CONTEXT: Transportation

Demand for transportation routes throughout the San Francisco Bay region began with the significant population growth in San Francisco and East Bay towns as a result of the 1849 Gold Rush. After the gold rush until about the 1870s, water transportation was the only direct means of linking the East Bay with San Francisco, and travel within East Bay towns was conducted by foot or on horse. The need for transportation facilities required adequate equipment and advances in modern transportation. In 1850 at its first session, California’s Legislature passed acts to provide for the construction of ferries and railroads in San Francisco and the Bay Area. This resulted in the development of ferry lines in the 1870s establishing modern transportation methods that linked San Francisco and urban development in the East Bay.

Berkeley recognized the importance of urban transportation early in its development. A series of horse car lines, steam-powered trains and ferry services were established all before Berkeley was incorporated in 1878. At this time, Berkeley had three business districts along San Pablo Avenue served by rail lines. Telegraph Avenue at Bancroft Way was served by a car line from Oakland. Additionally, Shattuck Avenue at Center Street was served by a steam line from Oakland. Shattuck Avenue has remained a hub of commercial development since the first steam-powered train ran along Shattuck Avenue in the mid-1870s, defining Downtown Berkeley by the rail lines servicing the community and the University of California, Berkeley. The evolution of transportation routes from horse car lines, to steam locomotive, followed by electric rail, and ultimately modern-day BART, have been the determining factors of commercial and residential growth in Berkeley.

Horse Car Line

In the 1850s and early 1860s Berkeley was a sparsely populated fairly rural town. However, growth associated with the College of California’s move from Oakland to Berkeley in 1866 resulted in an increase in population and demand for better transportation. A reliable transportation link was needed to assure the University’s success and enable Berkeley to develop into an urban center. At the University’s urging, led by former University President Henry Durant, Vice President Rev. Samuel H. Willey, and other leading citizens, the Berkeley Ferry and Railroad Company established a horse drawn transit line between Oakland and Berkeley along Choate (now Telegraph Avenue) in 1872. This first horse car line consisted
of a coach drawn on rails by a single horse. Durant, joined by John B. Woolsey, established an additional franchise to extend this first line from Telegraph Avenue out Humboldt Street to Bancroft Way. This extension was completed just before the Berkeley campus became fully operational. An additional horse car line along University Avenue was built in 1891. The opening of these early horse car lines created the first commercial district in East Berkeley, along Telegraph between Bancroft Way and Allston Way, providing a direct link to the developing campus.

During this period, ferry service with Berkeley was initiated. Berkeley Land and Town Improvement Association arranged land sales, opened stores, built wharves and promoted ferry connection with San Francisco as early as 1873. By April 6, 1874, the Board of Supervisors of Alameda County granted the company a franchise for twenty years to build a wharf at the foot of University Avenue establishing a transportation route to San Francisco.

Steam Streetcars

The first steps in modernizing transportation lines beyond the more traditional method of the horse car occurred in 1876, when the Berkeley Ferry and Railroad Company replaced horses with a steam dummy. For a short period of time the Berkeley Ferry and Railroad Company had control of almost all the transportation lines within Berkeley. However, the benefits of establishing a transportation route in growing Downtown Berkeley was soon identified as a successful business venture by local entrepreneurs.

Francis Kittredge (F. K.) Shattuck and James L. Barker bought a Central Pacific (later Southern Pacific) spur line, extending from Oakland, along Adeline Street terminating at Stanford Place, named after Leland Stanford, owner of the railroad (now Berkeley Square and Shattuck Square). Shattuck and Barker foresaw a steam train along Shattuck Avenue as a means of developing their commercial property within Berkeley and promoting Shattuck Avenue as Berkeley’s main commercial street. By 1876, the Berkeley Branch Steam Line, founded by Shattuck and Stanford was nearing completion. The line quickly evolved into the top competitor to the Berkeley Ferry and Railroad Company.

To obtain the required land to accommodate multiple rail lines running north-south along Shattuck Avenue, necessary freight yards, and Stanford Place station, property owners on Shattuck Avenue were required to provide a right-of-way fee, including 20 acres of...
land for yard stations and $2,000 in cash.\textsuperscript{10} With Shattuck Avenue established as the principal transportation route of both the Berkeley Ferry and Railroad Company and the Berkeley Branch Steam Line, East Berkeley quickly developed into the center of commercial growth.

