

Davis B Street and 3rd Street Visions Summary Report

April 2005



Foreword

Four visions for infill development on 3rd and B Streets have been refined for consideration, each representing different policy options. Efforts have been made to be responsive to the concerns raised from neighboring residents and property owners interested in redevelopment with an emphasis on attractive owner occupied housing. The visions adhere to the underlying principles in the Core Area Specific Plan and Design Guidelines in many respects. They both retain or relocate the structures with existing historic designations and utilize design patterns that will facilitate architectural elements stepping down to any adjoining single-family uses or along the alleys. They also maintain the streetscape front yard pattern with some modifications of setbacks and are to reflect the existing architectural character of the neighborhood. Vision One could be modified to retain existing structures and allow some additional units. Visions Two, Three and Four increase the number of units that can be built by allowing for removal of existing non-historic single-family structures rather than requiring adaptive reuse. This departure from the existing Downtown Guidelines reflects acknowledgement of the unique relationship the study area has to the downtown and Central Park and the need to encourage reinvestment in the properties.

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Section 1: Background

Section 1 provides an overview of the purpose and process of the B Street and 3rd Street visioning process, the civic and policy context, and planning objectives identified in community workshops.

Purpose and Process

In July 2004, the City Council initiated the “B and 3rd Street Visioning Process” to consider new development criteria for this area that balances community goals and provides opportunities for attractive infill development with an emphasis on potential ownership housing. The Council recognizes that the context and intended use of these streets differs from others within the University Ave/Rice Lane Traditional Residential Neighborhood and there is a need to guide the growing interest in redevelopment. This report summarizes the B & 3rd Streets Visioning Process to date and presents four visions representing different policy options for allowing infill development on the west side of B Street between 2nd and 4th Streets, and the portion of 3rd Street between University Ave. and B Street.

The Vision process is meant to inform policy, regulations, design guidelines and review process for projects within the B and 3rd Street planning area. The outcomes can have implications for a variety of stakeholders.

Property owners will understand the amount and type of development allowed on their land and the entitlement process required.

The neighborhood will have a better sense of the new pattern that may emerge and what is being done to ensure a compatible transition.

The community will visualize a connection between preservation, urban design, economic and housing policies from a communitywide perspective.

Policymakers will have a roadmap that provides a policy and regulatory approach to implementing the community's aspirations for the B and 3rd Street area.

City Staff will have a clearer set of guidelines and standards to advise those with interests in this area.

The Council sought a process that allows the community to evaluate possible changes in development guidelines that would allow for a more intensive development pattern while being sensitive to the neighborhood context. This process has two phases – Policy Development and Policy Implementation.

Phase One: Policy Development

Community workshops were held in October and December to solicit community input on a range of redevelopment options. Alternatives considered ranged from adding accessory dwelling units above garages along the alley to more intensive approaches considering new mixed-use three-story-flats and townhomes. The alternatives included development concepts desired by some property owners. The purpose of this

approach - to look at a full range of general infill development options - was to consider a broader range of choices and their relative merits in relation to the community goals for neighborhood/historic preservation and infill development. A Summary Report presenting two options (Options A and B) derived from input from the workshops was issued for public review in March. The four policy options presented in this report reflect comments received on the Summary Report. More detailed information about the alternatives evaluated at the workshops, summaries of workshop comments, and the B and 3rd Street Visioning Planning Options Summary Report are available on the City of Davis website: www.cityofdavis.org.

Phase Two: Policy Implementation

After receiving City Council direction, necessary amendments to the City's plans, guidelines, and zoning codes to implement the desired policy choices will be drafted for further public review.

Downtown and Neighborhood Context

The B and 3rd Street planning area is located west of the traditional downtown one block away from the UC Davis campus. B Street is an important arterial street and runs along Central Park's western edge. B Street was once part of the historic Lincoln Highway (1927-28) and faced a school that became Central Park. B Street has become a civic corridor and offers a valuable opportunity to create a backdrop framing Central Park's civic activities. 3rd Street is a pedestrian connector between downtown and the University. It is evolving into a mixed-use area with ground floor uses that make it an attractive and active connection.

The planning area is part of the traditional single-family University Avenue/Rice Lane neighborhood. In the 1960's, planning policies encouraged urban renewal and many of downtown Davis traditional buildings were razed and redeveloped with suburban-style single story commercial structures and parking lots. Some of homes in the planning area were replaced with boxy apartment buildings. If the 1960's plans were fully implemented, the University Avenue-Rice Lane Neighborhood would have been transformed into a commercial and apartment district. Davis reacted, as many cities did to urban renewal, with new policies and zoning that encouraged the preservation of historic resources and conservation of traditional neighborhoods. At the same time, the City also had the foresight to encourage infill development and protect rural lands from development. The emphasis today is to facilitate positive change and intensification within a design context that enhances a viable neighborhood and an appropriate intensity between the downtown and the university.

