5 - HISTORIC PRESERVATION & URBAN DESIGN
5. HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND URBAN DESIGN

STRATEGIC STATEMENT

Berkeley has one of the few examples of a pre-World War II downtown of its size in California. Our Downtown has an exemplary and vital heritage of historic buildings in a wide variety of architectural styles and scales. Pieces of Downtown remain much as they were in the 1930s. The scale, massing, and visual character of many historic buildings remain intact. Downtown buildings also relate to streets in traditional urban ways, with commercial ground floors fronting directly onto the public sidewalk, rather than being set back to accommodate automobile parking as occurred in many communities. Downtown Berkeley was also fortunate to escape much of the redevelopment that affected many California cities during the 1960s and 1970s, although some significant demolition and characterless construction occurred. (For additional background on historic resources in Downtown, see Appendix #.)

While Downtown’s historic assets are significant, Downtown is an incomplete cityscape (see Figure HD-1: Historic Resources, Noteworthy Buildings, and Potential Development Opportunity Sites). Downtown has many underused and nondescript 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. The character of new development must be carefully considered through the lens of urban design.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND NEW DEVELOPMENT

This chapter seeks 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. Modern architects are challenged by and their buildings are enhanced in responding to historic contexts. And through continued care and investment, historic buildings will continue to contribute continuity and character to Downtown’s changing yet principled cityscape.

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

- Studies show that historic preservation is good for the economy and for property values.
- Berkeley can capitalize on Downtown’s potential for cultural tourism by celebrating its historic character through civic improvements, and on-going programs and activities.
- Older buildings tend to offer distinctive retail spaces with taller ceiling heights and deeper retail space.
- Older buildings provide much of Berkeley’s most affordable and most family-friendly housing.
- 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.

- Preservation helps retain a community’s distinct character 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 enables us to chart paths to the present and future.

Urban design policies help assure appropriate new development and also have important 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, give needed scope for the exercise of design talents and creativity.

- New construction, and the renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, encourage new ideas such as energy-saving designs or innovative construction techniques.

- New construction, and the renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, can provide needed new housing.

- Urban design guides and stimulates new developments that are necessary for revitalization and evolution of Downtown’s economy and cultural uses.

- Urban design employs public improvements to complement private development and enhanced urban environment for our enjoyment.

DOWNTOWN SUBAREAS AND CONTEXTUAL DESIGN

The cityscape of the Downtown Area Plan is complex. It 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 Avenue to Durant. Despite some unfortunate remodelings, this “main street” has retained its basic visual character (see Figure HD-1, “Historic Resources, Noteworthy Buildings and Potential Development Opportunity Sites.”) Another particularly important historic subarea is the Civic Center Historic District. The Landmarks Preservation Commission may in future determine additional subareas to be historically significant, including residential areas.

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 development, and should include:

a) conserving the character of subareas that have a strong historic character, while recognizing that sensitive infill development and appropriate intensification of designated Landmarks can occur; and

b) channeling much of Downtown’s new development into sections now lacking a strong visual identity.
To help accomplish those aims, two distinct regulatory approaches to preservation and design are needed: one for subareas that have a strong historic character, and one for Downtown development outside those subareas.

For the strongly historic subareas, the Downtown Design Guidelines should be strengthened to better protect and reinforce the overall character of the subarea. The Landmarks Preservation Commission should evaluate subareas to determine whether any additional areas would qualify as a Historic District. Recent years’ additions to the Berkeley Main Library and the Francis K. Shattuck Building (at 2100 Shattuck) illustrate some ways that design can both respect and enhance the Central Shattuck subarea.

For subareas without historic character, the existing design review and landmarking processes should be used to protect individual historic buildings and the general Downtown cityscape, while allowing for a lively variety of good architecture. For all areas, the Downtown Design Guidelines should be amended and applied to address ways 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).

The answer to “what should a new building look like?” will vary from place to place. In subareas where historic resources are concentrated, designers should pay special attention to the context, including the adjacent properties and the subarea as a whole. For instance, along Shattuck from University to Durant where many historic buildings are located, a contextual approach might include building 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 ZONING STANDARDS AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

The urban design objectives should inform zoning regulations. Building-height, step-back and setback controls are especially important so as to encourage building design that is sensitive to historic contexts, but also Downtown’s “main street” traditions in general. Consideration should also be given to new “character-based” zoning provisions that spell out desirable and measurable urban design outcomes. These provisions can help address some essential ways that buildings should face streets to make streets more active, safe and attractive.