Competition between these providers resulted in a number of stations that serviced Berkeley. Subsequently, commercial centers developed around the train stations stretching the complete length of Shattuck Avenue. These stations and commercial centers included: Berkeley Station (Center Street and Shattuck Avenue); Dwight Station (Dwight Way and Shattuck Avenue); Newbury Station (Adeline Street and Ashby Avenue); Lorin Station (Adeline Street and Alcatraz Avenue); and the commercial center on Shattuck Avenue near Vine Street.\textsuperscript{11} Until 1878 the end of the line was Shattuck Avenue and University Avenue, when transportation routes were extended to accommodate increased residential growth in Berkeley.

With commercial growth centered on East Berkeley, west Berkeley was cut off from economic and commercial development. Berkeley Land and Town Improvement Association passed a resolution on May 22, 1876, for a separate local steam line to connect West Berkeley with the ferry at the Oakland Mole (located near the present approach to the Bay Bridge) and from there to San Francisco.\textsuperscript{12} The right of way was acquired by a subsidiary of the Central Pacific, the Northern Railway Company, with Charles Crocker as acting head. The line ran along Third Street between Berkeley’s northern and southern borders.

**Electric Streetcars**

With the advent of electric streetcar service all previous methods of transportation in Berkeley were replaced, and development opportunities were extended to outlying areas earlier serviced by horse-drawn trolleys. The demand for more modern and efficient transportation methods was furthered by the influx of San Francisco refugees of the 1906 Earthquake contributing to Berkeley’s growing population and residential development. The electric lines proved to be popular, reducing commute times and providing access to additional locations throughout Berkeley and the East Bay. The efficiency of electric streetcar lines linking Berkeley to other East Bay cities became a strong force in the development of the community’s commercial centers.

The first electric streetcar line in Berkeley went into operation on
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May 17, 1891. A horse car line along University Avenue was planned as early as 1874, with installation scheduled for 1884 with the completion of the Town Hall. However, construction on this line did not begin until 1891. The line ran north-south on Grove Street (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Way). In addition to the Grove Line, the first east-west streetcar line linking the city’s residential and business districts was established, along Shattuck Avenue and University Avenue to the ferry slips. The University Avenue streetcar connected with the Southern Pacific steam rail on Third Street, linking it to San Francisco bound ferries.

The original North Oakland Telegraph Avenue horse car line was converted to an electric streetcar in 1893. An electric line was completed linking West Berkeley, Emeryville and Oakland in 1901; another was installed on University Avenue in 1902. However, the Key Route established in 1903, and the Southern Pacific established in 1911, were the two most important developments in the electric trolley lines connecting Berkeley to the greater Bay Area.

**Key System and Southern Pacific**

The major change to Berkeley’s electric streetcar transportation came with the Key System Railway and Ferry (Key Route), so named as the configuration of trestle and ferry slips resembled a key extending into the Bay, connecting to San Francisco. The Key System began as the San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose Railway (SFOSJR), incorporated in 1902, under the ownership of Francis Marion “Borax” Smith. The Key System, was a consolidation of several smaller streetcar lines under Smith’s control, providing mass transit to cities throughout the East Bay, from 1903 until 1960 when the system was sold to AC Transit including: Oakland; Berkeley; Emeryville; Piedmont; San Leandro; Richmond; Albany; and El Cerrito.

The first Key System cars left Shattuck Avenue and University Avenue for ferry connection on October 26, 1903. Electric cars, in groupings of eight or more, and painted bright orange to match the ferry, ran from Shattuck and University Avenues to the foot of Market in San Francisco. The trip to San Francisco took 38 minutes, with a 35-minute return trip. The line established Berkeley as a commuter suburb of San Francisco and Oakland. Improving mass transit enabled the subdivision and opening of new residential areas for development, including the Claremont District, (1906), and Northbrae (1908). In 1908 the SFOSJR changed its name to the San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose Consolidated Railway and
established a feeder line in Berkeley on Dwight Way. One year later, a connection was completed on Ashby Avenue. These cross-town lines strengthened communication between the eastern and western parts of the city. The Key System name was changed again in 1912, to the San Francisco-Oakland Railway.