Planning Policy Context

Planning policies and regulations that govern the land use and design for the B Street and 3rd Street areas are located in several documents. At the upper end of Davis' planning system is the General Plan that provides an overall blueprint for the city's growth. In addition to the City's General Plan there are five principal planning documents that establish policies and guidelines for development or redevelopment of the properties located within the University/Rice Lane neighborhood. These include the Core Area Specific Plan (CASP), the Core Area Strategy Report, the Davis Downtown and Traditional Residential Neighborhoods Design Guidelines (Design Guidelines), Planned Development (PD2 86A) zoning, and Historic Resource Management Ordinance.

Key policies in the General Plan, Core Area Specific Plan and Core Area Strategy Report include:

- **Land Use:** Downtown should include a mix of uses that extends activities throughout the day.
- **Circulation:** Pedestrian, bicycle and automobile circulation systems should be coordinated and efficient.
- **Urban Design:** Streets and places should encourage pedestrian activity.
- **Conservation:** Buildings of historic value and other structures that contribute to the traditional character of Davis should be maintained in active service, whenever feasible.

Planning Objectives

Through the workshop process, a series of objectives were developed and used to evaluate planning alternatives. The evaluation included objectives for successfully responding to existing physical and policy context; historic and neighborhood preservation; providing ownership housing; providing enough density to make new investment feasible; and sustainable design.

New investment in the B Street and 3rd Street area should be supportive of the following objectives:

Context

- New investment should reflect a balanced approach to accomplishing General Plan infill and preservation policies.
- Development should support economic and urban design objectives for downtown.
- New investment should be compatible with the scale and uses of the neighborhood and park.
- Development should improve 3rd Street's pedestrian experience and land use connection between downtown and the university.

Preservation

- New development should protect and be compatible with existing historic and cultural resources.
- The character of new investment should be compatible with the neighborhood and downtown.

Ownership Housing

- New development should provide ownership opportunities while protecting the quality of life for existing homeowners.
- New investment should support economic development objectives for quality ownership housing in the downtown.

Density and Implementation Feasibility

- Development densities should be sufficient to support reinvestment.
- Development standards and review process should provide incentives for reinvestment that reflect the economic development and urban design objectives for B Street and 3rd Street.

Sustainable Design

- New investment should demonstrate Davis' regional leadership in sustainable design and planning.
- Green building technologies should be included in new development.

Section 2: Visions One and Two – Traditional Patterns

Section 2 describes two visions that reflect the traditional neighborhood development pattern. Vision One maintains the existing zoning on B Street. Vision Two modifies existing zoning on B Street to allow attached two and three story town homes with accessory dwelling units over garages along the alleys. Both Visions retain existing historic buildings and structures at the corners of 3rd and B Streets. Both allow three-story mixed use on 3rd Street. Vision One and Two can be implemented through current regulatory systems and funding with minor adjustments.

Vision One - Maintain Traditional Pattern

Vision: Enhance the alley with new cottages; retain existing structures on B Street allowing additions to accommodate new live/work uses. Enhance 3rd Street as a mixed use "commercial village."

Vision One allows development to occur on B Street under existing zoning and Guidelines, and on 3rd Street with some minor modifications. This option provides modest increases in housing while developing within traditional neighborhood yard and setback patterns. This option could be implemented incrementally with updated design guidelines and standards and represents less of a change from existing conditions.

Vision Two – Modify Traditional Pattern

Vision: B Street remains primarily residential with new attached two and three story town homes and two story accessory dwellings in "carriage house" addresses over garages along the alley. Enhance 3rd Street as a mixed use "commercial village."

Vision Two provides modest increases in housing while developing within traditional neighborhood yard and setback patterns. This option could be implemented incrementally with updated design guidelines and standards and represents less of a change from existing conditions than Visions Three and Four.

Downtown Infill Policies

Vision One supports limited infill development but with some minor modifications. Vision Two supports infill development and contributes to a greater mix of housing types in the downtown. Both Visions also provide for modest addition of mixed-use three-story development along 3rd Street.

Preservation Policies

Both Visions preserve the pattern of yards and setbacks found in the University Avenue/Rice Lane neighborhood. Both require new housing to transition in scale and protect the privacy of existing single-family houses. Vision A Continues to encourage retention/adaptive reuse of existing structures on B Street. Vision Two Does not require retention/adaptive reuse of all existing structures.

Parking

Residential parking to be provided on site. Modifications made to parking standards to provide an incentive for ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) in residential projects in Vision Two and accommodate mixed-use development in both visions.

