11/16/11 Public Hearing: Downtown Area Plan and Related Amendments to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance:

Proposed General Plan Amendments to incorporate the Downtown Area Plan (2011) into the City of Berkeley General Plan

NOTE: Figures 1 and 4 of the City of Berkeley General Plan will be modified to represent the Planning Commission recommendations to the City Council regarding the Downtown Area Plan and C-DMU boundaries.

LAND USE ELEMENT
Downtown and Other Commercial Mixed Use Areas

Downtown is the city’s primary civic, office, and entertainment center, as well as a retail area. A new building to house the University Art Museum and the Pacific Film Archive in the Downtown Area is under design and expected to be open by 2012. …

The table below includes the Downtown Plan’s height and floor area ratio limits for each subarea:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Downtown Plan Subarea</th>
<th>Base Height, Stories, and FAR</th>
<th>Maximum Height, Stories, FAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core</td>
<td>65’, 5 stories, 4:1 FAR</td>
<td>87’, 7 stories, 6:1 FAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford-Edge</td>
<td>40’, 3 stories, 3:1 FAR</td>
<td>60’, 5 stories, 4:1 FAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>40’, 3 stories, 3:1 FAR</td>
<td>60’, 5 stories, 4:1 FAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>40’, 3 stories, 3:1 FAR</td>
<td>50’, 4 stories, 3:5:1 FAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North 2</td>
<td>40’, 3 stories, 3:1 FAR</td>
<td>55’, 5 stories, 4:1 FAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North 1</td>
<td>35’, 3 stories, (residential) 3:1 FAR</td>
<td>Same as Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50’, 4 stories, (mixed use) 3:1 FAR</td>
<td>Same as Base</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By adopting the 2010 Ballot Measure R in 2010, the voters advised the City Council that greater heights and more intensity is acceptable in the Downtown. With its adoption of the 2011 Downtown Area Plan, The City Council may adopt an amendment to policies that allow increased height and intensity in response to that Measure R’s direction. Under the DAP, three buildings up to 180 feet, could occur in the Core Area (within one block of BART), and two UC buildings and two non-UC buildings could occur within the combined Core Area and Outer Core area. These buildings would be exceptions to a generally allowed height -- within the combined
Core Area, Outer Core and Corridor areas – of 60 feet “as a matter of right” and 75 feet with a special Use Permit. Also note that the DAP provides for the protection of buildings would be exceptions to a generally allowed height -- within the combined Core Area, Outer Core and Corridor area – of 60 feet “as a matter of right” and 75 feet with a special Use Permit. Also note that the DAP provides for the protection of adjacent residential neighborhoods, and calls for the rezoning of the Downtown Area’s southwest corner from R-4 to R-3 to reduce allowable building heights.

Downtown and Other Commercial Mixed-Use Areas

Policy LU-16 Downtown Area Plan
Take actions to attain goals and policies in the Downtown Area Plan, which is an element of the General Plan. Broad goals include:

Policy LU-20 Downtown Pedestrian and Transit Orientation
Reinforce the pedestrian orientation of the Downtown. (See also the Downtown Area Plan for related policies and actions.)

Policy LU-21 Architectural Design in the Downtown
A. Ensure that all Downtown area projects conform to the Downtown Area Plan, the Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines, and the Urban Design and Preservation Element.

Policy LU-23 Transit-Oriented Development
Encourage and maintain zoning that allows greater commercial and residential density and reduced residential parking requirements in areas with above-average transit service such as Downtown Berkeley. (Also see Transportation Policy T-16 and Downtown Area Plan.)

Policy LU-24 Car-Free Housing in the Downtown
Encourage development of transit-oriented, low-cost housing in the Downtown. (Also see Transportation Policy T-16 and Downtown Area Plan.)

Downtown Mixed-Use
This area of Berkeley is identified as the Downtown Area contains areas characterized by high density commercial, office, arts, culture, and entertainment and residential development, which are designated as Downtown Mixed-Use (see Figure 4). The Downtown Area Plan establishes sub-districts subject to different intensities and types of use (see Figure 2 and the Downtown Area Plan). It is intended that the Commercial Downtown Mixed-Use District allow and encourage diverse uses and the highest building intensity in the City to promote a vibrant city-center by increasing housing, supporting retail and cultural uses, and capitalizing on exceptional access to transit.

The Downtown Area also contains residential neighborhoods that lie outside of the Downtown Mixed-Use area and are which may be designated low-medium (Zoning: R-
2A), medium (R-3) or high density (R-4) residential, depending on the characteristics of the neighborhood. The DAP provides for the protection of adjacent residential neighborhoods, and calls for the rezoning of the Downtown Area’s southwest corner from R-4 to R-3, thereby reducing allowable building heights and development pressures.

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Streets and Sidewalks

…To successfully compete with other retail and entertainment destinations, Downtown must offer an attractive sense-of-place. In the Downtown Area, transportation design and operation decisions should give priority to pedestrians.

Policy T-34 Downtown and Southside Parking Management
Manage the supply of Downtown …. (Also see Economic Development and Employment Policy ED-6 and Downtown Area Plan.)

Policy T-40 Parking Impacts
… For the Downtown Area, a comprehensive parking strategy should be developed (see Downtown Area Plan). …