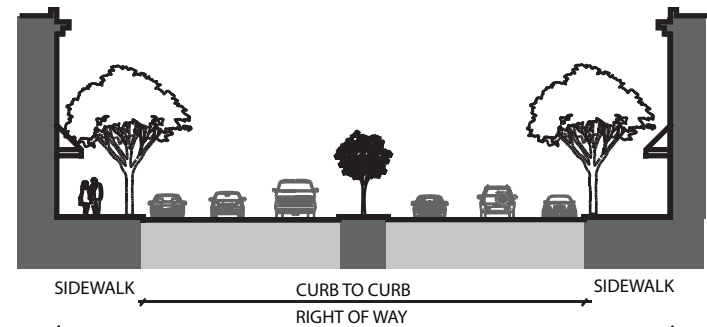
**Existing sidewalk conditions.** A relatively narrow sidewalk for pedestrians is accompanied by a wide swath of asphalt devoted to motor vehicles. Staff photo.



**Wide sidewalk with varied amenities.** Generous sidewalks might be accompanied by public seating, outdoor dining, and freestanding flower stands or food kiosks. Large pockets of landscaping, including ecological “rain gardens,” could be created. Staff photosimulation.

## UNIVERSITY AVENUE GATEWAY

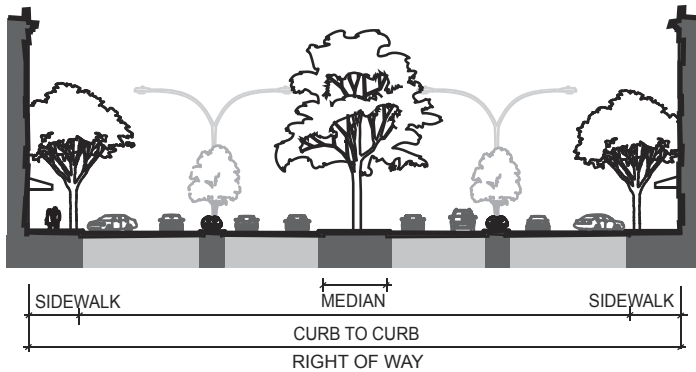
The easternmost segment of University Avenue lies between Shattuck Square and Oxford, and is the arrival point (or “gateway”) for many people visiting UC Berkeley and the Downtown. This segment also has relatively little traffic, and transportation modeling has shown that two of its four travel lanes may not be needed. Major pedestrian enhancements can be made if two travel lanes are eliminated. The street frontage along the University Avenue Gateway includes many historic buildings, as well as major University development opportunities that will contain retail shops and visitors’ information facilities. A combination of street improvements, University construction, and historic adaptive reuse could result in rapid and positive transformation of this area.



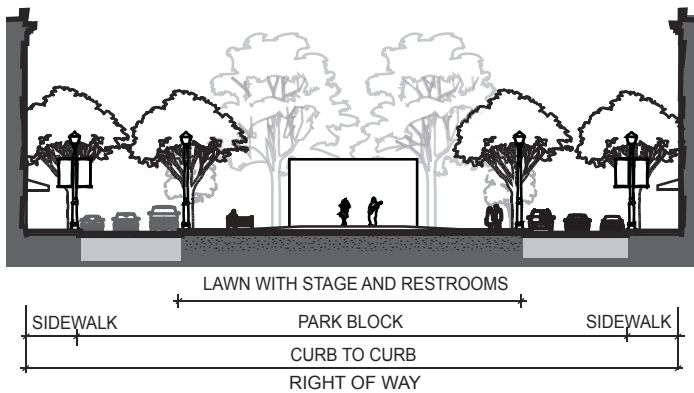
*Design Concept*

# PARK BLOCKS CONCEPT

Shattuck's right-of-way is wide enough to accommodate a new linear park that is over 60 feet wide, if on-street parking is reconfigured. (The diagonal parking with backup lane takes up nearly half of Shattuck's existing 160-foot right-of-way, while use of parallel parking would use relatively few feet.) Linear parks of similar dimension exist and are well used in many other cities, including the "Park Blocks" in Portland, Oregon, "South Park" in San Francisco, and portions of the "Emerald Necklace" in Boston.



Existing



Design Concept



**Existing Conditions.** Diagonal parking and a generous backup lane are on the other side of a narrow 3-foot planting strip from the travel lanes in the foreground. Staff photo.



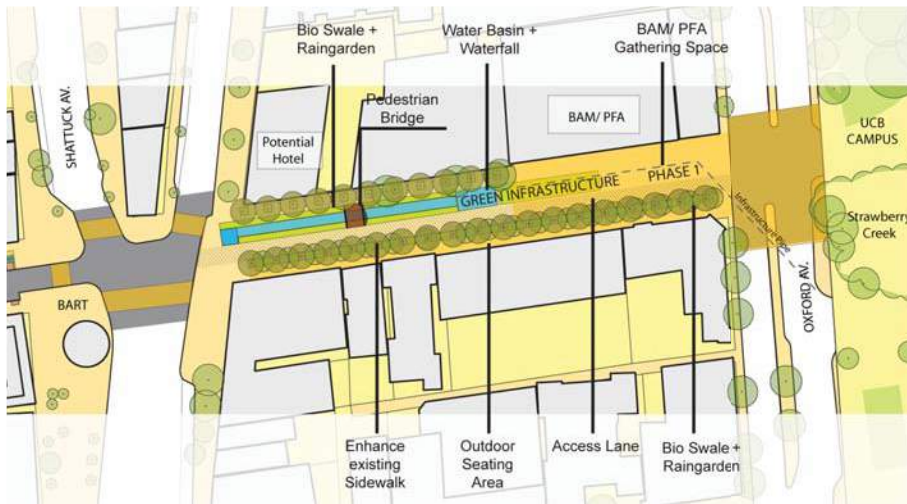
**Park Blocks Photo Simulation.** If travel and parking lane dimensions are kept to a minimum, trees in the existing planting strip can be retained and the park would occupy the space in between. The Park Blocks might contain a variety of elements, such as multipurpose lawn, a stage for small performances, public bathrooms, and play equipment. Staff photosimulation.



**A Classic “Main Street.”** Improvements along Center Street’s southern edge were designed by Lyndon-Buchanan, and offer a generous sidewalk and places to sit under a canopy of mature trees. Staff photo.

## CENTER STREET PLAZA CONCEPT

Center Street presents an exceptional opportunity for an inviting pedestrian plaza in the heart of Downtown – “Berkeley’s Living Room.” The Plaza would occupy the one-block segment from Shattuck to Oxford, which connects BART to the UC campus and has one of the highest densities of foot trips in the East Bay. Existing amenities along the southern edge include mature street trees, outdoor dining, historic light poles, and complementary furnishings (see upper right). As planned, this segment of Center Street would be closed to regular traffic, and a “slow street” might be created in the near-term. Of special interest is the creation of a landscaped water feature that would reference Strawberry Creek (which goes into a culvert just east of the Plaza) and might even draw water from Strawberry Creek to make a more emphatic connection.



**Center Street Plaza.** This plan-diagram illustrates features and relationships within a new pedestrian plaza with environmental features.

## ECOLOGICAL FEATURES

Downtown streets and open spaces have the potential for becoming part of an advanced and integrated stormwater system that filters pollutants from urban runoff, reduces “downstream” flooding, and adds attractive landscaping that communicates Downtown’s connection to nature – and the City’s commitment to environmental sustainability.

“Rain gardens” have been introduced into urban settings in several urban settings, such as 12th Street in downtown Portland, Oregon (shown at right). Ecological features in Downtown, such as rain gardens and landscaped swales, would receive and filter rainwater that flows off of streets and contains oil and other pollutants. Drains set at the right elevation would allow rainwater to flow directly into the storm sewer system during major rains, so that not more than an inch of water would gather.



Detail Section Type

**Downtown “rain gardens.”** Portland, Oregon, has committed itself to sustainably manage street stormwater runoff by using landscaped stormwater planters (or “rain gardens”) to capture, slow, and filter polluted “urban runoff” that flows off of streets. Credit of Photo and illustrations: © Environmental Services, Portland Oregon



# 7 - HOUSING AND COMMUNITY HEALTH & SERVICES

# 7. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY HEALTH & SERVICES

## STRATEGIC STATEMENT

**A Vibrant, Livable, and Sustainable Urban Neighborhood.** Downtown has the potential for becoming a great place to reside. Significant housing growth has helped transform Downtown into a more vibrant neighborhood, and strengthened Downtown as a commercial and cultural center. Residents support Downtown's retail shops, restaurants, and services, and housing growth will improve the viability of Downtown businesses.

