

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

SETTING, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Berkeley is located at the geographic center of the Bay Area. Like its neighbors to the north and south, its western limits are defined by the Bay and its eastern limits by the abruptly rising Berkeley Hills. Its climate is mild; prevailing winds are from the west and southwest.

The character of Berkeley's urban development has its roots in concurrent events during the last half of the 19th Century. Establishment of the University of California and dedication of the site for the School for the Deaf led to the physical development of its eastern foothills and its emergence as a cultural and educational center. Development of the railroads from Oakland, first to Martinez and later to Sacramento, led to industrial and residential development in West Berkeley, then known as Oceanview.

The first major growth decade was 1900-1910, when the population increased from 10,000 to 40,000. Trolley service to Oakland and ferry service to San Francisco were initiated at this time. When the earthquake and fire of 1906 drove many to the East Bay, Berkeley experienced unprecedented residential growth. The 1920's saw another spurt of residential growth. In spite of the 1923 fire which destroyed 600 buildings and left 4,000 persons homeless, the population grew from 56,000 in 1920 to 82,000 in 1930.

The most recent population growth in Berkeley occurred during and after World War II. The war attracted large numbers of war workers. Berkeley's black population quadrupled while its student population fell from 17,000 in 1940 to 11,000 in 1945. From 1945-1950, the University doubled in student population. Enrollment, however, dropped back to 13,000 by 1953. The University has since grown to almost 30,000 students.

This change from a middle-class University city to a highly diverse city accommodating a wide variety of races, economic levels and lifestyles has been permanent and characterizes Berkeley's population today. Berkeley's diverse population has produced a climate in which concern for its people and the courage to innovate result in unique policies and programs.

The 1955 Master Plan set a comprehensive framework for the future and led to a program of rezoning which protected many lower income neighborhoods. This was followed by the first and, to date, most successful neighborhood planning effort - the San Pablo Neighborhood Plan. The Federally Assisted Code Enforcement Program (FACE) in San Pablo Neighborhood to help residents improve their homes was the largest single FACE program in the nation. Unfortunately, the shifts in federal policy toward urban assistance and the social upheavals of the 1960's aborted the original intention of continuing an orderly neighborhood-planning program throughout the city.

In 1966 Berkeley voted to underground all of the Bay Area Rapid Transit lines in Berkeley, becoming the only community in the system to take on indebtedness above that incurred for its share of the system as a whole. A major issue in this bond election was the fear that elevated tracks would split the community socially, economically and racially. This same concern led to voluntary integration of the school system in 1968.

Despite its limited financial capacity, Berkeley has sought to meet the diverse needs of its population. It has remained one of only a handful of California communities to provide a wide spectrum of health services to residents. Its commitment to quality public education is unequalled. A wide variety of social, recreational and cultural activities for and by residents are supported with city programs and contracts with community agencies. Low and moderate income families, elderly and disabled persons benefit from non-profit, moderate income housing and leased housing programs.

Berkeley residents care about their neighborhoods and their community. Thousands participate in the city's decision-making every year as members of neighborhood organizations, political groups backing candidates and initiatives, members of appointed boards and commissions and as individuals.

Paralleling concern for its citizens has been concern for the environment of the city and the region. Berkeleyans formed the nucleus of the Save the Bay Association which successfully fought the uncontrolled filling of San Francisco Bay for residential and industrial development.

Recognizing the environmental threat of automobiles, Berkeley resisted the development of an Ashby Avenue freeway, established a policy of reducing dependence on the automobile, installed a system of bikeways, developed a Traffic Management Plan to protect the environment of residential areas and initiated programs to improve transit service. Regionally, it is actively participating in planning for alternative solid waste management systems and regional open space.

