



cityofdavis.org/downtownplan

Action Minutes

City of Davis

**Downtown Davis Plan Advisory Committee Special Meeting
Community Chambers, 23 Russell Boulevard, Davis CA 95616
Thursday, January 25, 2018
4:00 PM Tour, 7:00 PM Meeting and Public Workshop**

Committee Members Present: Meg Arnold (Chair), Michelle Byars (Vice Chair), Catherine Brinkley, Judy Corbett, Josh Chapman, Mary DeWall, Ryan Dodge, Cheryl Essex, Matt Dulcich, Justin Goss, Chris Granger, Larry Guenther, Rob Hofmann, Darren McCaffrey, John Meyer, Sinisa Novakovic, Eric Roe, Deema Tamimi, Rob White, Randy Yackzan

Committee Members Absent: None

City Council Members: Mayor Robb Davis

City Staff: Bob Wolcott, Katherine Hess, Diane Parro

Consultants: Dan Parolek and Mitali Ganguly (Opticos Design), Gladys Cornell and Isabelle Gaillard (AIM)

1. Tour (4:00 PM to 5:30 PM)

- a. The Committee met outside of the Community Chambers for a consultant led walking tour through the downtown area. The purpose of the tour was to view parts of the downtown area as a group, including some recent and proposed projects.

2. Call to Order and Roll Call

- a. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m.
- b. Meg welcomed the community and explained this is an early stage of Downtown Davis Plan process. Meg explained we are on a tight schedule, so we are using comment cards as much as possible.
- c. Bob Wolcott administered roll call of all committee members.
- d. All members were present.

3. Approval of Agenda

- a. Bob Wolcott requested an agenda adjustment to move general public comments to the end prior to the breakout session. The agenda amendment was approved unanimously.

4. Introduction of Consultants and Staff

- a. Meg introduced Opticos and the Consultant Team
- b. Meg summarized the agenda
 - i. Presentation of existing conditions
 - ii. Comments from DPAC and the public
 - iii. Breakout exercise for community feedback

5. DPAC Observations on Tour

- a. Meg requested DPAC offer one observation or take-away from the 4:00 p.m. tour
 - i. Eric Roe: It was surprising that only 14 people live and work downtown.
 - ii. Larry Guenther: I noticed the amount of legacy from over 100 years ago to today. Every year is represented downtown.
 - iii. John Meyer: If I was a dentist, we have a lot of missing teeth. The mid-block parking looked goofy and skips pedestrian patterns. We do have an active downtown at 3rd Street- we need “implants.”
 - iv. Randy Yackzan: My team has developed in the neighborhood and outside of Davis- 5th and G Street Downtown Davis. Developing downtown is financially challenging. We used to have redevelopment agencies in place- Where does the money come from now? How do we incentivize more buildings downtown? We want more residential downtown.
 - v. Deema Tamimi: The blocks went from fairly active-spaces to immediately not active. It was striking- there are many blanks. I also learned that there was an ordinance that requires banks to have an office in order to have an ATM. This is a problem because the banks are often empty.
 - vi. Mary DeWall: There is congestion between bikers, walkers, and cars in the busiest parts.
 - vii. Michelle Byars: People and cars, cars and bikers, bikers and pedestrians –no one is comfortable moving Downtown. It is not safe.
 - viii. Catherine Brinkley: The age of downtown is young. We need young people in Davis to give feedback as we talk about the future of downtown. They drive the business.
 - ix. Darren McCaffrey: Lack of hierarchy in anything. Size, building lot coverage, street width, no hierarchy in the way downtown is planned.
 - x. Meg Arnold: I’ve lived here for 20 years and still can’t remember what block a store is on. There is a lack of hierarchy- no clear distinction between the small number of streets in downtown. There is a lack of distinction.
 - xi. Sinisa Novakovick: I am a representative of university neighborhood – the district consists of wonderful houses next to downtown houses. This neighborhood should be preserved. There are too many parking lots, let’s bury them and put four stories on them, let’s make this place three times as big in the core.