The competition brought about with the success of the Key System spurred the Southern Pacific Railway to begin modernization efforts to move toward electric railways, constructing a system of street railway lines throughout the city, between the years 1909 and 1915. The Southern Pacific announced that it would cut commute times and implement a “flyer” with only a few stops between the Oakland pier and central Berkeley. In 1911, Southern Pacific spent one million dollars converting all steam trains to the electric “Red Car” line. Steam trains were abandoned and the new “Red Cars” began to run along Shattuck Avenue, with new lines on Ellsworth and in North Berkeley, including the Ninth Street Loop.

A map of Berkeley from 1911 indicated the prevalence of the Key System and Southern Pacific transit routes. Both lines extended service through Shattuck Avenue’s commercial core. The Key System ran additional north-south lines on Grove (Martin Luther King, Jr. Way), and College Avenue, as well as a line, which ran the extent of the University’s border. In addition to the north-south lines, an east-west line ran along University Avenue from the campus to the ferry slips. Southern Pacific transportation lines extended north on Shattuck Avenue into residential districts with an additional north-south line on Telegraph.

A 1914 map indicated the increase in transportation service as well as the location of various Berkeley stations serviced by the Key System and the Southern Pacific. Many of stations were located along Shattuck Avenue: Shattuck Avenue and Dwight Way; Shattuck Avenue between Center Street and Addison Street (Stanford Place); Shattuck Avenue near Vine Street; and Shattuck Avenue and University Avenue. Additional stations serviced by the Key System were located along University Avenue. In 1914 the Key Route was the dominant transportation provider. Train service ran in a north-south direction along Shattuck Avenue and Sacramento Street. In addition, electric trolleys ran along Shattuck Avenue, and Telegraph, College and Grove Streets, with cross-town lines along Dwight Way, University Avenue and along the edge of campus. Southern Pacific continued service along Shattuck Avenue, with additional north-south service along Ellsworth, California, and Ninth Streets, as well as the bay shore.
Downtown Berkeley Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey

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Southern Pacific and the Key Route faced new competition in 1923. This year the Golden Gate Ferry Company re-established direct transportation to San Francisco from the foot of University Avenue. A ferry franchise was granted, and a concrete pier was built at the foot of University Avenue. The competition resulted in bankruptcy for the Key System, and it was reorganized as the Key System Transit Company. In 1923 Stanford Place (a.k.a. Berkeley Square and Shattuck Square) was transformed from a small park or public square, that earlier formed the railroad terminus, into a commercial block. On June 16, 1927 the Golden Gate Ferry began operation providing more direct connection with San Francisco. Automobile transportation started on the ferry in 1929. During the Depression the system was reorganized under a holding company and renamed the Railway Equipment & Reality Co. Finally, in 1938, the official name became the Key System. Opening of the Bay Bridge in 1936 resulted in abandonment of ferry service by the Key System and the Southern Pacific Company in 1939. The discontinued use of local streetcars in 1948, followed by commuter trains in 1958, indicated that the nature of transportation had shifted again and now focused on individual, rather than mass transit.

Automobiles and Parking

In the early part of the twentieth century, the automobile ascended to popularity and widespread use throughout American cities. By the 1920s and into the 1930s, cities across the nation were encountering an array of problems associated with the automobile including: traffic accidents; loss of street space to parking; and potentially fatal interactions between pedestrians, streetcars, and automobiles. In response municipal governments “pushed back curbs, widened streets, and installed an array of directional signs, lights, and traffic controls to help the more nimble and potentially lethal motor traffic intermingle safely with horses, wagons, darting pedestrians, and lumbering, unmaneuverable streetcars.”

By 1940 Berkeley’s population had increased to 85,000. As a result of World War II, Berkeley’s population further expanded with the influx of people working in East Bay factories supporting the war effort. After World War II a steady rise in population continued, as people returned or relocated to Berkeley from war time duties. The evolution of transportation in Downtown Berkeley responded to the increase in population and expanded use of the automobile. Shattuck Avenue as the commercial center of Berkeley remained the main thoroughfare. In 1948 the increased use of automobiles and buses...
forced all Berkeley street railways out of business.\textsuperscript{32}

The number of auto repair and body work facilities as well as parking facilities (public and private) located in Berkeley’s downtown illustrate the significant automobile orientation of Downtown Berkeley. The 1950 Sanborn map indicated that a number of auto garages, dealerships and gas stations were located throughout Berkeley’s downtown at the following locations:

**Auto Garages**

- 2121 Walnut Street at Berkeley Way;
- 2131 Walnut Street at Berkeley Way;
- the University of California Garage at the northwest corner of Berkeley Way and Oxford Street;
- 2001-2015 Addison Street;
- 2026-2039 Addison Street;
- 2039-45 Center Street;
- 2161 Allston Way;
- 2037 Durant Way; and
- 2036 Channing Way.