POPULATION

Berkeley has perhaps the most diverse population to be found in any city of its size. Persons of all ages, races, incomes and lifestyles are found among its population. While the size of the population (approximately 115,000) has not changed in the last quarter century, shifts in its makeup have occurred and probably will continue. The 50's and 60's saw a large increase in the student and young adult population. Between 1960 and 1970 the number of persons between 15 and 24 increased 50%, while the number of persons under five declined almost 30% and the number 35 to 64 declined almost 20%. Households with children were replaced by those without children. While the total white population declined slightly, the black population increased by 257. And the other non-white population (primarily Chinese and Japanese) increased almost 40%. Women, low income households, ethnic and racial groups, the disabled and unconventional lifestyles asserted themselves more than ever before. Alternative education, child care programs and senior centers were among the responses to this increased awareness. The impact of physical development (apartments, parks, urban renewal, street beautification, recreation centers) on the social fabric of the city is being examined. The integration of social and economic with physical planning recognizes the inter-relationship between what is developed or conserved and the quality of life and character of the population in Berkeley.

ECONOMY

The University of California is the single largest factor in Berkeley's economy. It provides approximately 12,000 jobs and its departments, staff, faculty,

students and visitors spend millions of dollars annually in Berkeley. Other significant components of the economy include the industrial development in West Berkeley, the Central Business District, community and neighborhood commercial centers and other institutions such as the hospitals and Graduate Theological Union.

In spite of institutional expansion and increased sales by specialty shops in many areas, Berkeley's economy has deteriorated over the past several years. Unemployment is over 16% among blacks it is estimated at over 20%. Since 1970, in constant dollars, sales tax receipts have declined 7%, real estate property values have declined 9%, and city expenditures have risen more than 12%. The University of California and other non-profit institutions not subject to the local property tax occupy large portions of the land in the city, with the result that a correspondingly greater tax burden falls on property owners and residents to support necessary municipal services.

THE MASTER PLAN

The purpose of the Master Plan is to guide public and private decisions affecting Berkeley's development and character. The Plan expresses Berkeley's current policies for future development, both short and long range. The City Council is a primary user of the Plan since its decisions will both directly implement Plan proposals and will provide the framework for others to act in accordance with the Plan through regulatory devices and other programs.

Berkeley's first comprehensive Master Plan was adopted in 1955. A landmark in its time, it still provides a standard for Master Plans focused on traditional physical development issues. Since then, Berkeley has participated in regional planning, including the ABAG plan for the nine county region, the Bay Conservation Development Commission plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission plan for transportation, and special plans for open space and housing. The state has broadened the horizons of local planning by requiring the integration into General Plans of policies on housing, natural hazards and environmental protection. While not mandated by state law, some jurisdictions (including Berkeley) are further expanding their plans to include social and economic development goals as well as other subjects of local interest.

While Berkeley's 1955 Master Plan has been amended many times -most recently in 1968 -- it still does not include all the elements mandated by state law. Although the flexibility of the existing Plan has allowed actions to make zoning more restrictive and to experiment in traffic *management*, the basic thrust of its policies does not accurately address the attitudes and problems of Berkeley in the 1970's. Wide citizen concern about the issues and policies affecting land use and density led to enacting the Neighborhood Preservation ordinance which mandated a comprehensive revision of the Master Plan and Zoning ordinance. A Master Plan Revision Committee was appointed by the City Council to assist the Planning Commission with the task of Plan and ordinance revision. The Committee's Master-Plan proposals were submitted to the Planning Commission in January 1976. After review, amendment and public hearings this Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission on December 15, 1976 and by the City Council on June 28, 1977. The *Planning Commission* will be developing Social and Economic Development Elements. These will be integrated into the Master Plan in the near future. In the coming years, other revisions will be made as appropriate to maintain the currency and utility of the Plan policies and proposals.

The Plan is a "today" Plan -- indicating the current intent of the city. In general, the Goals define ideals toward which the city will be constantly striving but which may never be fully attained. But Policies calling for improvements in the physical and social conditions of the city in specific ways can affect such improvements to a significant degree. Other policies are intended to define how programs and development activities are undertaken. The policies will be reviewed periodically as to their usefulness and validity and updated as needed.