While many downtowns “roll up the sidewalks” at night and on weekends, housing provides around-the-clock activity and makes Downtown more inviting place at any hour. Streets and other public open spaces are safer when housing looks out over them and when businesses that serve residents stay open later. Housing also generates resident stakeholders who take an active interest in keeping their neighborhood safe and attractive.

Downtown's “livability” is paramount to its success as a vibrant neighborhood. The shops, restaurants, and services that residents support are

also essential for making Downtown an attractive place to live, as are safe and inviting streets and open spaces. Living Downtown also gives easy access to theaters, cinemas, museums, and the East Bay's second largest transit hub.

Because Downtown residents consume far less energy and natural resources than people who live in other kinds of places in the Bay Area, increasing the number of people living Downtown plays a central role in implementing greenhouse gas emission targets set forth in Berkeley's Climate Action Plan. With anticipated housing growth, a household in Downtown can be expected to drive one-third as much as a household in urban neighborhoods with good bus service, such as the Elmwood. Furthermore, an average household in Downtown will drive less than one-eighth as much as one in suburban locations.<sup>4</sup> The more that transit and everyday needs are available on foot, the less that people need a car.

Besides reducing traffic and emissions, reduced vehicle use also makes housing in transit-rich locations more affordable. The average American spends 19.3 cents of every dollar on transportation, 95% of which goes toward the costs of owning and operating an automobile. Transportation spending for a household is second only to housing expenses, and is three times higher than health care expenditure.

Housing affordability also improves with decreased driving rates. The Bureau of Transportation Statistics estimates that walking and using transit saves typical households tens of thousands of dollars each year in auto-related

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### ***Facing Page: Downtown's Farmers' Market***

*Every Saturday, Downtown's Farmers' Market transforms Center Street into a festive, family-friendly, open-air market. The Market brings fresh locally-grown food to Berkeley residents and connects California's farmers directly to consumers. The Farmers' Market has been a tradition since 1981, and has been operated by the Ecology Center since 1987. Image courtesy Ivana Goldstein, [www.ivanagoldstein.com](http://www.ivanagoldstein.com)*

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<sup>4</sup>Holtzclaw et al, *Location Efficiency: Neighborhood and Socio-Economic Characteristics Determine Auto Ownership and Use*, 2002.

# Figure HC-1: Residential Uses

Staff Survey 2006

- Residential, Single-Family and Duplex
- Residential Apartments
- Mixed-Use With Residential Above
- 1/4 mile from BART rotunda





costs, leaving more household income to spend on housing or other needs.

As density increases so does the need to provide livable settings to live. Adequate levels of interior daylight daylighting and high levels of urban amenities are important accompaniments to urban housing.

**Residential Needs.** In Berkeley, housing must respond to a full spectrum of needs and preferences. Berkeley's households vary considerably in size and income, as well as in the age and abilities of household members. The same person often needs different types of housing as they pass through the typical stages of life: single adult, through childrearing, and older "empty-nester."

Given demand for diverse forms of housing, what unique opportunities are presented by Downtown?

Downtown presents opportunities for increasing the availability of housing for a range of household types and incomes. Higher density apartment buildings are appropriate to Downtown and generally have smaller, comparatively more affordable units than housing in locations with lower densities. Downtown residents can live without a car thereby significantly reducing their overall costs for transportation and housing. Downtown can play an important role in housing Berkeley's workforce, such as teachers, nurses, and University staff who presently commute in from other places. Transit access and social services in Downtown make it a desirable for people with very low-income and fixed incomes, including those who are homeless or in transition.

Households with higher incomes will find Downtown increasingly attractive and add to Downtown's diversity. Demographic trends show that large numbers of Berkeleyans are reaching an

age when they will seek housing that has fewer maintenance demands, less reliance on driving, and better access to cultural attractions and community life. With higher levels of discretionary income, housing for this demographic group will help fuel Downtown's retail revitalization and support cultural venues. Without growth in such housing, Berkeley Repertory Theater and other cultural stakeholders have expressed concern that their patron base will erode as Berkeley's aging "baby boomers" move to San Francisco or other locations where such housing is available.

Downtown Berkeley can also support more family-oriented housing, further strengthening Downtown as a neighborhood and destination – a sentiment expressed throughout the Downtown Area Plan process. To attract family housing, it will be important to give emphasize public improvements that enhance Downtown's safety, make open space and other amenities more available, and encourage the development of larger units.

**Housing Affordability.** Many moderate- and lower-income households are being priced out of the local housing market and members of Berkeley's workforce increasingly live elsewhere. The City must continue to take actions to create a stock of permanently affordable housing rented or sold at below-market rates to maintain the diversity that this community values so highly. While some housing needs can be met through the workings of the market, the City must take an active role to deliver housing for those with lower incomes and for people with special needs.

Until a recession began in 2009, Berkeley's housing prices continued to increase relative to household income. As prices were increasing, there was a steady loss of relatively affordable units. Market rents increased steadily between 1998 and 2008, growing by an average of five percent annually. In the third quarter of 2009,

market rents for all units ranged from nearly \$900 for a studio apartment to \$2,100 for a three-bedroom unit. Market rents exceeded what is considered to be affordable for households earning up to 80% of Berkeley's Area Median Income.

Ownership housing also increased in price until the recession, with the median price of a single family rising 48% from \$520,000 in 2002 to \$770,000 in 2008. The median price of condominiums rose 36% over the same period. Between 2002 and 2008, however, the median income of East Bay households rose just 12% to \$86,000.

While many other Bay Area jurisdictions saw steep declines in the cost of housing following 2008, the underlying desirability of Berkeley as a place to live and the ongoing basic market demand provided by the presence of the University has meant that Berkeley's housing values and market rents have declined slightly or not at all. Meanwhile, many residents faced additional hardships associated with declining income or job loss.

Lack of affordability therefore continues to face both renters and potential homeowners, especially renters with lower incomes and aspiring first-time buyers. The Bay Area remains one of the most expensive places to live in the country. Berkeley's central location in the Bay Area, its reputation, and the relative abundance of well-paying jobs will continue to make Berkeley attractive as a place to reside and result in higher housing prices as demand exceeds supply. Past increases in home prices and rents have created a situation where many current Berkeley residents could not afford to live here if they were only now arriving. This is a particularly serious problem for those who must support themselves with low, often fixed, incomes, such as federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for persons with disabilities. Low-income households can

spend nearly all of their incomes paying "fair market rent" for small apartment in Berkeley.

**Inclusionary Housing.** "Inclusionary housing" practices reserve a portion of all dwellings from new construction for low- and moderate-income households. While municipalities have established inclusionary requirements across the country, all inclusionary requirements for rental units were invalidated when the California's Supreme Court found such requirements to be in violation of California law in its 2009 "Palmer" decision.

Inclusionary requirements for condominiums still stand whereby a portion of units in a condominium project must be affordable to households with incomes not exceeding 80% of Berkeley's "Area Median Income" (AMI). Inclusionary units are subject to resale price restrictions tied to the Consumer Price Index.

California jurisdictions also must offer bonuses in exchange for affordable units provided voluntarily under the "density bonus" provisions of State law. The state's density bonus law gives development projects as much as 35% more dwelling units than the maximum that would normally be permitted under the zoning ordinance in exchange for affordable housing which must be provided in the project. The State density bonus provisions require the City to give an expansion of the normally-allowed building envelope in order to accommodate the additional units when requested by a developer. Maximum building heights and "green pathway" provisions in the Land Use chapter of the DAP have considered this possibility so as to limit the impacts of potential density bonuses.

Cities may also establish their own voluntary incentive programs to encourage affordable housing, such as by using the DAP's "Voluntary Green Pathway" entitlement process (Policy LU-2.3).