Improvements to Downtown’s public realm of streets and open spaces are also vital. Public improvements should actively support solutions that are appropriate to the context in which they occur, while also maintaining design continuity for some ubiquitous features such as street lighting (see “Streetscapes and Open Space” Chapter).

As the owner of developable land in Downtown, the University should also 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. At the same time, it should include suitable landscape features that relate Downtown to the main campus and Ohlone Greenway.
Revised March 25, 2009. While the map is generally accurate, corrections will be made and the status of any individual parcel should be verified. For site-specific information see the DAP Reconnaissance Survey Matrix.
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 encourage their adaptive reuse and intensification where appropriate.

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, exterior building modifications should 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 Interior’s “Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes,” should also be applied. At a minimum, historic facades should be maintained and/or rehabilitated and the scale and character of additions should be compatible with the historic building.

c) For the most common practices and alterations, compile reference materials to describe appropriate maintenance and façade improvements, and where additional information can be obtained. These materials should be compiled with community participation. Make reference materials available to property owners, contractors and architects.

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 ES-4.8, LU-3.3, AC-3.6 and OS-3.1.)

e) 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.

Policy HD-1.2: Repairs and 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.

1Additional 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.

2Documentation should be sufficient for analysis under CEQA.
a) Evaluate and, if needed, strengthen recommendations relating to substantial alterations contained within the Downtown Design Guidelines.

b) Encourage property owners, developers, and other stakeholders to use archives and other resources to guide appropriate restorations and repairs. Support the maintenance of and encourage public access to archives that offer information on older Downtown buildings.

Policy HD-1.3: Public Awareness. Enhance citizen awareness of Downtown’s architectural heritage and of its unique historic circumstances.

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 artists who are invited to install art in Downtown to refer to Downtown’s historic features and events.

Policy HD-1.4: 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 LU-6.1 and LU-6.2).

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

a) Recognize subareas having a unique and/or historic character in the Streets & Open Space Improvements Plan (see OS-1.1 and OS-1.2), by recommending 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) Evaluate and, if needed, strengthen the existing Downtown Design Guidelines to encourage...
designs that are contextual to subareas where historic resources are concentrated (see HD-3.1 AND HD-4.1). Use available survey findings to inform this process (see HD-1.1).

b) The Landmarks Preservation Commission may designate one or more historic subareas as Historic Districts (in addition to the present Civic Center Historic District and Berkeley High School Campus’ placement on the National Register of Historic Places), and in accordance with the twin goals of preserving historic structures and encouraging new, compatible and complementary development.

- If a Historic District is to be created, it should be accompanied by the creation of development guidelines acknowledging the importance of continued growth, increasing building densities, and design creativity.

- Use available historic survey findings to help support the preparation of documentation and the analysis for possible Historic District designation(s) by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

- Consideration should be given to the creation of a Shattuck Avenue Historic District that would generally include the 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.”

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 frame streets with building streetwalls and create 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 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 HD-4.1).

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, respecting
Downtown’s historic resources, while also considering policies relating to DAP building height and envelope provisions (see LU-1.1).

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 the appropriate design of new construction and building alterations that promote active, interesting, and pleasing streetscapes, open space, and street-level commercial spaces. Encourage street-level entrances and facades that contribute to the pedestrian environment. In commercial areas, buildings should generally maintain the urban tradition of no street-level setbacks from the street.

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

- include contextual provisions specific to where historic resources are concentrated (see HD-2.2);

- 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 ED-1.2);

- 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 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 (see AC-3.6 and ED-1.2);

- provide adequate lighting and safety features in garages, in bus shelters and at bicycle parking;

- promote resource-efficient design and emerging sustainability practices (see ES-4.1 through 4.8); and

- encourage on-site greenery and ecologically beneficial features (see OS-3.1).