Regulations

Assumes the guidelines and related zoning standards would be updated to allow taller buildings and higher densities on 3rd Street, and on B Street in Vision Two. Would require updating the Downtown Core Area Specific Plan.

Visions One and Two: Design Principles

Visions One and Two are intended to develop within the existing patterns of yards, setbacks and buildings in the existing neighborhood. The following summarizes design considerations for new investment in the B Street and 3rd Street areas in these two visions.

3rd Street (Between B Street and University Avenue)

The existing design guidelines would continue to provide the direction for 3rd Street in Visions One and Two. The Guidelines emphasize the evolution of the street into a "commercial village" of mixed-use buildings linking the university to downtown. The Guidelines stress:

- A mix of commercial and traditional residential building types is appropriate for this area.
- Two and three-story buildings should predominate.
- Varied setbacks are encouraged to enhance the transition between building types and provide for courtyards and plazas.
- Parking is not permitted in front of a building.
- Courtyards and plazas are encouraged.

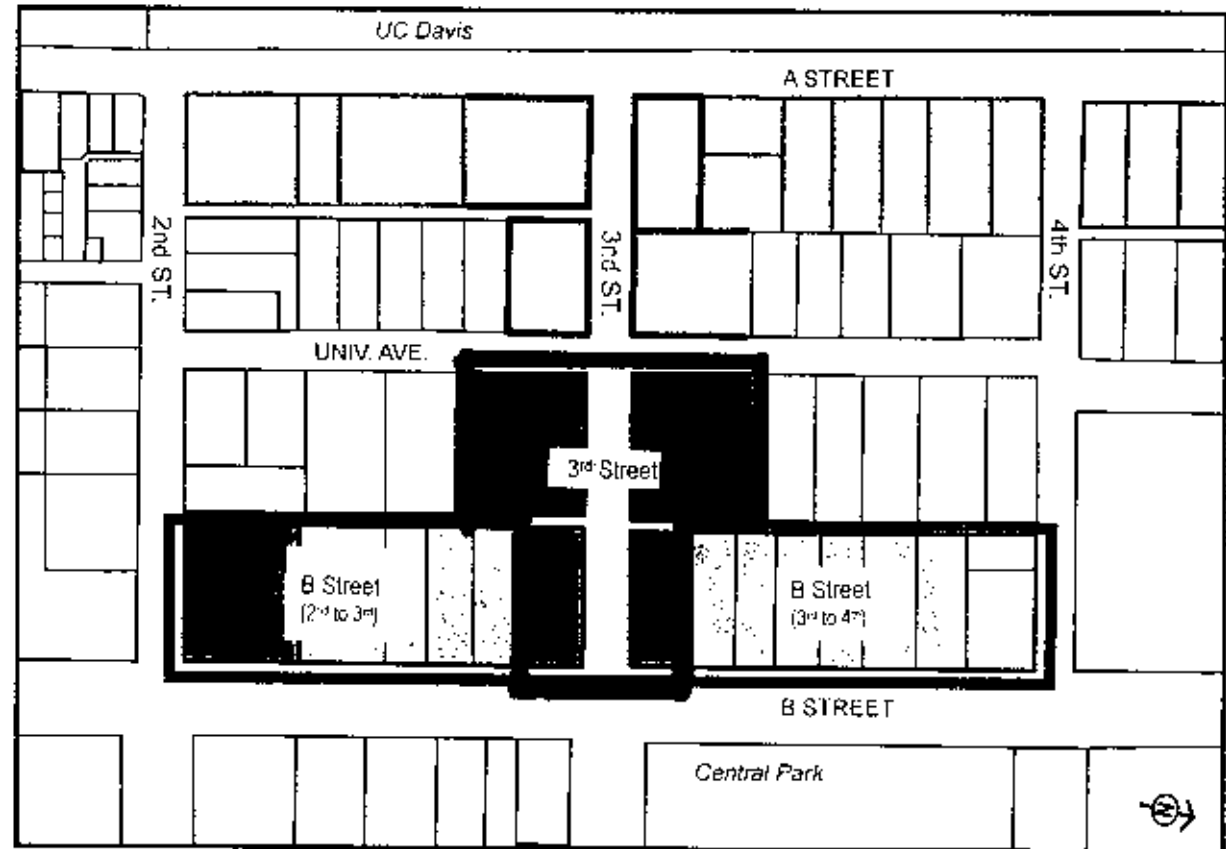
B Street (Between 2nd and 4th)

The Design Guidelines and planning standards would be used with some modifications to support the implementation of Vision One. The Guidelines currently stress the following:

- Provide front yards similar in character to neighboring properties.
- Preserve the sense of public and private and public open space through the sensitive placement of building additions and structures.
- Orient the front of the primary structure towards the street.
- Clearly define the primary entrance by using a raised front porch or stoop.
- Provide a sense of visual continuity by aligning the front and sides of a new building with other structures in the neighborhood.
- Access parking from alleys where feasible, and maintain traditional parking system.
- Preserve, to the extent feasible, existing mature trees.
- Minimize the perceived scale of a building by stepping down its height toward the street and neighboring smaller structures.
- Locate doors and windows to respect the privacy of neighboring properties.
- Use building and roof forms that are similar to those seen in the neighborhood.
- Locate secondary structure at the rear of the lot and along an alley.
- A secondary structure should relate to the general architectural character of the primary building in mass, scale, form and material.