In 2010, City Council began to consider a possible “affordable housing impact fee” that would require developers to provide funding (or units) in proportion to the demand for affordable units created by their development projects. Any fees collected will be placed in the City’s Housing Trust Fund (HTF) for the development of affordable housing. The HTF pools funds for affordable housing construction from a variety of sources, and makes these funds available to local affordable housing developers for the creation of very-low and low- income housing. Affordable housing developers use HTF commitments to leverage State and Federal resources. Starting in 2006, condominium developers have been allowed to pay a fee into the HTF in lieu of providing affordable units on-site. In 2009, the in-lieu fee for moderately priced project was roughly \$200,000 per unit.

HTF subsidizes for very-low and low-income households succeed in creating deeply affordable housing that would not be created through private development. Furthermore, some non-profit housing developers often supplement HTF financing with non-HTF financing for supportive social services to stabilize the lives of very low-income households and the homeless. Supportive services are generally provided within the housing development, and often treat substance abuse, teach job skills, and provide counseling.

While the HTF receives funds from some federal programs, such as Community Block Grants and HOME Partnership funds, these funds have not kept up with increased construction costs and are vulnerable to federal budget cuts. HTF activities will need to rely increasingly on developer impact and in-lieu fees” to meet the housing needs of disadvantaged communities.

**Homelessness.** Downtown Berkeley has a high concentration of homeless individuals relative to

the rest of Alameda County. 86% of Berkeley’s homeless persons are single adults, whereas half of the county’s homeless are families (2008). In Berkeley, 64% of homeless persons are chronically homeless (with at least three homeless episodes within four years), compared with Alameda County’s rate of 25%. In addition, an unusually large proportion of Berkeley’s homeless population is male, and Berkeley is a destination for many transient teens.

Homelessness results for different reasons, including high housing costs, limited employment opportunities, inconsistent access to health care, personal factors (such as financial emergencies, evictions, and abusive environments), and disabilities (such as mental illness and substance abuse). Berkeley has joined a growing list of cities that employ “Housing First” strategies that combine housing with social services to stabilize individuals and support them as they find new opportunities. Unlike past programs, “Housing First” eliminates sobriety as a prerequisite, so that persons with substance abuse problems can be housed and find treatment.

An increasing proportion of HTF funds have been directed toward projects with supportive services, but supportive services need funding from non-housing sources.

Single Occupancy Hotels (SROs) in which single residents have their own room but share bath and kitchen facilities also provides a needed source of housing for very low income individuals. Most of Berkeley’s SROs are located Downtown. Programs to retain SROs are important for serving homeless single adults, especially since it may be impossible to create new SROs. Housing grants and financing now favor the creation of permanent rather than transitional housing, and generally require that each unit have a bathroom and kitchen.

**Social Services.** Social services play a vital role in helping families and individuals gain and maintain economic self-sufficiency. Berkeley has made access to social services a priority and many are delivered in and around Downtown. Programs target: low-income residents, veterans, individuals needing job skills and placement assistance, young people, and individuals and families who are homeless or hungry.

Social services also address the needs of single and working parents, with childcare centers and programs that care for sick children so their parents can work. Many nonprofit providers deliver these services, and some are funded partly with City funds, such as community-based employment training and placement organizations. Berkeley's First Source program connects low-income Berkeley residents with local job opportunities. YouthWorks connects local youth with area businesses through summer and year-round training and apprenticeships. Berkeley High School students receive an array of service on campus, including health care, counseling, and college preparation services. The YMCA also offers: education and job training services for at-risk youth and teens, programs for the elderly, and support for families and individuals challenged by physical disabilities.

The City also delivers services in Downtown for persons with physical and mental disabilities, and persons recovering from drug and alcohol abuse. Berkeley has the highest concentration of people living with mental illnesses within the County of Alameda (factoring in both housed and homeless individuals). Berkeley is one of two California cities that provide public and mental health services (counties provide these services in all other jurisdictions), and is evidence of its commitment to those in need.

Many social service providers operate out of facilities distributed throughout Downtown. Some services are provided next to Civic Center Park in the Veterans Memorial Building, which is in need of seismic work to maintain safety. The Suitcase Clinic provides a drop-in health care clinic for homeless and low-income individuals.

UC Berkeley provides services to the community from locations in and near Downtown, and University Extension provides a clinic to help families with children whose learning difficulties stand in the way of academic progress (A searchable database of University programs can be viewed at <http://calinthecommunity.berkeley.edu/>).

**Appropriate Behavior.** Policies in the Downtown Area Plan address the perception by some people that Downtown is unsafe and that there is an excess of threatening, aggressive, and abusive behavior. There is broad agreement in the community that such behavior is unacceptable, whether it is from high school students, homeless youth, or persons with substance abuse problems. The perception and the reality of inappropriate behavior by some in Downtown demands community efforts that involves various City departments, the School District, the merchants, and the nonprofit agencies that provide services. Downtown community members must work together and agree on what behavior is unacceptable, and enforce standards of behavior. Much can be accomplished if merchants, residents, and other stakeholders, become better informed of ordinances and programs that are already in place – along with clear instructions and direct connections to agencies that can help.

There are also ways to improve perceptions of Downtown through direct City action. Street and sidewalk cleaning, and landscape maintenance, can occur frequently. Access to public restrooms can be improved. Public spaces can

be designed to invite all kinds of people instead of being appropriated by a few small groups. And the City can strengthen efforts to connect people with mental illness or substance abuse issues with programs that can help them.

**Community Health.** A 2006 City of Berkeley study showed significant disparities in the health of certain populations attributable, at least in part, to disparities in access to health services. Despite the City's efforts to make health care available for those who need it, African American and Hispanic households tend to have less access to health care services and poorer health. This is a citywide issue, but Downtown is centrally located and is the location for significant providers of health services, such as Herrick Hospital. Downtown also has more than its share of homeless and other at-risk populations. Downtown should continue to play an important role in providing health care services, and could provide an even bigger role in the future.

**Herrick Health Facility.** State seismic safety standards may require closure of Herrick Hospital (a division of Sutter Health) to close as a health facility, but it could serve other community health service needs and help to close Berkeley's health care gap. The city needs comprehensive health service planning in which the future of Herrick Hospital is factored and a coherent infrastructure for health services is retained.

**UC Community Health Campus.** The University is considering establishing a "Community Health Campus" at the former State of California Department of Health Services (DHS) site at Hearst and Shattuck. The University already provides many health services to the community, such as health clinics, an optometry clinic, social work, community-based research, community outreach, auditoriums available for community events, and other community services.

Establishing a more accessible location in the Downtown Area presents unique advantages. Furthermore, bringing a broad array of services to a focused campus environment offers synergies among health service program providers, researchers, students and the community. A UC health campus could become an exceptional asset for Downtown, and could leverage economic development and other improvements.

## GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

### **GOAL HC-1: ENCOURAGE DOWNTOWN AS A THRIVING, LIVABLE, DIVERSE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD WITH A MIX OF SUPPORTIVE USES.**

**Policy HC-1.1: Neighborhood-Serving Uses.** Encourage neighborhood-serving uses that let residents meet daily needs on foot (see Policy LU-1.1).

**Policy HC-1.2: Sufficient Open Space.** Provide sufficient usable open space for residents within Downtown and as part of new residential projects (see policies under Goals LU-2 and OS-3).

### **GOAL HC-2: MAINTAIN A GOOD QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES DURING THE DAY AND AT NIGHT IN DOWNTOWN AND IN SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

**Policy HC-2.1: Residential Daylight.** Provide adequate natural light in residential units (see Policy HD-4.2).

**Policy HC-2.2: Noise Mitigation.** Evaluate and strengthen noise mitigation measures as appropriate to Downtown's active mixed-use environments. Recognize that Downtown's mixed-use areas are different from residential neighborhoods in its higher intensity of overall activity,

nighttime activity (such as restaurants and music venues), and residential and commercial uses placed in close proximity. Encourage use of best available technologies by improving standards for sound insulation and mechanical noise.