**Auto Dealerships**

- northwest corner of University Avenue and Milvia Street;
- 2009 University Avenue;
- 2170 University Avenue;
- 2109 Milvia Street;
- 2122 Durant Way;
- southwest corner of Durant Way and Fulton Street;
- northwest corner of Shattuck Avenue and Channing Way;
- 2475 Shattuck Avenue;
- mid-block, south side of Haste Street between Fulton Street and Shattuck Avenue; and
- northeast corner of Dwight Way and Fulton Street.

**Gas Stations**

- 2198 Hearst Avenue at Oxford Street;
- 2199 Berkeley Way at Oxford Street;
- 1980 University Avenue;
- 2167 University Avenue at Oxford Street;
- 2000 Oxford Street at University Avenue;
- northeast corner of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and Addison Street;
- northwest corner of Addison Street and Milvia Street;
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- southeast corner of Center Street and Milvia Street;
- northeast corner of Milvia Street;
- northwest corner of Milvia Street;
- southeast corner of Milvia Street and Kittredge Street;
- northwest corner of Kittredge Street and Fulton Street;
- southwest corner of Fulton Street and Bancroft Way;
- northwest corner of Durant Way and Fulton Street;
- northwest corner of Fulton Street and Dwight Way;
- 2500 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way;
- northwest corner of Dwight Way and Fulton Street;
- southeast corner of Bancroft Way and Fulton Street; and
- southwest corner of Berkeley Way and Grove Street.

Additionally, as people began to drive downtown parking became a necessity. Street parking served the immediate need. However, increased number of automobiles on the road brought about the necessity for actual parking lots in Berkeley’s commercial core. The 1950 Sanborn map indicates that surface parking lots were located at the following the locations:

**Surface Parking Lots**

- the northeast corner of Shattuck Avenue and Berkeley Way;
- mid-block of Addison Street between Shattuck Avenue and Oxford Street;
- 2025 Center Street extending to Addison Street;
- southwest corner of Center Street and Oxford Street;
- 2025 Center Street extending to Addison Street;
- adjacent to the YMCA on Allston Way;
- 2022 Kittredge Street;
- mid-block on the south side of Kittredge Street between Shattuck Avenue and Fulton Street; and
- 2023 Bancroft Way.

During the post World War II era the automobile took Berkeley by storm. Downtown was filled with automobiles and associated services and parking. Wide use of municipal transportation was abandoned for the individual freedom provided in automobile transportation. However, automobile transportation brought about new concerns and congestion, resulting in the demand for a new method of transportation that would suit a modernized post war society.
AC Transit

AC Transit is a modern bus system, owned by the public of the East Bay. In November 1956 citizens voted to establish the Alameda Contra Costa Transit District. Funding for the District was provided in 1959 through a voter-approved bond of $16.5 million. This funding allowed AC Transit to acquire the bankrupt Key System from the California Public Utilities Commission and begin operation in 1960. The fleet consisted of 250 new “transit liners,” extending service into new neighborhoods, creating an intercity bus network. By 1974 AC Transit’s service area stretched from the western Contra Costa County cities of San Pablo and Richmond to the southern cities of Fremont and Newark. At that time AC Transit provided transportation to San Francisco along major arteries.

The 1970s saw a period of change for the AC Transit system. With the beginning of Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) service in 1972, AC Transit contacted with BART to provide feeder buses linking the rail system with suburbs outside the district’s service area. Further expansion of AC Transit lines followed from 1974-1978, providing service to outlying communities.

AC Transit’s service area was divided into two divisions, called Special Transit Service Districts 1 and 2. Special Transit Service District 1 extended from San Pablo Bay to Hayward, including the cities of Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland, Piedmont, Alameda, San Leandro, Hayward, and the unincorporated areas of Ashland, Castro Valley, Cherryland, El Sobrante, Kensington, and San Lorenzo. Special Transit Service District 2 consisted of the cities of Fremont and Newark in southwestern Alameda County where AC Transit operated a network of local routes. An intermodal transport center was located at Center Street and Shattuck Avenue, serving as a transfer station for the East Bay and BART.