**Vision One:
Maintain Traditional Pattern**

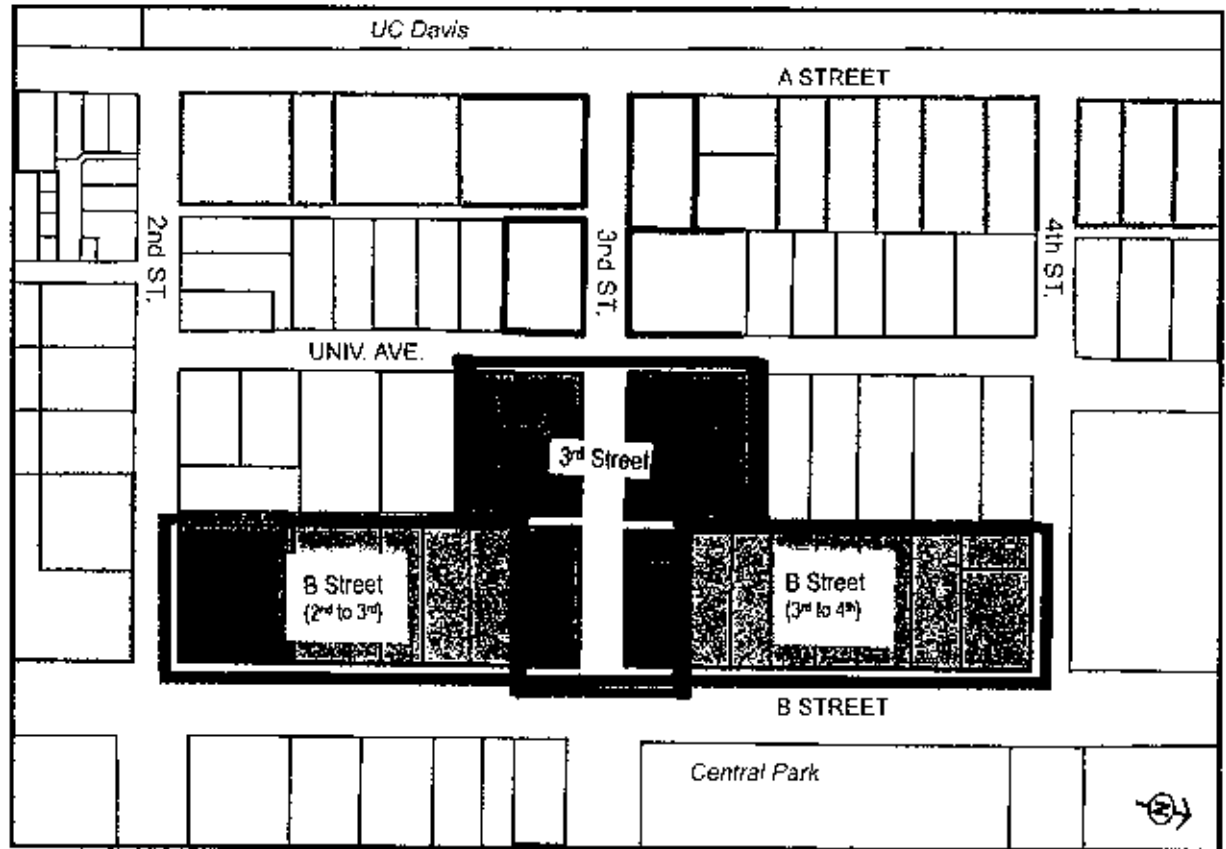
- 3rd Street -- Mixed Use "Commercial Village"
-- 2 and 3 stories
- B Street -- Retain / expand houses on B
-- Collages on alleys
-- 2 stories



**B Street and 3rd Street
Visioning**

**Vision Two:
Modify Traditional Pattern**

- 3rd Street – Mixed Use “Commercial Village”
– 2 and 3 stories
- B Street – Retain / expand houses on B
– Cottages on alleys
– 2 and 3 stories



**B Street and 3rd Street
Visioning**

Section 3: Vision Three – New Development Pattern

Section 3 describes a new development pattern that allows development of new three-story attached row housing or flats on B Street and alley townhouses with parking courts accessed from alleys. 3rd Street and the corners of 3rd and B Street are redeveloped with mixed use. Vision Three would require a district approach to be effectively implemented.