- a) Evaluate existing noise standards and noise-related permitting for adequacy with regard to noise patterns in Downtown's unique urban environment. Consider revisions to strengthen the City's noise ordinance based on this evaluation.
- b) Improve standards for sound insulation and for minimizing mechanical noise with best available technologies. Study the relationship between building form and materials and noise. Encourage use of best available technologies for sound insulation and mechanical noise. Consider amendments to the Downtown Design Guidelines to address noise-related issues.
- c) Regularly monitor and analyze Downtown noise levels and their relationship to traffic, building form, nightclubs, loading, and the provision of urban services. The City shall create a noise map of the Downtown Area and surrounding blocks, and update the map regularly to assess changes in noise levels and the effectiveness of noise standards and mitigation measures. In addition, available data from prior years should be used to determine, if possible, changes in noise patterns and the reasons for them. Base on these analyzes, consider improvements to standards and mitigation measures.
- d) Maintain adequate service as Downtown's population and service requests grow, through noise-related assessment, monitoring and enforcement provisions. Consider use of agreements with businesses and

landowners acknowledging the noise ordinance and agreeing to comply with it.

**Policy HC-2.3: Construction Noise.** Minimize and mitigate noise and other disruptions attributable to construction activities.

- a) The City shall be proactive in enforcing construction activity rules regarding noise and hours of work, due to the comparatively high level of expected ongoing construction activity in Downtown.

**GOAL HC-3: OFFER DIVERSE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS OF DIFFERENT AGES AND INCOMES, HOUSEHOLDS OF VARYING SIZE, AND PERSONS OF VARYING ABILITIES. GIVE DOWNTOWN A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN MEETING BERKELEY'S CONTINUING NEED FOR ADDITIONAL HOUSING.**

**Policy HC-3.1: Growth with Preservation.** Allow for significant housing development in the Downtown Area while simultaneously preserving the scale of existing residential areas.

- a) Significantly increase the capacity for new housing development in Downtown, as provided for in the Land Use chapter.
- b) Reduce development pressures in residential-only areas (see policies under Goal LU-4).
- c) Consider ways to make standards and guidelines easier to understand and apply.

**Policy HC-3.2: Affordable Housing & Supportive Services.** Encourage the creation of new affordable housing projects for low- and very-low income housing, and the creation of associated supportive services (see policies under Goal-HC-5).

- a) New development should pay a Housing Impact Fee consistent with citywide policy.
- b) Residential development projects opting for the Voluntary Green Pathway shall provide affordable housing as described in Policy LU-2.3.

**Policy HC-3.3: Larger Residential Units.** Encourage larger residential units in the Downtown Area.

- a) Consider standards, guidelines, and incentives to promote larger residential units.

**Policy HC-3.4: Home Ownership.** Encourage market-rate ownership housing (such as condominiums) to generate substantial new fees for the Housing Trust Fund. (The Housing Trust Fund finances deeply affordable units for homeless individuals/families and other low income households.) Also encourage home ownership opportunities to encourage long-term residents in the Downtown – especially low- and moderate-income households.

- a) The City should work with lenders and developers to encourage “location-efficient mortgages,” which recognize that transit- and pedestrian-oriented locations reduce household transportation cost, and make more household income available to leverage loans.
- b) Consider fees on market-rate owner-occupied housing to raise funds for increasing the supply of affordable housing (see policies under Goal LU-2).

**Policy HC-3.5: Senior & Disabled Housing.** Encourage the creation of affordable housing for seniors and persons with disabilities, especially housing with supportive services, except for skilled nursing facilities that take little ad-

vantage of and contribute little to Downtown’s pedestrian- and transit-oriented environment.

- a) Evaluate possible policy tools and incentives for encouraging housing for persons who are elderly and/or have disabilities, especially those that incorporate supportive services. Apply the most promising tools and incentives to Downtown.
- b) As citywide programs for creating housing for seniors and persons with disabilities are refined, consider incentives for projects that are near transit and supportive services.

**Policy HC-3.6: UC Housing.** Encourage the creation of faculty, staff, and student housing on properties presently owned by the University of California (see policies under Goal LU-6).

**GOAL HC-4: PRESERVE EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING DOWNTOWN, AND EXPAND THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR LOW-INCOME, VERY LOW-INCOME AND WORKING-CLASS HOUSEHOLDS IN DOWNTOWN.**

**Policy HC-4.1: Prevent Displacement.** Prevent displacement of existing affordable housing in the Downtown Area, except where replaced by an equivalent number of permanent similarly affordable dwelling units.

- a) Enforce and consider ways to strengthen existing policies for the retention of existing rental housing for low-income residents.
- b) Maintain and enhance City “acquisition and rehabilitation” efforts for affordable housing, while avoiding arbitrary or capricious displacement of tenants. Mitigate the negative effects of temporary or permanent reloca-

tion on tenants, and develop a plan for such mitigations in advance of implementation.

- c) Consider incentives for the acquisition and rehabilitation of existing buildings by private owners, to maintain more affordable housing for low-income residents in Downtown.
- d) Consider the use of the Housing Trust Fund and/or housing mitigation fees from office and other commercial projects for the renovation and retention of affordable housing.
- e) Consider flexibility in development standards to make it easier to renovate and retain affordable rental units.

**Policy HC-4.2: Affordable Housing & Supportive Services.** Promote the creation of permanent affordable housing with supportive services in Downtown, especially for homeless individuals and families. Encourage provision of appropriate supportive services for tenants at all functional levels.

- a) Identify opportunities to expand permanent housing with supportive services in Downtown.
- b) Develop a model “net-zero energy” affordable housing and green demonstration project on the City-owned Berkeley Way parking lot site (see Policy ES-2.3). Provide a level of underground parking, if feasible, or contributions toward the construction of public parking at a nearby location, with the goal of not reducing the overall number of off-street parking spaces (see policies under Goal AC-3).
- c) Develop programs and partnerships among service providers and non-profit housing developers for rehabilitating and converting existing SRO properties, and by using a per-

manent supportive housing model, such as Berkeley’s “Housing First” program.

- d) Identify sites and long-term funding to support the development and on-going provision of services for new permanent supportive housing to meet the needs of very low-income single individuals and engage owners of SRO properties to convert to permanent supportive housing.
- e) Encourage the creation of “micro-units,” very small apartments that may not include typical apartment features, such as a standard kitchen. Review development standards and inclusionary housing provisions to identify obstacles to the creation of micro-units, and consider whether such obstacles should be removed.
- f) Explore options for expanding the range of affordable housing opportunities in the Downtown by encouraging innovative housing types, including limited equity cooperatives, co-housing, housing land trusts and other options.
- g) Consider incentives for projects that provide a greater number of affordable units or that provide units at deeper affordability (50% or less of the Area Median Income).

**GOAL HC-5: DELIVER IN DOWNTOWN EFFECTIVE AND COMPASSIONATE SERVICES FOR SENIORS, PARENTS AND YOUTH, AND PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE HOMELESS, HAVE PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL DISABILITIES, AND/OR SUFFER FROM SUBSTANCE ABUSE.**

**Policy HC-5.1: Youth Services.** Serve youth in Downtown, and encourage their health, safety



and welfare. Expand recreation and other uses that serve youth (see policies under Goal ED-8).

- a) Expand recreation and other uses that serve youth. Support internships for teens and young adults.
- b) Encourage developers to hire local youth who are enrolled in State-approved construction apprenticeships programs with a proven record of success.
- c) Work in partnerships with organizations and institutions (such as Berkeley High School, Berkeley City College, the YMCA, the Adult School, and UC Berkeley) to provide healthful activities, counseling, career planning, job training/placement, medical, and other beneficial services for teens and young adults – including parenting support programs.
- d) Support initiatives where teens and young adults can contribute to Downtown through internships and civic activities. Encourage developers to hire local youth enrolled in state approved construction apprenticeships programs that have a proven record of success.

**Policy HC-5.2: Training & Skill Building.** Encourage life skills, job training, job referral and job placement through programs and facilities that focus on Downtown (see policies under Goal ED-8).

**Policy HC-5.3: Senior Services.** Serve seniors in Downtown, and encourage their health, safety and welfare.

- a) Work in partnerships with community organizations and institutions to maintain the availability of appropriate senior services.

**Policy HC-5.4: Social Services.** Maintain and enhance prompt access to social services by Downtown residents and transient populations.

- a) Evaluate existing and future social service needs and opportunities, both citywide and Downtown. Consider how services might be improved and how they might be accommodated in Downtown.
- b) Seek funding to modernize the Veterans Memorial building and make it seismically safe. Consider its continued use for as a social service facility.