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART)

The history of the BART begins as early as 1946. Facing a heavy post-war migration to the greater Bay Area and its consequent automobile boom, business and civic leaders on both sides of San Francisco Bay met to discuss ways of easing the mounting congesting impacting the bridges spanning the Bay and existing transportation facilities. In 1947 a joint Army-Navy review Board suggested that an underwater tube devoted exclusively to high-speed electric trains, linking San Francisco and Oakland was needed.
to prevent further congestion.\textsuperscript{36} In 1951 The State Legislature created the 26-member San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit Commission to study Bay Area transportation.\textsuperscript{37} On June 4, 1957, at the Commission’s recommendation, the Legislature formed the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District, comprised of the five counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo.\textsuperscript{38} The district’s main purpose was to oversee the building and operation of a high-speed rapid network linking major commercial centers with suburban sub-centers.

Engineering plans developed by Parsons-Brinkerhoff-Tudor-Bechtel (PB-T-B) between 1957 and 1962, called for electric trains to run on grade-separated right-of-ways, reaching a maximum speed of 75-80 miles per hour.\textsuperscript{39} By 1961 the final plan was submitted to the supervisors of the five district counties for approval. San Mateo County Supervisors officially withdrew from the district on April 12, 1962, citing high property taxes and the existing Southern Pacific commuter lines as primary reasons. One-month later Marin County also withdrew from the district.\textsuperscript{40} The five-county plan was quickly revised to a three-county plan with a new emphasis on rapid transit connection between San Francisco and the East Bay cities and suburbs of Contra Costa County and Alameda Counties. The new plan was presented as the “BART Composite Report,” and approved in July 1962.\textsuperscript{41} BART construction began on June 19, 1964, with groundbreaking ceremonies in Contra Costa County.\textsuperscript{42}

Work on the rapid transit system reached its peak in 1969, but construction was behind schedule and costs were increasing. By early 1971, the ten prototype transit cars were being test operated on the Fremont line to ensure adequate design before going into full-scale production. At the same time IBM was preparing the prototype fare collection machines. Major construction was phased out from 1971-1972, as BART prepared to become an operating railroad, with opening day on September 11, 1972.

The Berkeley community played a strong role in the creation of BART. Originally approving a combination of aerial and subway lines through the city, Berkeley later came to oppose the plan in favor of a subway line. The new plan called for the BART train to run underground along Shattuck Avenue, continuing the tradition of transportation lines in Berkeley, and a redesign of the Ashby Station from an aerial to a subway facility. For the next 2-\(\frac{1}{2}\) years a series of controversial hearings ensued. The issue was resolved when 83\% of Berkeley residents of Berkeley voted tax themselves another $20 million to have BART run underground.\textsuperscript{43} The delay of
BART construction in Berkeley resulted in additional costs of $18 million. Following the completion of the system, Shattuck Avenue was renovated for accommodating motorized vehicles, with modern conventions for moving traffic in an efficient manner. Pedestrian improvements were also incorporated with benches, resting areas, trees and large parking bays to beautify Berkeley’s transportation and commercial thoroughfare.

**Extant Resources Associated with Transportation Context**

Downtown Berkeley has very few existing resources from the early periods of transportation development. There are no remnants of the horse car lines; steam and electric streetcars no longer weave through the commercial and residential districts. Of the many stations which were located along Shattuck Avenue and University Avenue none remain. However, the footprint of Stanford Place station can be seen in the commercial blocks of Shattuck Square and Berkeley Square. Also, the current street width of both Shattuck Avenue and University Avenue reflects their use as transit corridors. Finally, Berkeley’s commercial center along Shattuck Avenue is a reminder of the role transportation had in the formation of Berkeley’s downtown.

Modern transportation developments of the automobile and BART are prevalent and continue to have an active role in the future development of downtown. Parking garages and surface parking are located throughout the downtown vicinity. BART serves as the primary mass transit link to San Francisco and East Bay cities.
Endnotes: Transportation

1 Mary Johnson. *The City of Berkeley A History: From the First American Settlers to the Present Date*. Manuscript on file at the History Room of the Central Berkeley Public Library, 83.

