

Transportation, Circulation & Parking

Section 4

4.1 Motor Vehicle Transportation and Circulation

Community Vision

The vision calls for balancing the needs of various travel modes so that motorized traffic does not replace the pedestrian and threaten the Core Area's place as the vital, community center. Too much traffic could make sidewalks and outdoor areas noisier and interfere with easy pedestrian movement. Use of public transit—which provides an important link to the downtown—is on the increase. Even better service is possible with increased funding from Propositions 108, 111 and a student referendum.³⁸ Related policies include:

- Limiting through automobile traffic to certain streets at the edge of the downtown business district (Fifth, First, B and F). The remaining inner streets would function as “Main Street” streets for destination traffic and pedestrian routes. The primary transit routes have been identified as A, B, F, First, Second, Third and Fifth streets.³⁹
- Improving transit service to the downtown to increase activity without generating more automobile

traffic, and the need for more parking. Transit service to downtown is provided by: Unitrans (the City of



Davis/ASUCD bus system) and Yolobus (with service to Sacramento, West Sacramento, the Sacramento Airport and Woodland). Downtown is a regular stop on Amtrak's Capitol route from San Jose to Roseville.⁴⁰

Issues/Challenges

- **Richards Boulevard Corridor.** Growth in recent years in North and South Davis has caused more cross-town traffic to be routed through the downtown, even if not bound there. The City Council approved the redesign of the Richards Boulevard underpass in the summer of 1996. The project called for two additional auto lanes, separated bike paths and pedestrian facilities. This decision was over-

³⁸ General Plan

³⁹ Specific Plan

⁴⁰ Specific Plan



turned, however, by voter referendum. Voters were concerned about increasing traffic on downtown streets. Interviews conducted for this report, however, indicate a perception that this traffic bottleneck is still a problem that hinders economic growth downtown.

Current and Recent Actions

- ▶ **Richards Boulevard Corridor Alternatives.** The City is analyzing alternatives for transportation congestion relief (vehicles, bikes, pedestrians, etc.) without expanding or replacing the existing vehicle tunnel under the railroad. A free right turn lane from Richards to First Street has been approved and is scheduled for construction in the spring of 2000. Coordination of signal timing for intersections along the Richards Boulevard/First Street corridor is also being considered.
- ▶ **Improved directional signs.** Signs directing visitors and residents to significant community destinations (i.e. UCD, visitor information, train depot, parking, and major public facilities) are being added to improve traffic circulation.
- ▶ **Electric vehicles.** *General Plan Policy MOB 1.10* calls for establishing charging stations for electric vehicles in public parking lots in accordance with the future growth of electric vehicle use. Charging stations have been installed at the depot parking lot, Fifth and G garage, and E Street Plaza parking lot.

Future Actions

HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR 2000-2004

- ▶ **Downtown shuttle.** DDBA goals for 1999/2000 include working with Transportation and Parking Services at UCD to pursue a grant for bringing back the downtown shuttle. Attendees at the 1999 Downtown Forum were strongly in favor of this.
- ▶ **Alternate modes of transportation.** Educate customers and employees on the availability of transit, bicycle and other non-auto transportation modes.

4.2 Parking

Community Vision

Just as the automobile must not replace the pedestrian if the Core Area is to remain the vital community center, the community has decreed that automobile parking must not interfere with pedestrian oriented stores and offices. Policies include:



- Locating large-scale parking structures on the periphery of the downtown Core Area with retail frontage along sidewalks.⁴¹
- Excluding additional large parking areas unless they are related to a specific development project and there is no viable alternative for new parking.⁴²
- Develop a comprehensive parking plan/program that equitably accommodates long-term parking needs for the expanding downtown. Currently there are 3,727 parking spaces downtown.⁴³

Issues/Challenges

- ▶ **Merchant parking.** Studies by the Chamber and DDBA of parking in the two-hour restriction area concluded that employees who rotate their cars from space to space throughout the day consume half of the parking spaces.
- ▶ **Two-hour zones.** Recent parking programs include restrictions on long-term (over two-hour) parking in the downtown core coupled with a permit program for area residents. This has caused employee parking to spill over into the residential neighborhoods just east and north of the business district. In addition, downtown users wishing to shop and have lunch, or see a movie, are frustrated by a perceived lack of convenient long-term parking.
- ▶ **Perceived safety.** Overcoming perceived safety concerns is needed to convince employees and customers to use parking structures.

Current and Recent Actions

- ▶ **Boy Scout Cabin parking lot.** In 1995 the City made improvements to the Boy Scout Cabin parking lot to accommodate overflow parking.
- ▶ **Depot parking.** In the fall of 1998 the City of Davis completed construction of a 135-space parking lot adjacent to the historic Southern Pacific Depot and Amtrak station.
- ▶ **Fifth & G complex.** This new \$15 million complex housing retail, cinema and offices has an accompanying five-story parking garage. In the garage, 217 of the 430 spaces are available to the public with a three-hour limit. The City Council recently concurred with the DDBA's recommendations to study the feasibility of allowing a limited amount of all-day downtown employee parking in this structure. Temporary permits would be issued on a monthly basis until demand increases from Fifth & G tenants and customers.
- ▶ **Davis Commons.** This new retail project at First Street and Richards Boulevard includes 205 parking spaces.
- ▶ **Angled parking.** Portions of Second Street and E Street have been converted from parallel parking to angled parking adding 23 additional spaces.
- ▶ **Saturday parking enforcement.** The City Council recently concurred with the DDBA's recommendations to enforce two-hour parking time limits in the downtown core on Saturdays as well as weekdays. This enforcement will begin in January 2000. A third parking enforcement officer has been hired to ensure that parking regulations on all streets are being enforced.