**Policy HC-5.5: Communication Services.** Ensure that persons in Downtown can access communication services, particularly during emergencies.

- a) Work with telecommunications providers to ensure that public telephones are available and accessible throughout Downtown.
- b) Work with telecommunications providers to consider emergency call boxes or other publicly accessible emergency response devices in Downtown, and to implement their installation if they convey substantial public benefit and are feasible.

**GOAL HC-6: PROVIDE A SAFE, CLEAN AND ATTRACTIVE DOWNTOWN, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY.**

**Policy HC-6.1: Safe Environments.** Encourage safe environments by addressing unsafe conditions and inappropriate behavior (see policies under Goal OS-4).

- a) Establish community-appropriate standards of behavior and maintain a shared

commitment among public and private stakeholders to enforce those standards, consistent with the citywide Public Commons for Everyone initiative.

- b) Distribute public information summarizing existing ordinances pertaining to street behavior and provide clear instruction on how to report aggressive behavior, and unsanitary and unsafe conditions.
- c) Engage merchants, other stakeholders, the Police Department, mental health and social service providers, and homeless advocates, in defining critical issues and actions. As part of this on-going process, monitor locations and conditions where aggressive, abusive and unsanitary behavior occurs frequently.
- d) Provide adequate 24-hour public toilets in Downtown with clear signage, and provide for their ongoing maintenance, security, and frequent cleaning.
- e) Establish easy mechanisms for direct communication between Downtown community stakeholders and police or other service personnel to encourage rapid response to unsafe conditions or inappropriate behavior.
- f) Work in partnership with Berkeley High School and its students, parents, teachers, and staff, along with merchants, to define what constitutes appropriate behavior – for students and adults alike – and to encourage appropriate behavior in Downtown.
- g) Encourage cooperative action between the City of Berkeley, the Berkeley Unified School District, and Berkeley High School staff. The existing joint committee of City and BUSD administrators should begin by

considering inappropriate Downtown behavior and ways to address it.

- h) Encourage collaboration among all of the public agencies in Downtown, including the City, BART Police, UC Police, and BHS Staff, to enforce standards.
- i) Expand and create new opportunities for high school and other students to support and engage in community services, social programs, and problem solving.

**Policy HC-6.2: Cleaning & Maintenance.** Encourage a clean Downtown, with landscaping that is attractive and well-maintained (see policies under Goal OS-4).

- a) Consider ways to expand the capacity for cleaning and landscape maintenance through better coordination, greater efficiency and increased funding (see policies under Goals LU-2 and OS-3). Give special attention to ways that cleaning and landscaping activities might be combined with expanding job training and social service opportunities.

**Policy HC-6.3: Design for Public Safety.** Promote safety in publicly accessible areas by encouraging active use of public areas, visual access, and adequate lighting (see policies under Goal OS-4).

**GOAL HC-7: MAINTAIN AND EXPAND INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE IN DOWNTOWN TO ADDRESS HEALTH INEQUITIES.**

**Policy HC-7.1 Health Services.** Encourage the retention and expansion of effective health care and health-related services in Downtown, especially to address the needs of those who

would be most negatively affected by lack of accessible, centrally located health services.

- a) The City should engage in an open, inclusive and transparent process for assessing the City's health services needs – and the role that the Downtown Area, due to its central location and accessibility, might play in meeting these needs. Among the issues that should be considered is care for acute and long-term chronic and life-threatening conditions, some of which have been addressed at the Herrick health facility site.
- b) The City should encourage the owner of the Herrick site to include health services for the community as part of any redevelopment of the site (see Policy LU-8.1).
- c) Encourage UC to move health services and programs that serve the general public into the Downtown Area (see Policy LU-8.2).
- d) Encourage collaboration among all of the public, non-profit and for-profit agencies in Downtown that provide health-related services, including the City, the YMCA, non-profit and for-profit health-related organizations, the University of California, various transportation agencies, and other service providers.



# 8 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# 8. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## STRATEGIC STATEMENT

Downtown is the heart of the city, where the community comes together to shop, to work or play, to eat or read, to exercise or just to walk. A thriving, economically successful Downtown is essential to the health of Berkeley, economically, socially and environmentally. To succeed, Downtown must build on its competitive advantages, especially its relationship to its cultural, educational, and historic assets.

Downtown's attributes and economic trends present opportunities for reinvigorating Downtown. City policies and efforts can encourage a diverse mix of complementary uses in Downtown. Continued demand for office and residential space can be expected, and new office and residential growth will bring higher levels of spending. Downtown's retail mix will continue to take shape around Downtown's synergies and central location. Downtown might also capitalize on unmet market demand for certain types of retailers.

Downtown opportunities also vary by subareas. Immediately around BART, exceptional regional access, higher development intensity, and heavy foot traffic, point toward retail that is more varied and with a regional clientele. Consequently, Shattuck deserves special emphasis for improvement and retail recruitment activities from

University Avenue to Bancroft, as do adjacent side streets east of Shattuck. Along Addison Street and University Avenue, cultural uses will continue to bring activity to Downtown and support nearby businesses. Farther from BART but still within easy walking distance, the Downtown Area becomes progressively more residential. There is less intensity of activity and commercial activity tends to be more neighborhood-serving businesses. In these areas, a neighborhood-serving retail focus makes sense.

As Berkeley's symbolic heart, Downtown also plays a special role in providing services, goods, and cultural resources that meet the needs of Berkeleyans of all incomes, ethnicities, ages and household types. While Downtown has no direct freeway access, it enjoys some of the best transit access in the Bay Area. While cars are not the preferred mode for going Downtown, it is important to provide adequate parking for patrons of Downtown businesses, while simultaneously discouraging automobile commuters. Appropriate signage and pricing be used to use parking appropriately with an emphasis on short-term patrons. Berkeley can also take pride in creating a recognizable center for "green" businesses and cutting-edge practices for environmental sustainability.

**Culture and the Arts.** Downtown is a center for cultural and the arts. Downtown should build on its role as a destination for drama, music, films, and fine arts and support their health and growth. The Arts District has brought together a strong complement of theatre and music venues, and cultural destinations are located throughout Downtown. As a consequence, Downtown Berkeley has experienced a cultural renaissance in the past few years, with an explosion of music, theatre and art venues.

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**Facing Page:** *Small business owners give character, life and vitality to Downtown. Local artist Lisa Esherick, created a series of oil paintings of Downtown's small business owners to celebrate their contributions as individuals and as a whole. Images used with permission.*

Major new contributors to the Downtown scene are on their way. As this Plan is adopted, the University Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive is well on its way to constructing a world-class building that is sure to become a sought-out destination. The Magnes Museum also has plans to relocate Downtown, to take advantage of Downtown's accessibility and be part of its large community of cultural uses.

Downtown is also fortunate to have exceptional architectural and historic assets. Moving forward, it will be important to build on the foundation that these assets represent, as Downtown's competitiveness depends on the unique sense of place that its historic and architectural treasures afford.

The contributions of the arts and culture cannot be overestimated. In Berkeley, there are more than 130 arts and cultural organizations that collectively form one of the City's largest employment sectors. The arts provide some 3,400 jobs, reach an annual audience of 1.7 million people, and have a combined budget of \$70 million. Theater and music venues can also take some credit for the success of many restaurants and unique retailers in Downtown, and economic advisors to the DAP have recommended Downtown retail strategies build on these current strengths.

**Retail Revitalization.** Downtown continues to be a significant employment center and attracts tourists and visitors; it is no longer a major retail destination in the East Bay. Because of its distance from the freeway, dearth of large ground-floor retail space, and a perceived lack of convenient parking, economic advisors have indicated it is unlikely Downtown will attract a major "anchor" retailer or become a major regional retail center.

Downtown can increasingly serve Berkeleyans and visitors with attractive shops, diverse restaurants, amenities, and an appealing and lively

urban environment. Downtown provides many needs that are not met in neighborhood commercial centers, and offers options for Berkeleyans to shop locally instead of in cities. Good transit connections between Berkeley residential neighborhoods and Downtown are an essential part of a sustainable Berkeley.