2 [www.berkeley.edu](http://www.berkeley.edu)


5 *A History of Berkeley: An Exhibit Commemorating the Centennial of the City of Berkeley*, 30.

6 Mary Johnson. *The City of Berkeley A History: From the First American Settlers to the Present Date*. Manuscript on file at the History Room of the Central Berkeley Public Library, 78.

7 George A. Pettitt. *Berkeley: The Town and Gown of it*, 57.

8 *A History of Berkeley: An Exhibit Commemorating the Centennial of the City of Berkeley*, 16.

9 George A. Pettitt, 63.


11 *A History of Berkeley: An Exhibit Commemorating the Centennial of the City of Berkeley*, 16.


15 *A History of Berkeley: An Exhibit Commemorating the Centennial of the City of Berkeley*, 30.


17 Ibid, 1.


20 *Looking Back at Berkeley: A Pictorial History of a Diverse City*, 30.


22 Ibid, 1.

23 *Looking Back at Berkeley: A Pictorial History of a Diverse City*, 49.

24 *Map of Oakland and Vicinity*. Published by The Realty Union, First National Bank Building, San Francisco, CA, 1911.


29 *Looking Back at Berkeley: A Pictorial History of a Diverse City*, 51.
31 *Looking Back at Berkeley: A Pictorial History of a Diverse City*, 23.
32 *Looking Back at Berkeley: A Pictorial History of a Diverse City*, 51.
37 Ibid, 1
38 Ibid, 1
39 Ibid, 3.
42 Ibid, 3.
43 *Looking Back at Berkeley: A Pictorial History of a Diverse City*, 51.
CONTEXT: Light Industry

Introduction

Industrial growth in Berkeley paralleled the growth of the city, and in its infancy small industries such as nurseries, bakeries, and planing mills sprang up as needs arose. The larger industries in existence the first three decades after the city’s inception included Berkeley’s first industry, the Pioneer Starch and Grist Mill (1855), West Berkeley Planing Mill (1857), Standard Soap Works/Colgate (1875), Hofburg Brewery (1880), and the West Berkeley Brewery (1883). Most of these industries were located in west Berkeley near the San Francisco Bay.

Berkeley experienced an industrial boom after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire forced industries out of San Francisco. Companies were attracted to cities that witnessed relatively little destruction from the earthquake, such as Berkeley and Oakland. Reportedly, thirty industries relocated to or were established in Berkeley immediately following the earthquake. The industrial expansion continued to benefit Berkeley well into the 1920s. Census reports showed 84 manufacturing plants in Berkeley in 1909, 113 plants in 1919, and 193 plants in 1928. In 1929 the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce boasted its eclectic assortment of industries in the local newspaper:

Berkeley is the largest center of production of cocoanut oil in the United States and therefore in the world. [We] make here marine engines and gas engines of all descriptions…automatic egg cleaning and candling machines…motor-driven railroad cars…musical instruments…soaps and food products…”

In the 1930s industry in Berkeley continued to flourish through the Great Depression, even as an economic slump wreaked a lasting financial disaster throughout the rest of the country. In 1938 over 300 manufacturing plants operated in Berkeley. High profile companies, which constructed factories in Berkeley, included the Palm-Olive-Peet Company, H.J. Heinz Corporation, and the Philadelphia Quartz Company. World War II brought industry to Berkeley in the form of war-supply manufacturers settling in west Berkeley, a part of the city that by the second decade of the twentieth century was zoned specifically for manufacturing. On the other side of the city, Downtown Berkeley had forced out nearly all of its larger industries and by the 1940s and 50s was dedicated largely
to small businesses and residential neighborhoods. The only industries left near Downtown Berkeley in 1950 consisted of small bakeries, printers, and small specialty industries, such as a felt product manufacturer that catered to the “school spirit” industry, manufacturing such products as pennants and banners.