⁴¹ Specific Plan

⁴² Specific Plan

⁴³ Economic Development Strategic Plan 1995-2000



- ▶ **Perceived safety.** The City Council recently concurred with the DDBA's recommendations to improve maintenance and police patrols at the F Street parking structure to encourage use by downtown employees.
- ▶ **In-lieu parking fee reduction.** The City Council has approved a policy to reduce or eliminate in-lieu parking fees for projects in the Core Area. The City's adopted in-lieu fee is \$8,000 per space. Depending on the type of project (retail, other commercial, or residential) and zoning district, the fee is reduced to either zero or \$2,000 per space for up to 25 spaces. Larger projects may receive similar reductions upon approval by the City Council.
- ▶ **Marketing.** The DDBA has created a positive image marketing campaign about parking in the Core Area. They have redesigned the downtown parking map showing downtown parking zones, written a guide on how to obtain parking permits, and distributed these and other parking information to downtown businesses. Employees are being educated to park in long-term lots and structures, as well as outlying areas of the downtown.

Future Actions

HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR 2000-2004

- ▶ **Long-term parking.** Increase the marketing and number of long-term parking spaces for employees, mid-week shoppers, diners, movie-goers and daily visitors to downtown. Attendees at the 1999 Downtown Forum expressed strong support for this idea.
- ▶ **Saturday enforcement:** Analyze effectiveness of Saturday enforcement in freeing up parking for customers.
- ▶ **Additional 20-minute** parking on-street in the Downtown.
- ▶ **Education.** Educate employers and employees about appropriate long-term parking locations for Downtown employees.

FURTHER ACTIONS FOR 2000 AND BEYOND

- ▶ **Employee parking.** Analyze employee parking as a whole and identify new sites to designate for employee parking. Determine the feasibility of making both levels of the parking structure located at First and F streets free long-term parking directed at downtown employees.
- ▶ **Regal Station Site.** Consider permanently paving the former Regal Station site and designate the parking for commuter and employee parking.

4.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian Movement

Community Vision

The City of Davis and the UCD campus are nationally acknowledged leaders in bicycle planning and use. Bicycles probably serve the transportation needs of students, faculty, and staff better than any other mode. It is estimated that there is an average of more than one bicycle per person in Davis, and that 25 percent of person trips in Davis are made by bicycle. Policies include:

- Improving bicycle connections and bicycle parking in the downtown Core Area to further encourage this alternate form of transportation.⁴⁴
- Providing separate bicycle access to U.C. Davis to lessen the interface between motorists and bicyclists in the Richards Boulevard area. The City and University agree this is a good idea.

Issues and Challenges

- ▶ **Safety.** As development and use downtown continues to intensify, conflicts between cars and bikes/pedestrians will become increasingly prevalent.
- ▶ **Congestion at intersections.** The majority of intersections in the downtown are four way stops. As auto, bike, and pedestrian traffic intensifies, these four-way stops will become increasingly congested, affecting air quality and adding to the frustration of automobile travelers.

Current and Recent Actions

- ▶ **Putah Creek/I-80 bicycle underpass.** The City will construct a new bicycle underpass that crosses I-80 and the Union Pacific railroad tracks along the South fork of Putah Creek. The project will connect South Davis to the downtown and the University and provide an alternative to the Richards Boulevard undercrossing for bikes and pedestrians.
- ▶ **Richards Widening Alternatives.** Alternatives are being analyzed to either construct a second bike tube at Richards underpass and/or build a bike/pedestrian bridge over Richards connecting F Street to the new Putah Creek underpass.
- ▶ **Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements.** Bulb-outs, or shortened pedestrian crossings have been installed at Fourth and G and Second and G streets, the G Street Plaza mid-block crossing, and E Street Plaza mid-block crossing. As part of the pedestrian amenities plan, additional crossings will be enhanced annually along primary pedestrian corridors throughout the Core Area.



⁴⁴ Specific Plan



Future Actions

HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR 2000-2004

- ▶ **Bicycle parking.** Continue to install additional bike parking facilities in the Core Area as needed. Develop a standard plan including policies, design, style, location, and number of bicycle racks consistent with the Core Area Specific Plan.
- ▶ **Diagonal Parking.** Analyze the impacts of diagonal parking on bike safety in the downtown.
- ▶ **Bike lanes.** Examine ways to improve bicycle circulation to and within the Core Area.

FURTHER ACTIONS FOR 2000 AND BEYOND

- ▶ **Bicycling.** Improve bicycle route connections to open space and natural areas and neighboring communities. Improve destination signage throughout the City on bikeways.