Third Street (Between B and University)

Vision: Enhance Third Street as a "commercial village" linking the campus to downtown with new mixed use buildings, sidewalk cafes, and pedestrian/bike enhancements.

This option provides a measurable increase in housing supporting infill policies requiring new development patterns and parking policies. 3rd Street becomes a mixed-use address and a livelier pedestrian connection between the campus and downtown. It provides ample added motivation for redevelopment of existing single-family lots on B Street and 3rd Street. Vision Three would require a district approach to coordinate site planning (circulation, open space, utilities and parking). Without such an approach potentially undesirable impacts on the neighborhood could result.

B Street (Between 2nd and 4th Street)

Vision: Enhance B Street across from Central Park with a built form that establishes a more urban scale on B Street emphasizing a mix of higher density housing types.

Downtown Infill Policies

Vision Three supports infill development and contributes to a greater mix of housing types. It provides for continuous mixed-use along 3rd Street, strengthening the pedestrian and economic connection between the university and downtown.

Preservation Policies

This option changes the predominant character of the study area from traditional single-family to townhouse and multi-family. The change in the neighborhood context of the historic buildings is acknowledged. By not requiring initial projects to respond to existing lot, yard and setback patterns it will allow a change in the pattern of investment.

Parking

For Third Street, parking is accommodated consistent with the Central Commercial zoning standards with residential parking required on-site and in-lieu fees allowed for non-residential uses. On B Street, two parking spaces per residential unit is accommodated on-site with considerations for reduced parking standards for smaller one and two bedroom units. A parking management strategy would be required to support fewer on-site parking spaces per unit and off-site parking for ground floor commercial uses on 3rd Street. Instituting an in-lieu fee program to expand public parking facilities in the Central Park area of downtown and other parking management programs would need to be pursued.

Regulations

The Core Area Specific Plan, Design Guidelines, zoning, parking and other related standards would need to be updated to reflect the new vision for these areas and to allow taller buildings, higher densities, smaller setbacks and modified parking requirements. New mechanisms and committed effort would also be required to enhance off-street parking.

Vision Three: Design Principles

Vision Three anticipates a change to the pattern of front, rear and side yards on B Street and a more urban edge to 3rd Street. The following summarizes design considerations for new investment in the B Street and 3rd Street areas in Vision Three.

Third Street (Between B Street and University Avenue)

The existing design guidelines would be modified to provide direction for 3rd Street in Vision Three. The Guidelines emphasize the evolution of the street into a "commercial village" of mixed-use buildings linking the campus to downtown. Vision Three would be more urban with a strong uninterrupted storefront edge along 3rd Street. The following modifications to the Design Guidelines would be needed:

- Mixed-use storefront buildings with residential roof forms are appropriate for 3rd Street.
- New buildings to be predominantly 2 stories at the street with a maximum of 3 stories permitted. 3 story elements at the corners of blocks area encouraged.
- A consistent storefront setback is desired along 3rd Street.
- Courtyards and plazas are to be located as designated by an overall open space concept for the block.
- New development to be of high quality design and construction enhance the visual quality of the street and complement the residential character of the overall neighborhood.
- Commercial uses emphasize retail and sidewalk cafes at the street level with offices and residential apartments on upper floors.
- For-sale condominiums/flats are also encouraged.
- Doors and windows carefully located to respect the privacy of neighboring properties.
- Existing landmark trees and designated historic structures are preserved.
- On-site parking located behind the buildings with access off the alley. Underground parking encouraged where feasible.

B Street (Between 2nd and 4th Street)

Modifications to the Design Guidelines and planning standards would be made to support the implementation of Vision Three. The following modifications to the Design Guidelines would be needed:

- New development to be of high quality design and construction to enhance the visual quality of the street and support potential for owner occupied units.
- New development to consist of individual attached residential townhouses planned in an efficient arrangement to minimize paved area and create meaningful open space opportunities.
- Provide consistent front yard setbacks along B Street and the alley. Design front yards to clearly define public, semi-public, semi-private, and private spaces.
- Flexible live-work spaces on the ground floor units facing B Street are encouraged to provide a more public edge to the Park and B Street.
- New buildings are predominantly 3 stories stepping down to 2 stories as appropriate to reduce the perceived scale of buildings from the street and adjacent single story structures.