**Chronological History of Industry in Downtown Berkeley**

In 1894 Sanborn maps recorded a broad dispersion of small industries throughout Downtown Berkeley. Most industries were concentrated immediately east and west of Shattuck Avenue and confined between University Avenue and Allston Way near the heart of Berkeley’s downtown. The sole exception, a bakery housed in the Stewart & Trobridge Building at the corner of Dwight Way and Shattuck Avenue, was far-flung from the industrial sector to the north and surrounded by predominantly residential neighborhoods. (That area of Dwight Way was a bustling part of the city in its own right, due to its advantageous location on a busy horsecar line.) A sampling of industries in the downtown area included a large hothouse and nursery at the northeast corner of Addison Street and Shattuck Avenue, and a collection of industrial buildings on the 2100 block of Center Street, which housed a dressmaker, bakery, and candy factory. The hothouse and nursery filled a large corner lot surrounding a residence, while the dresses, baked goods, and candy were manufactured in one- and two-story commercial buildings with narrow, rectangular footprints.

One of Berkeley’s largest industries at the time, the Golden Sheaf Bakery at 2026 Shattuck Avenue, was opened in 1877 by Englishman John G. Wright and was touted as Berkeley’s first wholesale and retail bakery. The Golden Sheaf was known for being a city within itself, providing board for its owners and employees. The Bakery was well regarded throughout the Bay Area for its varieties of breads, cakes, and pies. At the height of its growth the Golden Sheaf also operated a catering business and a retail shop.6 Farther west where development was sparser, G. Pape’s Planing Mill filled the corner of Addison and Milvia Streets. Singe-story and L-shaped in plan, G. Pape’s Mill was the largest industrial complex in the area and furnished materials for buildings throughout the Bay Area, including the interior finishes for a portion of San Francisco City Hall.7 Constructed in 1905, the Bay Commons building on the corner of Bonita Avenue and Berkeley Way was originally built to house a brick and fireplace factory. Brick walls and a square cupola distinguished the two-story building. The brick and fireplace factory operated in Berkeley for
a short time and by the end of World War I, the American Legion had converted the building to a livery stable and dance hall on the second floor.

By 1911 industry in Berkeley was flourishing. After the 1906 Earthquake and Fire destroyed much of San Francisco, many of the city’s industries relocated in Berkeley. Most of the industries relocated to west Berkeley, yet the trend was pervasive enough to reach Downtown Berkeley. Downtown industries still continued to concentrate near Shattuck Avenue, south of University Avenue, but had begun to spread as far south as Bancroft Way. The only industry depicted on the 1894 Sanborn map remaining in 1911 was the planing mill at the corner of Addison and Milvia Streets, which by this time was known as the Berkeley Planing Mill. In this period, Downtown Berkeley was dominated by a large number of printing presses and binderies (fourteen), creameries (nine), bakeries (eight), and blacksmiths (five), as well as smaller numbers of other types of light industries. The high number of creameries was likely based on Berkeley’s proximity to farms. It is unclear why a particularly high number of bakeries opened in Berkeley; most bakeries were small-scale stand-alone outfits or located at the rear of restaurants. Specific types of industries were often concentrated in certain areas of the downtown. For example, seven buildings housing printing and binding companies were located within a three-block span of Center Street and six creameries were housed within three blocks of each other on University Avenue.

In terms of physical size, the largest industries located within Downtown Berkeley from 1910 to about 1920 were the Berkeley Planing Mill (Addison and Milvia Streets) and the F.W. Foss Lumber Company and Planing Mill (1915 Center Street). The Golden Sheaf Bakery, which received an Addison Street-facing addition in 1905 designed by architect Clinton Day, was sold to Wonder Bread in 1909, and the Bakery building fronting Shattuck Avenue was razed. However, Day’s two-story brick building at 2071 Addison Street survived, but was converted to commercial office spaces soon thereafter.

The Berkeley Press, Berkeley Independent, and Berkeley Gazette newspapers, and the Lederer, Street & Zeus press office occupied buildings in Downtown Berkeley in the early 1900s. These publications and publishers printed on the press on the first floor of the Heywood Building at 2119 Addison Street, a large three-story building that housed flats on the second and third floors. The Berkeley Gazette was published in a narrow, two-story building at
Two telephone companies opened in Downtown Berkeley sometime after the turn of the century. Bay Cities Telephone Company operated out of a two-story, brick corner building at 1944 Allston Way. Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company located its offices in a one-story building at 2277 Shattuck Avenue and its telephone exchange in a large, four-story building at 2112 Bancroft Way.