ASSUMPTIONS

GENERAL

- 1) The San Francisco Bay Region,* despite intensive and massive development, is still rich in natural and scenic resources. In an overall sense, the region will choose to protect and conserve those environmental qualities remaining and will take decisive actions toward improving the quality of its environment.
- 2) The region's population is expected to increase from 4.6 million in 1970 to 5.8 million in 1990, but almost no population growth will occur in central cities such as San Francisco, Oakland and Berkeley. These cities will, however, experience increases in employment.
- 3) Berkeley will continue to occupy a key position in the region, functionally as a world renowned educational center and geographically due to its proximity to Oakland, San Francisco and the Bay. Berkeley will continue to coordinate with state and regional agencies responsible for area-wide planning of social services, transportation, public facilities, open space and environmental protection.

BERKELEY

- 1) The size of Berkeley's population will not change; its makeup will be characterized over the next twenty years by: 1) racial, ethnic and economic diversity; 2) a high proportion of young adults including many non-students; and 3) more but smaller-sized households and families.
- 2) The University of California will continue its role as a center of higher education and cultural activities. Its enrollment will stay at approximately 27,500.
- 3) Financial assistance from state and federal sources will increasingly be in the form of block grants which permit a greater degree of local discretion in their use than categorical grants for specific projects. This will be accompanied by requirements for systematic general and program planning at the local level to obtain the greatest benefit from these limited resources.

*Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, San Francisco, Solano and Sonoma Counties.

- 4) Its central location, attractive neighborhoods, growing number of households and limited opportunities for new development will result in a continued high demand for housing of all types in Berkeley.
- 5) Commercial, residential and institutional activities will continue to use and improve existing structures where feasible. Deteriorated buildings and incompatible uses will be replaced.

GOALS

- 1) To preserve the unique character of Berkeley which results from its extraordinary natural and man-made amenities, and from its diverse population made up of persons of all ages and a wide variety of economic levels, racial and ethnic groups and lifestyles.
- 2) To enable all residents to obtain decent housing, suitable employment, public services, recreational and cultural facilities and essential personal goods and services.
- 3) To preserve Berkeley's traditional regional roles as a fine residential community and as an educational, cultural, professional and recreational center of the Bay Area.
- 4) To make local government open, accessible and responsive to the needs of all Berkeley citizens.
- 5) To improve Berkeley's financial position by fostering opportunities for appropriate economic development.

Berkeley's character

Berkeley's residents ' have always had a deep attachment to the physical character of the city. Although taking different forms of expression over the years, the recognition of the city's beauty, geographic advantages and its physical setting have almost continuously affected the viewpoints of its temporary and permanent citizens. The racial, cultural and economic diversity of its population that has occurred in recent years is recognized as a valued aspect of the city's character. Policies to control the scale and location of new development, to preserve open space, to mitigate the effects of automobiles and, to strengthen citizen participation are included in the Plan to clarify the inter-relationship of citizen participation, the economy and the character of the city.

Increased Citizen Participation

Residents and organizations are demanding more direct access to the planning and decision-making process. The Plan addresses the need to impart information to citizens and to develop and maintain effective ways for citizens and organizations to participate in policy decisions on land use controls and environmental and social issues.

Emphasis on People

The 1955 Master Plan dealt with people in a quantitative manner, as users of physical development. The revised Plan more explicitly derives from the needs of people -- for jobs, housing, open space, safety from natural hazards and participation in a rich cultural and community experience. The needs of the elderly are not the same as the needs of families; the needs of low income households are not the same as the needs of the more affluent. The Plan responds to this spectrum of needs to the greatest degree possible.

Environmental Awareness and Protection

Since 1955, awareness and understanding of environmental hazards, the potential polluting effects of human activities and consequences of ecological disturbance have greatly increased. The state's requirements for Plan elements on Noise, Conservation, Open Space, Seismic Safety and Safety reflect this concern. Berkeley has been a leader in restricting bay fill, supporting recycling and preserving environmental quality in its neighborhoods. The Plan formalizes, extends and coordinates such policies and proposals.