Downtown also offers opportunities to enjoy a blend of small shops, restaurants, and services, which are often unique. Downtown has many small retail spaces, as the median size of Downtown's 317 ground-floor spaces is only 1,460 square feet (2008). Downtown also has synergies among small retailers that make it a one-of-a-kind retail destination, such as a cluster of bookstores and game stores in the Shattuck Square area.

The quality and character of Downtown is essential for Downtown to compete with other destinations. In Downtown an array of local goods and services are available within a pedestrian-oriented district that has exceptional transit service, where a positive sense of place can be cultivated. It is important that visitors, residents, students and workers find clean, safe and well-designed streets and open spaces.

**Residential Foundation.** Downtown is also a growing residential neighborhood. Downtown residents and businesses are mutually supportive. Downtown shops and services make it possible for more people to meet their daily needs by walking, and the patronage of residents encourages healthy and successful local businesses.

The growth of Downtown into a great urban residential neighborhood is essential to Downtown's economic success. Housing supports Downtown businesses and contributes to the city's vitality – while also offering a car-free environment that helps minimize transportation-related greenhouse gases.

Downtown can be a model for integrating economic development and environmental protection. A “green” and sustainable Downtown should be integral to its economic development. Green means not only abundant tree canopy and attractive landscaping and open spaces but also the use of cutting-edge technologies that protect water quality, conserve resources and reduce energy consumption. Downtown should attract and support “green” businesses and should be promoted as a destination for visiting green businesses and seeing best environmental practices up close.

In addition to building on the strength of its existing commercial, residential, and institutional uses, Downtown must also build on the strength of its location. While relatively distant from a freeway, it has some of the best transit access in the Bay Area. While cars are not the preferred mode for going Downtown, it is important to provide adequate parking for patrons of Downtown businesses, while simultaneously discouraging automobile commuters. As part of an economic development program, it is also important that appropriate signage and pricing be used so that people can find parking easily and also so parking is used efficiently.

Downtown forms the heart of Berkeley’s community. Not only is it centrally located, but it is Berkeley’s symbolic center. As such, it should provide services, goods, and cultural resources to meet needs of Berkeleyans of all incomes and ethnicities, as well all ages and household types – families, the elderly, and students.

**A Center of Employment and Education.** Downtown is the heart of a “city of learning.” Downtown contains or is next to major educational anchors including the University of California, Berkeley City College, Berkeley High School, the Central Library, and a concentration of learning-related businesses and institutes.

Downtown is one of two major employment centers within Berkeley, the other being West Berkeley. Downtown’s professional, technical, government and service offices serve the community and the Bay Area. Jobs in Downtown range from entry-level opportunities to the highest levels of professional and academic achievement. Several job training and job placement programs are located Downtown.

Downtown has had a relatively low vacancy rate in offices and rental rates for offices are relatively high compared to many portions of the Bay Area. The low vacancy rate is partly because most of Downtown’s office space serves the needs of the University or Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. In light of its growing needs, the University’s plans to construct an additional 800,000 square feet of office, research and cultural space in and adjacent to the Downtown Area, and UC staff and employees will continue to make significant contributions toward Downtown’s economic vitality.

Because many businesses are eager to be near to the University and Lab, and because the University spins off new businesses, there is likely to be a strong continued demand for Downtown office space. A 2006 study indicated that, since 1997, 104 start-up companies began as spin-offs resulting research at the University and Lawrence Berkeley Lab; only 14 of these companies remained in Berkeley, however. The study suggested that 25 companies could have been retained if Berkeley had more medium- / large-sized space and policies that encouraged business retention. In spite of demand, there has been very little office development in Downtown Berkeley for many years and until the recession there was limited office space available. As the economy recovers, it is likely that demand for office space in Downtown will pick up to address this type of need.

Berkeley's reputation and its adjacency to the University have attracted many non-profit organizations to Downtown. These non-profits represent a wide spectrum of concerns, including public policy, computer and internet technologies, cultural programs, community services, and job training and placement programs.

**Building on Strengths.** Downtown's commercial area is very large for a city of about 100,000 people. City policies and programs can help recruit retail uses that are complementary to existing uses or fill an unmet market niche. For Downtown, these include games, books, apparel, home furnishings, computers, electronics, bicycles, and shops or restaurants relating to cultural uses. In addition, new office and residential uses will bring higher levels of spending, while minimizing local and regional traffic impacts.

In order for an economic development strategy to "build on strengths," it must also emphasize targeted strategies that follow a fine-grain understanding of existing uses and characteristics in each subarea – resulting in healthier and more diverse retail. This does not necessarily mean establishing significantly different zoning use standards for different Downtown commercial areas, but perhaps establishing policies that recognize the importance of certain types of uses in certain locations. For example, the area around the BART station forms a distinctive core that is ideal for supporting a highly intensive mix of uses with vigorous retail especially along Shattuck Avenue.

## GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

**GOAL ED-1: SERVE THE NEEDS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE CITY. MAKE DOWNTOWN A MORE ATTRACTIVE REGIONAL DESTINATION, BY BUILDING ON DOWNTOWN'S UNIQUE BLEND OF CULTURAL, HISTORIC, ENTERTAINMENT, ART,**

## **EDUCATIONAL, AND COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS – AND BY PROMOTING SUCCESSFUL RETAIL BUSINESSES AND OTHER ATTRACTIONS, WITH DAYTIME AND NIGHTTIME POPULATIONS TO SUPPORT THEM.**

**Policy ED-1.1: Shop Downtown.** Encourage shopping Downtown, especially by Berkeley residents and UC faculty, staff, and students.

- a) Work with the Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA), the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, UC Berkeley, the Berkeley Cultural Trust, and other stakeholders to market Downtown, support businesses, attract tenants, and promote effective merchandising.
- b) Conduct surveys to identify retail businesses for which there may be market demand, such as retailers that would serve Berkeley residents and UC faculty, staff and students.
- c) Maintain and enhance "Shop Berkeley" programs and events to encourage patronage of Downtown businesses, and to describe benefits from local independent businesses.
- d) Enhance safety and cleanliness on Downtown streets (see policies under Goal HC-6).

**Policy ED-1.2: Parking.** Address parking availability problems associated with retail, restaurant, cultural, educational, entertainment, and hotel uses (see policies under Goal AC-3).

**Policy ED-1.3: Retail, Restaurants & Cultural Uses.** Support existing and encourage highly functional and viable new retail, restaurant, and cultural uses (such as theaters, music, museums, and galleries).



- a) Reduce discretionary review and streamline permits, to the extent feasible, for retail, restaurant and cultural uses.
- b) In new buildings, require ground-floor retail space with a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of 15 feet (see Policy HD-4.1).
- c) Where continuous commercial and cultural uses are desirable (see “Figure LU-3: Public-Servicing Frontage”), strengthen standards to require and guidelines to encourage street-facing retail, restaurant, cultural, and acceptable alternatives, as part of new development and adaptive reuse.
- d) To promote functional and viable retail, minimize street-level parking to the extent feasible (see Policies AC-3.3 & HD-4.1).
- e) Focus economic development, historic preservation, street improvement, and maintenance resources toward subareas with the most opportunity for success and synergy.
  - Work with retail stakeholders to regularly consider the extent and location of vacancies, and to recruit appropriate and complementary new tenants.
  - Give special attention to Shattuck Avenue from Durant Street to University Avenue, and secondarily to segments of University Avenue, and Addison and Center Streets, between Shattuck and Oxford.

**Policy ED-1.4: Rehabs & Reuse.** Encourage the rehabilitation and reuse of existing buildings (see policies under Goals LU-2 & LU-4, and the chapter on Historic Preservation and Urban Design).

**Policy ED-1.5: Local Businesses.** Encourage the retention and creation of small businesses and locally-owned businesses (see Policy ED-9.1).

**Policy ED-1.6: Larger Retail Spaces.** Retain and attract larger retailers to promote Downtown as a destination.

- a) Identify larger retail types that may do well in Downtown (such as for electronics, computers, appliances, and apparel).
- b) Consider incentives to retain and encourage retail space exceeding 10,000 square feet.
- c) Review and, if necessary, modify zoning provisions to discourage the subdivision of existing large spaces.
- d) Encourage the University to create larger retail spaces along University and Shattuck Avenues (see Policies LU-6.1 and HD-5.1).