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 at the same time improve signage that helps visitors navigate Downtown (See ED-1.10 and 1.11).
d) **Encourage outdoor dining, street fairs, and similar limited private use of public spaces (See ED-2.1).**

e) **Establish new and enhance existing publicly accessible convenience facilities such as restrooms, drinking fountains, and other amenities (See OS 4.5 and ED-2.2).**

**Policy HD–4.2: Adverse Impacts.** Design and locate new buildings to avoid significant adverse solar- or wind-related impacts on important public open spaces. Also provide for adequate natural light in residential units through appropriate building form (see HC-2.1).

a) **Strengthen the Downtown Design Guidelines to provide guidance on how solar access and wind impacts should be analyzed and addressed, for both public open spaces and residential units.**

b) **For taller buildings, use solar- and wind-simulation facilities to evaluate and refine design alternatives, such as facilities at PG&E’s Energy Center and UC Berkeley’s College of Environmental Design.**

**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 increase 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 with concentrations of historic resources (see HD-2.1, HD-2.2, OS-3.1, and OS-1.2).

**Policy HD-4.4: Design Creativity and Excellence.** Support design creativity during development review and in the resulting construction, and continue Berkeley’s tradition of architectural excellence. All new construction and building alterations should be of the highest quality.

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 HD-1.1);
   - encourage architectural and site features that use durable materials and are detailed to be long-lasting (see ES-4.6).

b) **Promote and, where appropriate, require buildings that have resource-efficient design and emerging sustainable design practices (see ES-4.1 and 4.2).**

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

**Policy HD-5.1: Appropriate Buildings.** Within the Downtown Area, strongly encourage the University to design buildings that are appropriate to Downtown, and make all streets abutting University property pedestrian-friendly, such as would be required of any Downtown developer. Along street frontages of University buildings within Downtown, the ground floor should be pedestrian-friendly, have windows and entrances, and avoid blank walls. Encourage active street-level uses. Provide retail uses along Shattuck Avenue and the north side of University Avenue (see LU-1.1 and LU-5.1).
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 help enhance streets and public open spaces in Downtown (see OS-1.1 and OS-1.2).

a) Urge the University to make substantial and fair contributions for street improvements adjacent to their properties in Downtown. Continue to have conversations with the University on how to fund other improvements in Downtown, including but not limited to those noted below (see OS-1.4, OS-3.1 and LU-8.1).

b) Continue to work in partnership with the University in the development of the Streets & Open Space Improvements Plan (see OS-1.1 and 1.2), especially in locations of mutual interest. Give priority to development and street improvements along UC’s frontage on University Avenue and Oxford Street

c) Encourage University efforts to enhance open spaces along the Oxford-Fulton edge of the main campus, including provisions regarding “the Crescent” and a new publicly accessible “green” at the east end of Kittredge Street

d) To provide a transition between the park-like campus and the urban Downtown, partner with the University to design and implement Oxford Street as a green boulevard, with active building fronts along the west edge of Oxford.

e) Encourage the University to enhance the Ohlone Greenway extension (from the Ohlone Greenway to the UC campus) through landscaping and building design along Hearst Avenue on its DHS site

f) Create a convenient pedestrian connection through the State Department of Health Services (DHS) site between Walnut Street’s segments north and south of the DHS site.

g) Encourage midblock pedestrian connections between University Avenue and Center Street, as part of future 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.
A World Class Museum

“The University’s Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA) is acclaimed worldwide for its collections, research and programs. The exemplary modern building that was home to BAM/PFA for many years was found to be seismically unsound in 1997 and its renovation was determined to cost as much as a new building. The BAM/PFA Board of Trustees turned this challenge into an opportunity by pursuing a new museum where cutting-edge art, film, and digital programs and collections could be housed in a state-of-the-art facility. They chose the site of the former UC Press and adjacent garage so that the new museum could be part of Downtown’s increasingly vibrant cultural scene and exceptional transit access.

By selecting the internationally renowned Japanese architect Toyo Ito, the Board assured the creation of major architectural icon for Downtown and the UC campus. Ito’s design will make the museum a fluid extension of the public spaces that surround it: connecting to the Arts District to the north, the UC campus to the east, and the future Center Street Plaza to the south. Says Ito, “Envision a place where transparency is not just a visual effect, but also an emotional and social activity.”