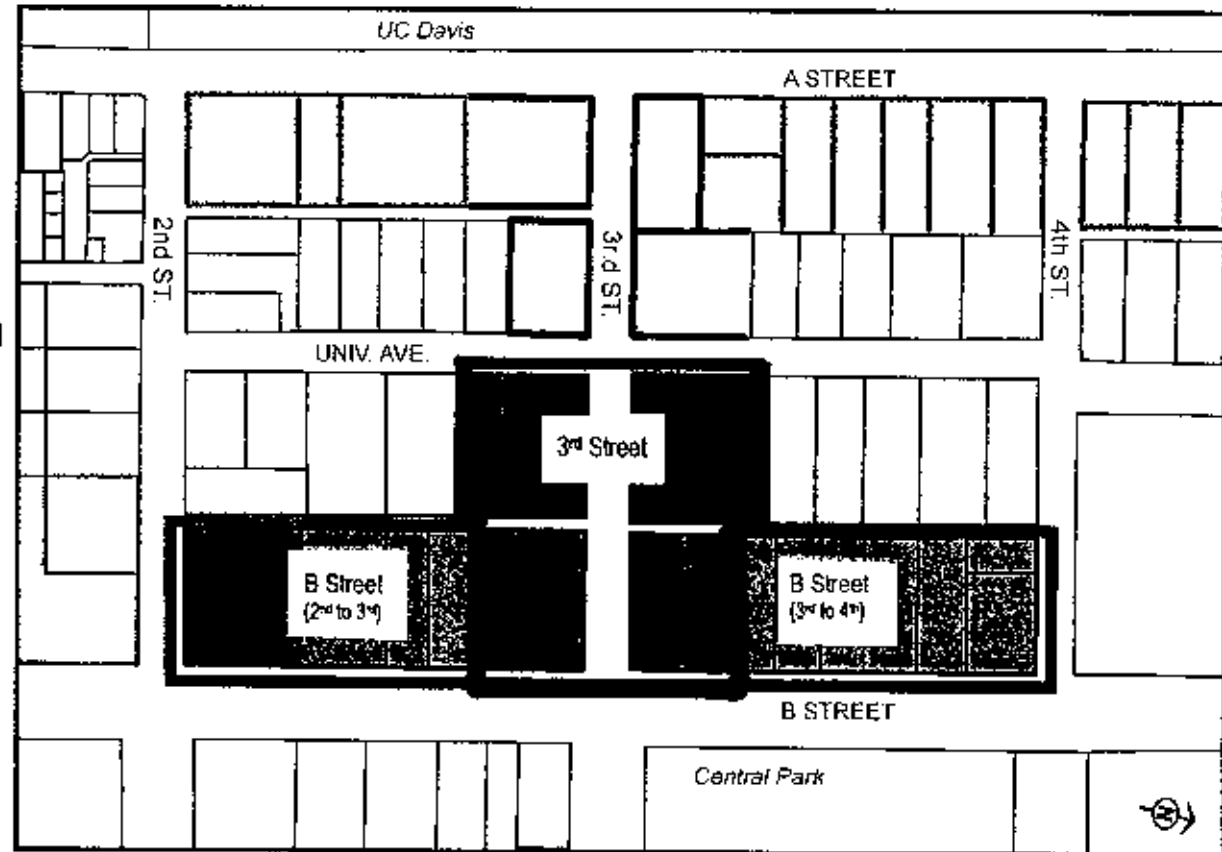
- Exceptions to parking requirements or other development standards considered for preservation of existing landmark trees, trees of significance, character contributing or designated historic structures.
- Parking provided on ground floor of units oriented on interior parking court with shared accessed off the alley.
- The B Street alley should be designed as a new small residential street with alley units fronting on to it.

The following guidelines would still pertain to housing on B Street and the alley:

- Minimize the perceived scale of a building by stepping down its height toward the street and neighboring smaller structures.
- Locate doors and windows to respect the privacy of neighboring properties.
- Use building and roof forms that are similar to those seen in the neighborhood.
- Orient front entries toward B Street and alley with a raised front porch or stoop to clearly define primary entrance to each unit.
- Existing landmark trees and designated historic structures are preserved.
- Clearly define the primary entrance of each unit by using a raised front porch or stoop.

Vision Three: New Development Pattern

- 3rd Street – Mixed Use “Commercial Village”
 - Predominantly 3 stories, stepped to 2
- B Street – Townhouses/Condos on B and alley (2nd to 3rd) – 2 and 3 stories
- B Street – Row/Townhouses on B and alley (3rd to 4th) – 2 and 3 stories



B Street and 3rd Street Visioning

Section 4: Vision Four – Special Character District

Section 4 describes staff's recommended Vision Four based on a new development pattern of a mix of new two/three-story residential housing forms on B Street. 3rd Street and the corners of 3rd and B Street are redeveloped with mixed use. Vision Four would require a district approach to be effectively implemented.