The number of industries located in Downtown Berkeley was reduced significantly by 1929. This was likely a result of multiple factors, which included the closing of industries due to a shrinking national economy, the movement of industries out of what had become a more commercial area, and the surging popularity of the automobile. The 1929 Sanborn map delineated the growth of automobile-related businesses in the downtown area. G. Pape’s Planing Mill was no longer in existence, and the former mill buildings housed an automobile garage and Ornamental Iron Works. A lumber storage lot remained on the former site of F.W. Foss’s Lumber Company, yet the planing mill building was demolished by 1929. Industries that existed in 1911 and continued to exist in 1929 included an ice cream factory located at 2112 Allston Way, the Berkeley Daily Gazette at 2044-48 Center Street, and the telephone company at 2112 Bancroft Way.

New industries that appeared in Downtown Berkeley between 1911 and 1929 included the Berkeley Farms Creamery plant at 2116 Allston Way, located in a two-story building constructed in 1924 on the site of the Frank E. Heath Creamery. The Berkeley Farms Creamery stayed in the building until 1935. A medium-scale garment manufacturer, Wheeling Manufacturing Company, constructed a large one-story building at 2115-19 Milvia Street in 1922.10 New lighter industries included: four new small-scale bakeries on Bancroft Way, Shattuck Avenue, and University Avenue; a trunk factory at 2110 Allston Way; a candy factory at 2109 Bancroft Way; and a cigar factory at 1975 University Avenue. Constructed in 1923, a large, two-story building at 2128-30 Center Street designed by preeminent local architect, James W. Placheck, contained a condensed mix of light industries in its basement. The industries included a bakery, candy factory, and ice creamery.

By 1950 the number of industries located within Downtown Berkeley was reduced to approximately ten.11 The area was dedicated largely to commercial, residential, and automobile uses. Of the ten industries existing in 1950, one dated from 1911, the
Pacific Telephone and Exchange at 2112-16 Bancroft Way. At least three industries in existence in 1929 continued to thrive twenty-one years later. These included Wheeler Manufacturing Company at 2115-19 Milvia Street, known for its “school spirit” clothes and pennants; and two printing houses, one at 2055-61 Addison Street and one at 2010 Center Street. New industries appearing on the 1950 Sanborn maps included a single blacksmith at 1933 Addison Street (1940), the Langendorf Baking Company at 2029 Channing Way (ca. 1950), and the UC Press Building at 2106-20 Oxford Street (1939). According to the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, the UC press, located in a Moderne-style building designed by architects Charles Masten and Lester Hurd, was chosen by the U.S. Government Printing Office to print the United Nations Charter, which was signed at the San Francisco War Memorial Veterans Building in 1945. The Lederer, Street & Zeus printing and engraving plant constructed at 2121 Allston Way in 1938 (formerly located in the Heywood Building at 2119 Addison Street) was one of the last large-scale industrial plant buildings constructed in Downtown Berkeley. Lederer, Street & Zeus was Berkeley’s most prominent printer and held a monopoly on the city’s civic, promotional, and historical publications. The UC Berkeley student newspaper, the Daily Californian, used the Lederer, Street & Zeus building for its press and editorial rooms when the building first opened.12

**Extant Examples of Resources Relating to Industry Context**

Few buildings exist today in Downtown Berkeley that at one time housed important local industries. Many industrial buildings were demolished to make way for new development, such as G. Pape’s Planing Mill (demolished in the 1980s) and the Berkeley Farms Creamery plant (demolished in 1999). However, a handful of industrial buildings are still extant, including the UC Press building at 2106-20 Oxford Street (1939), the Lederer, Street & Zeus building at 2121 Allston Way (1938), and the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph at 2112-16 Bancroft Way (1924). The Lederer, Street & Zeus building has served as a temporary collections holding place for the Berkeley Public and UC Berkeley Bancroft Libraries. The Bay Commons building at the corner of Bonita Avenue and Berkeley Way and the Golden Sheaf Bakery warehouse building at 2069-71 Addison Street, both constructed in 1905, are exceptional examples of extant industrial buildings, having survived over a century of continued use and multiple tenants. Although none of the
aforementioned buildings houses an original industrial tenant, the structures still stand as testaments to Downtown Berkeley’s industrial past.
Endnotes: Light Industry

1 Mary Johnson. *The City of Berkeley: A history from the first American settlers to the present date.* April 1942.
4 Federal Writers’ Project, 17.
5 Mary Johnson.
8 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, 1911 publication.
9 Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, Golden Sheaf DPR form.
12 Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, Lederer, Street & Zeus DPR form.