Toyo Ito’s design moves well beyond the traditional box museum. Ito has stretched meeting places, devised unexpected views, and inserted unanticipated spaces for contemplation, all to encourage the University and community to merge and engage. Ito’s design also calls for an innovative structural steel exterior that curves to meet towering windows.

The museum’s first floor will house a cinema, four exhibition galleries, a children’s studio, and museum store and café, most of which will be open to the public without charge. Upper floors will include sixteen exhibition galleries, a library, three learning centers, and roof garden. The new museum is expected to open in 2013 and will be LEED certified.”

Image and text courtesy University of California BAM/PFA, http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/newbuilding/design
HISTORIC RESOURCES AND DOWNTOWN BERKELEY

In the mid-19th century Francis Kittredge Shattuck and his brother-in-law George Blake acquired large landholdings flanking today's Shattuck Avenue, which would later become Downtown Berkeley. Downtown's early development was stimulated by the opening of a railroad spur line in 1876 to stations that were located at Dwight Way and at Berkeley and Shattuck Squares, where a rail tracks where buildings now stand. Shattuck Avenue's width accommodated the train 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 early 20th century, dramatic growth and rebuilding were stimulated by: electric rail service linking Berkeley to Oakland and San Francisco; by the resettlement of San Franciscans to the East Bay after the 1906 earthquake and fire; and by the growth of the University of California. There was less development beginning with 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's character is largely because many of its buildings were constructed between 1900 and 1940 and have retained their historic appearance. Berkeley is fortunate to have escaped the wholesale redevelopment that scarred many California cities in the 1960s and 1970s. Some demolition and

b) The University is encouraged to include integration and preservation of a meaningful portion of the landmarked garage building and forecourt at 1952 Oxford Street into any future development on the University/Oxford/Berkeley Way/Walnut block.

Downtown Design Guidelines

Adopted in 1993, the Downtown Design Guidelines have shaped development projects in positive ways. The Guidelines emphasize how building alterations and new buildings should be face streets in attractive and appropriate ways—with active street-level uses at the sidewalk instead of blank walls or parking. The Guidelines also address common design characteristics, including the rhythm of openings, materials, and other façade treatments, establish parameters for compatible infill construction.

“Except for appropriately defined open spaces, special corner features or recessed entrances, a continuous zero setback should be maintained at the ground floor.”

-1993 Design Guidelines, on active street frontages
new construction did occur, however, in the 1960s and 1970s when BART was constructed and two large early-1900s buildings at Shattuck and Center were replaced by the high-rise Great Western and suburban-style Bank of America buildings.

The community responded to the demolition of Berkeley’s historic buildings by adopting the 1974 Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO). This ordinance authorizes the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to designate properties as Landmarks and Structures of Merit, and gives it regulatory power over the properties it designates. Sixty-three properties in the Downtown Area have been designated as Landmarks, and three as Structures of Merit. Nine properties have also been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Downtown Area also contains the Civic Center Historic District and Berkeley High School Campus Historic District, which are listed on the National Register and for which the LPC has regulatory power under the LPO.

Several surveys of historic resources have been conducted for Downtown Berkeley. In 1977–1979 the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) surveyed and documented about 650 structures and sites throughout Berkeley; this survey is referred to in the State Historic Resources Inventory (SHRI). In 1987, BAHA assembled available information into a report entitled “Historic Survey of Downtown.” This document contained SHRI forms for individual structures in the 1990 Downtown Plan area, a list of “Historically Significant Buildings Downtown . . .,” and a “Downtown Property List” with the age, architect and other information. There were also several maps (with minor iscrepancies), Including one that showed the properties classified as:

- City Landmarks (and in some cases also “National Register”),

Shattuck Avenue looking north circa 1940. Image courtesy of BAHA.

- Included on the State Inventory (but not landmarked), or

- Contributing.

The “Contributing” properties were defined in BAHA’s 1987 report without elaboration as:

- Properties [that] could be considered contributing to the existing fabric of downtown by virtue of age, scale, height, massing, materials.

The BAHA Historic Survey was cited in the 1990 Downtown Plan, which included a map of “Downtown Historical Structure Locations.” This map had three resource categories:

- Landmark Building - City and/or National Register,
In 1993, the Landmarks Preservation Commission adopted a list entitled “Historically Significant Buildings in the Downtown.” This was described as “the . . . Commission’s list of buildings which 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 1993 LPC list was largely consistent with BAHA surveys, except a few additional buildings and omission of the Great Western building.