**Policy ED-1.7: Entertainment & Culture.** Strengthen Downtown as a prime regional destination for alternative and mainstream cinema, and live theater and music. Evaluate and enhance the theater- and cinema-going experience in subareas where they are concentrated.

- a) Work to retain and expand cinemas, live theaters, and music venues.
- b) Work with cinema, theater, and music venues to upgrade to state-of-the-art facilities.
- c) Evaluate the experience of going to Downtown theaters, cinemas and music venues, and make enhancements to public safety and aesthetics. Adopt SOSIP recommendations such as pedestrian-scaled lighting for enhancing Downtown as a destination as



**Figure ED-1: Historic Cinemas.** Downtown cinemas, along with music clubs and live theater, help make Downtown a regional destination for entertainment. The California Theater, built in 1914, and UA Theater, built in 1932, also help contribute to the special sense of place that distinguishes Downtown from other destinations. Staff photos



**Figure ED-2: Civic Destinations.** The YMCA and Central Branch Library are among Downtown's many civic destinations and help make Downtown welcoming to families. Staff photos

part of the SOSIP (see policies under Goal OS-1). Give special attention to improving the theater-going experience near Shattuck and Kittredge Street and near Shattuck and Addison, as well as connections to nearby parking facilities.

- d) Promote the arts and cultural events, programs and activities.

**Policy ED-1.8: Families.** Promote family-friendly uses, such as childcare and preschools, and cultural, recreational, and educational activities for children, such as the YMCA.

- a) Consult with existing family-friendly businesses and organizations to determine what factors are critical to their retention and expansion. Consider incentives and programs that will support and retain existing family-friendly businesses and organizations.

- b) Work with DBA, property owners, real estate brokers, and other Downtown stakeholders to recruit new family-friendly businesses and organizations to Downtown.

**Policy ED-1.9: Educational Uses.** Promote educational uses, and enhance Downtown as a center of learning.

- a) Work with educational institutions to retain and expand lectures, instruction, and public events in Downtown. Such educational institutions include, but are not limited to: such as University of California, Berkeley Public Library, Berkeley High School, and Berkeley City College. Consider incentives and programs that might help encourage such activities.
- b) Encourage public awareness of Downtown educational events and activities through publicity and City communications.

**Policy ED-1.10: Conference Facilities.** Seek to retain and expand meeting and conference facilities.

- a) Support efforts by the Convention and Visitors Bureau and Downtown Berkeley Association to inventory and publicize available meeting and conference facilities.
- b) Encourage the inclusion of meeting and conference spaces to serve the private sector and the general public within new office and institutional development projects.
- c) Work with existing businesses and educational institutions to promote the use of suitable underutilized spaces as additional meeting and conference facilities.

**Policy ED-1.11: Hotels.** Encourage hotels in the heart of Downtown.

- a) Allow greater building height for major hotels than is generally allowed, if the hotel project delivers significant additional public benefits (consistent with Policy LU-1.5).
- b) Consider other incentives for major hotel projects, commensurate with the unique public benefits that hotels are likely to deliver.
- c) Partner with hotel developers to seek State and/or Federal funding that may support hotel projects and/or associated public improvements.
- d) Evaluate the impacts of hotels during the permit review process with respect to the impact of anticipated hotel employees on the demand for housing, transit and other public services, and measures that would be taken by the hotel to mitigate those impacts.

**Policy ED-1.12: Signage.** Improve public signage to make it more attractive and reduce “visual clutter,” such as by eliminating unnecessary signs or avoiding unnecessary variety in style. Enhance and expand signage and other features to help visitors navigate Downtown, such as to find transit, public parking, or major destinations.

- a) Seek ways to consolidate new and existing signs. Develop guidelines for the general appearance and placement of signs, possibly as part of the Streets & Open Space Improvements Plan (see Policy OS-1.1).
- b) Develop a program of directional “wayfinding” signs and information kiosks which gives consideration to:
  - the location of common destinations, especially cultural venues;
  - points of interest, such as historic resources and environmental sustainability features;
  - visitor arrival points, such as near BART and larger parking garages;
  - transit stops and stations with real-time bus and BART train arrival times;
  - signage showing real-time parking availability in larger garages (see Policy AC-3.1).

**Policy ED–1.13: Parking.** Address perceived parking availability problems associated with retail, restaurant, cultural, educational, entertainment, and hotel uses (see policies under Goals AC-1 and AC-3).

**GOAL ED-2: MAINTAIN SAFE AND INVITING STREETS, PARKS & PLAZAS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF BUSINESSES AND THE WELL-BEING OF RESIDENTS.**

**Policy ED-2.1: Activity & Safety.** To promote activity and safety on streets and other public open spaces, encourage outdoor dining, street fairs, outdoor merchandising and other private uses, as appropriate.

- a) Review existing City policies and procedures that may pose barriers to outdoor dining and street fairs on public property. Also consider other private uses that could help enhance public spaces. Eliminate barriers to the extent possible, while also assuring that private users pay a fair share of public maintenance costs.

**Policy ED-2.2: Public Conveniences.** Establish new and enhance existing publicly accessible convenience facilities including restrooms, drinking fountains, and other amenities.

- a) Make publicly accessible convenience facilities an integral part of planning for public streets and open space improvements (see Policy OS-4.1).
- b) Maintain public restrooms to highest practical standards, through the allocation of adequate City resources and through public-private cooperation.

**Policy ED 2.3: Clean Public Spaces.** Promote clean and well-maintained streets, parks, and plazas (see policies under Goals OS-4 and HC-6).

**GOAL ED-3: TO MAKE DOWNTOWN MORE ATTRACTIVE AND ECONOMICALLY SUCCESSFUL, ENCOURAGE PLACE-MAKING**



**Figure ED-3: Berkeley's Arts District.** The Arts District has spurred Downtown revitalization efforts by attracting people from around the Bay Area. Cultural organizations, private developers, and the City have worked together to attract venues for live performance, including Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Aurora Theater, The Jazzschool, Nevo School, and the Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse. Art galleries promoted by Berkeley's Civic Arts Program add to the mix.

The Arts District was initially focused along a one-block segment of Addison Street that was improved to be more attractive and feature poetry and public art. Major new cultural uses are expanding the Art District beyond its original boundaries. The University of California Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive and the Judah L. Magnes Museum are relocating to the Downtown, and adaptive reuse of the UC Theater may feature a major music club.

Image courtesy Susie Medak

**THROUGH THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS, STREET AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS, AND HIGH-QUALITY NEW CONSTRUCTION.**

See "Historic Preservation & Urban Design" and "Streets & Open Space" chapters, and policies under Goal ED-1.

**GOAL ED-4: ENSURE THAT UC BERKELEY IS A PARTNER IN PROMOTING A HEALTHY AND VITAL DOWNTOWN.**

**Policy ED-4.1: Guiding and Cooperating with UC Berkeley.** Provide guidance to the University regarding actions that it can take regarding the Downtown Area Plan, and cooperate with the University in carrying out the Plan.

- a) Work with the University to develop a summary of UC-related policies and implementing actions contained in the DAP. Review this summary regularly, and consider ways to implement the DAP more effectively.
- b) Work toward the timely adoption of Zoning provisions and Downtown Design Guideline amendments in order to further guide UC development initiatives in the Downtown Area.

**Policy ED-4.2: Community Uses & Economic Activity.** Encourage the University to locate academic and related programs that have a strong community component and can encourage economic activity Downtown (see policies under Goal LU-6).

**Policy ED-4.3: Downtown Retail.** Encourage the University to use its development to strengthen Downtown retail (see policies under Goal LU-6).

- a) Encourage the University to make development along Shattuck and University Avenue a near-term priority, because of its economic benefits to Downtown. Work with UC Berkeley staff and administrators to accelerate UC's current 10-year timetable for development in these locations.

**Policy ED-4.4: Fair Compensation.** UC Berkeley should fairly compensate the City for taxes lost when the University leases, buys, or occupies space that was previously occupied by private tenants.

- a) The City should seek an agreement with the University to establish a mechanism such that if UC leases or occupies any space within private office/commercial development, or purchases land Downtown, it will provide to the City financial support equivalent to the taxes and/or fees that the City would receive if private users were leasing, occupying or owning the space.