After careful consideration of the physical and policy context, future development options, and public input received throughout the B Street and 3rd Street Visioning process city staff has developed a recommended vision for implementation. This vision supports the previous recognition of the unique aspects of this area and emphasizes 3rd Street as a unique mixed use urban village with a mix of higher density housing forms integrated on B Street in a manner compatible with the surrounding context.

Third Street (Between B and University)

Vision: Enhance Third Street between B and University as a distinctive "urban village" that goes beyond simply improving the connection between downtown and campus to create a unique character district. This mixed use concept emphasizes new development that blends the intellectual capacity at the university with entrepreneurial spirit of downtown in a high quality urban village environment that established a focal point for the neighborhood.

The basis of this vision is the creation of a distinct district that functions as a draw for high value added commercial uses and live-work ownership opportunities that are desired in this district. Providing a synergy to support these types of retail, office and café uses that serve the neighborhood and adjacent University population would minimize additional traffic and parking demands. A cluster of such uses will help establish a high quality, unique character district attractive to those seeking "urban village" working / living environments. Such a district could also serve as a defining focal point for the neighborhood.

B Street (Between 3rd and 4th Street)

Vision: Enhance B Street across from Central Park with a built form that establishes a stronger visual edge the Park while providing land uses that support the community's desires for compact development in a manner compatible with the existing neighborhood. Enhance B Street between Second Street and Third Street with a built form that establishes a prominent visual presence to the street and while providing a variety of housing types and land uses that support the community's desires for compact development in a manner compatible with the existing neighborhood.

Downtown Infill Policies

Vision Three supports infill development and contributes to a greater mix of housing types. It provides for continuous mixed-use along 3rd Street, strengthening the pedestrian and economic connection between the university and downtown.

Preservation Policies

This option changes the predominant character of the study area from traditional single-family to townhouse and multi-family. The change in the neighborhood context of the historic buildings is acknowledged. By not requiring initial projects to respond to existing lot, yard and setback patterns it

will allow a change in the pattern of investment. A comprehensive approach rather than piecemeal deviations from existing patterns is preferable. If properly implemented a high quality, albeit more urban, design environment can evolve.

Parking

For Third Street, parking is accommodated consistent with the Central Commercial zoning standards with residential parking required on-site and in-lieu fees allowed for non-residential uses. On B Street, two parking spaces per residential unit is accommodated on-site with considerations for reduced parking standards for smaller one and two bedroom units. A parking management strategy would be required to support fewer on-site parking spaces per unit and off-site parking for ground floor commercial uses on 3rd Street. Instituting an in-lieu fee program to expand public parking facilities in the Central Park area of downtown and other parking management programs would need to be pursued.

Regulations

The Core Area Specific Plan, Design Guidelines, zoning, parking and other related standards would need to be updated to reflect the new vision for these areas and to allow taller buildings, higher densities, smaller setbacks and modified parking requirements. New mechanisms and committed effort would also be required to enhance off-street parking.

Vision Four: Design Principles

Vision Four anticipates a change to the pattern of front, rear and side yards on B Street and a more urban edge to 3rd Street. The following summarizes design considerations for new investment in the B Street and 3rd Street areas in Vision Four.

Third Street (Between B Street and University Avenue)

The existing design guidelines would be modified to provide direction for 3rd Street in Vision Four consistent with these principles:

- New development to be of high quality design and construction to enhance the visual quality of the street and cultivate the evolution of Third Street as a creative class/arts village.
- Uses to emphasize creativity based professional/retail users such as designers, architects, artists, novelists, engineers, researchers, etc.
- Additional cafes and restaurants limited to properties at 3rd and B rather than on interior lots on 3rd Street.
- Residential uses on upper floors are encouraged as smaller studio and 1-bedroom rental units. Larger for-sale condominiums/flats are also encouraged.
- Smaller mixed use buildings rather than one large mixed use building are preferred.
- New buildings to be predominantly 2 stories at the street with 3rd and 4th stories permitted if well integrated and providing any appropriate privacy and scale transitions.
- Doors and windows carefully located to respect the privacy of neighboring properties.
- On-site parking located behind the buildings with access off the alley. Underground parking encouraged where feasible.
- Exceptions to parking requirements or other development standards considered for preservation of existing landmark trees, trees of significance, character contributing or designated historic structures.
- Existing landmark trees and designated historic structures are to be preserved.