In 1994, the City adopted the “Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines.” This document has continued to guide diverse aspects of both alterations and new construction. Its chapters distinguish between guidelines for “Landmark Buildings,” “Significant Buildings,” and “All Buildings.” The adopted Guidelines contained a map and list of historic resources, which were largely consistent with previous surveys although some previously recognized buildings were omitted.

In 2006, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) worked with the City to develop a “Reconnaissance Survey” for the 500 parcels in and abutting the Downtown Area. ARG’s work focused on attributes recognized by the State Office of Historic Preservation but a definitive level of analysis for structures (such as identifying alterations precisely using historic photos) was not performed. ARG also produced “Context Statements” for understanding and assessing potential resources. The Context Statements prepared by ARG in 2007 are available and are organized by historic themes, such as “Transportation,” “Commerce,” “Commercial Architecture,” “Residential Development,” and “Health and Medicine.”

One attribute applied by ARG was historical “integrity,” which is an important factor in analyzing historic resources, and is a National Register criterion for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The evaluation of integrity depends upon a property’s physical features and how they relate to its historic significance. To have historical integrity, a property need not be pristinely unaltered, rather it needs to retain enough of its historic character or appearance to convey its historic relevance. Evaluating integrity is subjective to some degree, and ARG’s integrity ratings were disputed and acknowledged as “preliminary.” Consideration of “integrity” may also be somewhat extraneous because -- under the LPO affirmed by voters in 2008 -- properties without sufficient integrity to qualify for the National Register may still be eligible for local designation as a Landmark, Structure of Merit, or part of a Historic District.
Figure HD-1, Historic Resources, Noteworthy Buildings, and Potential Development Opportunity Sites (Figure HD-1) maps key attributes covered by the Reconnaissance Survey and described below. (While community members and staff have worked diligently to make the Reconnaissance Survey and map error free, information for individual parcels should be verified.) This map reveals a strong clustering of historic resources along Shattuck from about University to Durant, as acknowledged by Policy HD-2.2.

"Designated Landmark or Structure of Merit" -- properties so designated as of early 2009.

"Significant per both LPC List and Design Guidelines" -- show the latest official comprehensive listings, and a building’s presence on both lists indicates broad consensus about its significance.

"Building on the SHRI" -- (other than those in the above two categories) were surveyed and documented as part of the State Historic Resources Inventory (SHRI) in 1977–1979.

"Other Building Called Contributing or Significant by BAHA Report, Downtown Plan, LPC List, or Design Guidelines" – while documentation of these buildings varies widely, they are presumed to be historic resources until CEQA-level analysis determines otherwise.

"Development Opportunity Site Apparently Containing No Historic Resource" – while the location of future development cannot be predicted, the map shows the location of likely candidates, including vacant lots, parking lots, one-story buildings, and 2-/3-story buildings within a block of BART.

"Existing Development Assumed to Remain." This mapping, too, is tentative and illustrative. It attempts to show properties (other than historic resources) on which the present physical structures will likely remain basically unchanged during the plan period.

The map also depicts the boundaries of the Civic Center Historic District and Berkeley High School Campus Historic District, which were established as such by the LPC and are on listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic resources are vulnerable to loss from development, and receive protections from the DAP, the LPO, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A building that is on a "local register" of historic resources is presumed to be a “historical resource” for the purpose of CEQA analysis “unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(2)). For example if a development application were filed to demolish or alter a showed as “contributing” by the 1990 Downtown Plan, the LPC would take a closer look at the property and help determine its merit as a historic or cultural resource. LPC could find that the building merits protection, or it could find that it is not actually significant thereby allowing the project to proceed with a Mitigated Negative Declaration or simple Negative Declaration.

In the case of designation of a Historic District, the LPC would decide the precise boundaries, the period or periods of significance, and the identity of the particular buildings within the District that are either contributors or non-contributors. To help make sure that new development and building alterations harmonize with the surrounding historic context, the LPC is responsible for design review for all properties within designated Historic Districts. Design review for areas that are not designated Historic Districts would continue to be handled by the Zoning Adjustments Board's Design Review Committee.