**GOAL ED-5: INCORPORATE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND ESTABLISH DOWNTOWN AS A RECOGNIZED CENTER FOR BUSINESSES AND INSTITUTIONS THAT ARE COMMITTED TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.**

**Policy ED-5.1: Green Businesses.** Encourage "green businesses" Downtown (see Policy ES-2.2).

- a) Promote environmental business practices.

**Policy ED-5.2: Public Awareness.** Increase public awareness of environmental features and programs Downtown (see policies under Goals ES-1 and ES-2).

**Policy ED-5.3: Local Food and Businesses.**

Promote strategies that connect Downtown residents, businesses and visitors with local sources of products, services, and healthful foods (see Policy ES-2.3).

**Policy ED-5.4: Local Businesses.** Encourage the retention and creation of small and locally-owned businesses (see Policies ES-2.3, ED-8.2, and ED-9.1).

**GOAL ED-6: INVEST IN CIVIC IMPROVEMENTS (SUCH AS STREETS, OPEN SPACES, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES) TO ENHANCE DOWNTOWN AS A PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, AND VISIT.**

See policies in chapters on “Historic Preservation & Urban Design” and “Streets & Open Space”.

**GOAL ED-7: PROMOTE DOWNTOWN AS A REGIONAL CULTURAL CENTER AND VISITOR DESTINATION.**

**Policy ED-7.1: Culture & the Arts.** Promote the arts and cultural events, programs, and activities, especially those that embrace diverse traditions and are accessible to persons of all economic means.

- a) Support the Civic Arts Commission and cultural groups in Berkeley that support emerging local artists and cultural organizations.
- b) Support Arts District stakeholders and other cultural groups that bring expressions of ethnic, religious, cultural, and minority institutions to Downtown.
- c) Encourage long-term and affordable space for arts, culture, and other desirable uses that cannot pay market rents (see Policy LU-1.2).

- d) Consider establishing facilities for outdoor public performances of music, drama, dance, poetry, or other performance arts (see policies under Goal OS-1).

**Policy ED-7.2: Tourism & Visitors.** Promote Downtown as a tourist and visitor destination (see policies under Goals ES-2, LU-1, AC-1, AC-3, HD-1, OS-1, OS-4, and other goals in this chapter).

**GOAL ED-8: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF DOWNTOWN JOBS THAT GO TO BERKELEY RESIDENTS, AND SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF JOB SKILLS FOR BERKELEY RESIDENTS – ESPECIALLY BERKELEY’S YOUTH.**

**Policy ED-8.1: Job Development.** Connect Downtown businesses with the employment needs of Berkeley residents, and address existing chronic unemployment and under-employment among local populations. A special emphasis should be placed on providing Berkeley youth with job skills and entry-level job opportunities (see policies under Goals LU-2 and HC-5).

- a) Gather information on the types of employment available Downtown and make this information available to educational institutions and job training.
- b) Encourage job training (such as employment counseling, referrals, placement, and retention) and the development of life skills (such as parenting, grooming, and personal finances) for Berkeley residents and homeless populations by working with Downtown’s public and private institutions, nonprofit organizations, and businesses.
- c) Strengthen citywide job referral and job placement programs for Berkeley’s residents (such as “First Source”), and work

with Downtown business and job training organizations to help Berkeley residents obtain Downtown employment. Consider requiring construction firms and labor unions that work on public improvements to participate in on-the-job training for Berkeley residents, including Berkeley youth.

- d) Support job placement and professional internship programs for youth in the Downtown Area, such as at the YMCA and Berkeley High School, and help these programs network with Downtown business organizations.
- e) Consider incentives for developers and new businesses to provide on-the-job training and employment opportunities, and consider inclusion of job opportunities for Berkeley's workforce as part of City-developer negotiations.
- f) Consider how job training opportunities might be joined with Downtown cleaning and landscaping activities.
- g) Promote local hiring with Voluntary Green Pathway employment requirements (see Policy LU-2.3).

**Policy ED-8.2: Business Opportunities.** Serve the growth needs of existing Downtown businesses, and support start-up businesses Downtown, especially ones that capitalize on the proximity of UC Berkeley. Take advantage of Berkeley's existing workforce and its ethnic and cultural diversity (see policies in "Land Use" chapter and elsewhere in this chapter).

- a) Encourage new office space Downtown by allowing appropriate uses and building heights (see policies in Land Use chapter).

- b) Work with the University to encourage its faculty and recent graduates to locate new and/or existing businesses Downtown.

**GOAL ED-9: ENCOURAGE LOCAL BUSINESSES THAT REPRESENT THE CITY'S DIVERSE ETHNIC, CULTURAL AND INCOME GROUPS.**

**Policy ED-9.1: Local Businesses.** Encourage the retention and creation of small businesses and locally owned businesses.

- a) Establish economic development strategies to retain existing small and locally owned businesses, and to encourage the establishment of new businesses with ownership structures that keep consumer dollars in the local economy.
- b) Maintain and expand "Shop Berkeley" promotion and education efforts specific to Downtown.
- c) Continue existing, and consider new, low-interest loans to encourage and support local small businesses in Downtown.
- d) Provide training to small businesses for their improvement and to make Downtown a more effective business district.
- e) Seek to recruit ethnically- and culturally-focused restaurants and other businesses in other cities to move to, or open another branch in, Downtown.
- f) Seek to avoid arbitrary or capricious displacement of business tenants, and mitigate the negative effects of temporary or permanent relocation on businesses.

**GOAL ED-10: SERVE THE HOUSING NEEDS OF ALL INCOME GROUPS AND PROVIDE A GROWING BASE OF RESIDENTS WHO SUPPORT A BROAD RANGE OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL AND OTHER BUSINESSES.**

See policies in chapter on “Housing and Community Health & Services.”

**GOAL ED-11: PROVIDE ACCESS TO DOWNTOWN, WHICH SUPPORTS RETAIL, RESTAURANTS, ENTERTAINMENT, HOTELS AND CULTURAL USES.**

See policies in chapter on “Access.”

**GOAL ED-12: INVEST RESOURCES DOWNTOWN TO SUPPORT CITY GOALS AND TO IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY OF ENVIRONMENT.**

**Policy ED-12.1: Revenues for Downtown.**

Significant capital investment in Downtown infrastructure and a continued commitment to maintenance of a quality environment is necessary in order for the Downtown to develop and remain a vital and vibrant place to work, live, shop, dine and recreate. The City must balance the needs of all neighborhoods and commercial areas of the City, while at the same time remaining committed to investing resources in the Downtown to meet these goals. Potential sources of funding for investment in the Downtown include parking meter revenue, transient occupancy tax and various development fees that could be assessed. Each year prior to the City Council reviewing and adopting its annual budget, the Council will be provided with a report of the revenues generated from various sources in the Downtown. As part of the annual budget adoption, the Council will commit a meaningful amount of resources to

both capital investment and maintenance for the Downtown area (see policies under Goal LU-2).

- a) Coordinate financing strategies for parking & transportation, streets & open space, and other public needs, to identify funding sources, estimate revenues, and prioritize improvements and programs.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



## **CITY COUNCIL**

Tom Bates, Mayor

Linda Maio, District 1

Darryl Moore, District 2

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Jesse Arreguin, District 4

Laurie Capitelli, District 5

Susan Wengraf, District 6

Kriss Worthington, District 7

Gordon Wozniak, District 8

## **CITY STAFF**

Phil Kamlarz, City Manager /  
Christine Daniel, Interim City Manager

**Matt Taecker,**  
**Principal Planner & Urban Designer**  
**for Downtown Berkeley**  
**Planning & Development**

Alexander Amoroso, Principal Planner

## **Department**

Dan Marks, Planning Director /  
Wendy Cosin, Interim Planning Director

Debra Sanderson, Planning Manager

Interns: Alexander Tiblier, Alexis Lynch, Berta Lazaro, Caroline Teng, Christopher Kost, Esmeralda Jardines, Jassu Singh, Katie Handy, Katja Schulz, Nathan Hedberg, Nick Perry, Patrick Race, Seung Yen Hong, Yiu Kam

## **UC BERKELEY STAFF**

Emily Marthinsen, Assistant Vice Chancellor

Harrison Fraker, Professor of Architecture

Jim Horner, Campus Landscape Architect

Jennifer McDougall, Principal Planner

Lawrence Rinder, Director, BAM/PFA



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