B Street (Between 2nd and 4th Streets)

The existing design guidelines would be modified to provide direction for B Street in Vision Four consistent with these principles:

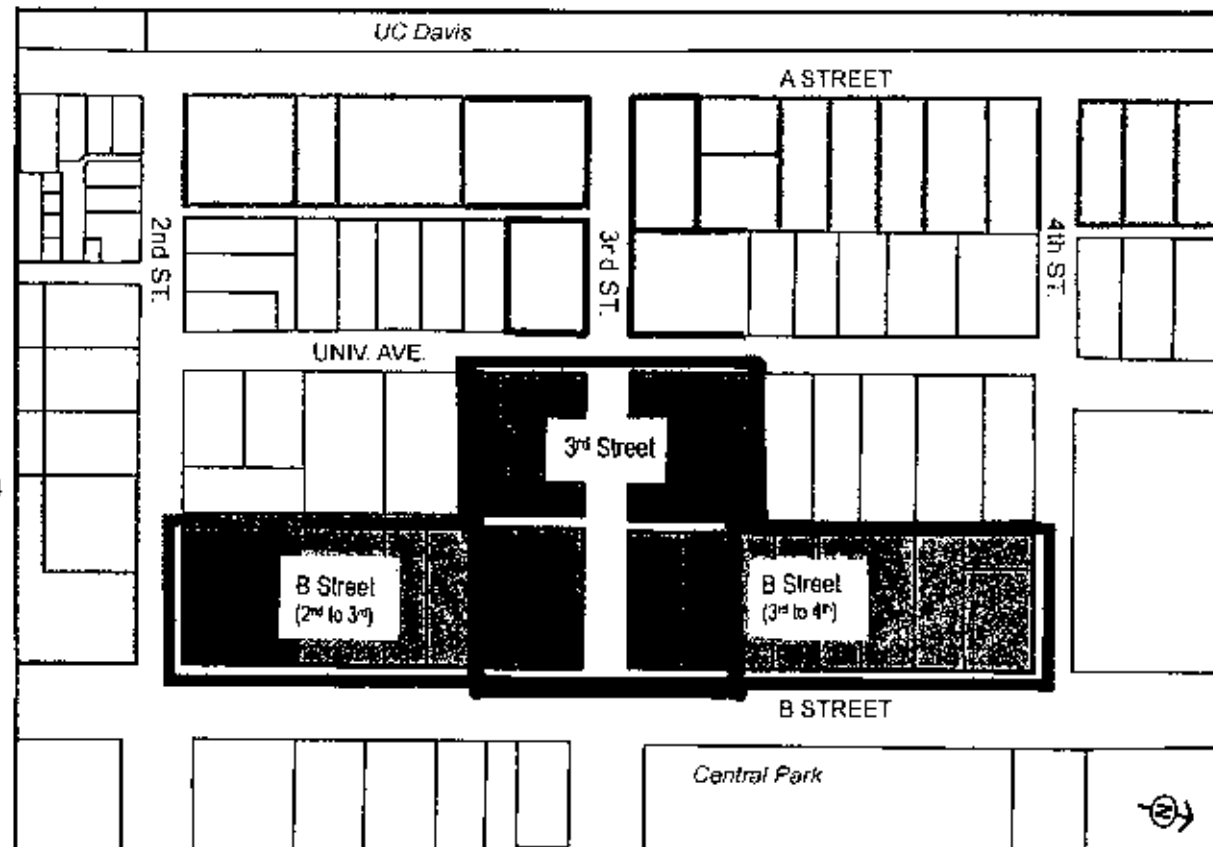
- New development to be of high quality design and construction to enhance the visual quality of the street and support potential for owner occupied units.
- New development north of Third Street mixed use district to consist of individual attached or detached residential townhouses planned in an efficient arrangement to minimize paved area and create meaningful open space opportunities. Flexible live-work spaces on the ground floor units facing B Street are encouraged to provide a more public edge to the Park.
- New Development south of Third Street mixed use district to consist of new ownership housing opportunities with potentially higher density forms such as attached townhouses and condominium units. Conversion and expansion of existing residential structures to accommodate office uses is also appropriate south of Third Street.
- New buildings are predominantly 2 stories at the street and alley with 3 stories permitted if well integrated and providing appropriate privacy and scale transitions.
- Townhouse units expressed individually with front entries oriented toward B Street and alley.
- Raised front porch or stoop to clearly define primary entrance to each building.
- Landscaped front and alley setbacks incorporated into new projects. Design of front yards should clearly define public, semi-public, semi-private, and private spaces.
- Doors and windows carefully located to respect the privacy of neighboring properties.
- Parking for residential uses provided in covered garages oriented on interior parking court with shared accessed off the alley.
- Exceptions to parking requirements or other development standards should be considered for preservation of existing landmark trees, trees of significance, character contributing or designated historic structures
- Existing landmark trees and designated historic structures are to be preserved.

Vision Four: Special Character District

3rd Street – Distinctive Mixed Use ‘Urban Village’
– Predominantly 2 stories at street, up to 4

B Street – Townhouses/Condos on B and alley
(2nd to 3rd) – 2 and 3 stories

B Street – Row/Townhouses on B and alley
(3rd to 4th) – predominantly 3 stories



B Street and 3rd Street Visioning