- xii. Josh Chapman: When we talk about corners that are congested. Yes, we have problems downtown, but we are doing something right. Using phrases like- downtown is “broken” perpetuates the problem. We have a place people want to come to, eat and own businesses, bring their families, we have a special place downtown.

6. Presentation on Existing Conditions, Dan Parolek of Opticos, Inc.

- a. Opticos and consultants gave presentation on the project, process, engagement opportunities and existing conditions
 - i. Tentative Dates (to be confirmed by agendas prior)
 1. February 15, 2018, DPAC meeting
 2. March 8, 2018, DPAC meeting
 3. Mar 20 – 24 , 2018, Design Charrette #1
 4. April 19, 2018, DPAC meeting
 5. May 8 -12, 2018, Design Charrette #2

7. DPAC Comments on Presentation

- a. Eric Roe: 1961 plan had all of those center-block surface parking lots- very different from the ideal today.
- b. John Meyer: If 1961 influenced today, 2018 will influence 2080. We need to have future goals to hang everything on. I believe our goals should be to populate downtown, be a model globally, and be a better partner with the campus. We need to focus on big ideas.
- c. Larry Guenther: There was a lot of success in the 1961 plan- they implemented many of those ideas. If we have a good plan, we could implement. A lot of implementation comes from the property owners. I noticed that the parking lot by the train station is always red (full). There is nothing easier to redevelop than a parking lot, except a parking lot.
- d. Michelle Byars: Prop 13 made many incentives- make a huge change in downtown.
- e. Rob White: Regarding the 1961 plan- we laugh, but cannot let go of two parking lots in our downtown. There is one place that has paid parking downtown is always full. We are unable to let go of the car in one of the most sustainable cities in the US.
- f. Catherine Brinkley- “Make no little plans” by Daniel Burnham.
- g. Chris Granger: We did adopt the climate action plan, but we did not have an implementation plan. Our council needs us to do a good job laying out a framework they can hang their decision-making around, so they are not pulled apart at city council and picking apart pieces of the vision. We need to make a plan the community and leaders can support.
- h. Cheryl Essex: the 3d chart of “value” should really be clear that the topic is tax valuation. There are many values not represented by this chart, such as sales tax value and value to the community of our extraordinary train station. A chart showing jobs/housing balance does not consider the university right outside the census tract. This really distorts the picture!

8. Public Comment Cards

- a. Meg Arnold and Michelle Byars read comments from the comment cards.
 - i. I didn't hear the need for an emphasis on affordable housing. Please incorporate housing/transportation affordability considerations so that we ensure equitable development and so that we don't further gentrify.
 - ii. I appreciated Catherine's attention to demographic downtown. Another underrepresented demographic on the council may be parents of young children. In looking at inflow/outflow, it would be important to consider families who stay in town/care for children and would like to go downtown.
 - iii. There needs to be green and public spaces downtown (not just Central Park or Commons, which exist on the fringe) for families- and others- to gather downtown centrally and patronize downtown retail. This would be essential to getting residents who are families to live downtown.
 - iv. 1) Why are there 3 movie theaters in Davis? It's usually empty and takes up a lot of space and energy. The few times I have gone to the movies, I usually have the entire theater to myself! My hometown has a larger population than Davis, and we don't even have one movie theater. Most students watch movies on campus, stream movies online or Netflix.
2) Why are there so many ACE hardware stores in downtown? It's quite inconvenient honestly. Due to the lack of parking around the ACE hardware stores, it makes it difficult to transport large items from store to store in my car, which is usually parked far away. For example, I had to carry 5 bags of soil and plants down the street. A hardware store should be located in a large parking lot.
3) I wish there was a bike rental system in Downtown so my parents could visit me at school and bike around campus and downtown.
 - v. Should the Downtown study area be expanded to include the City Hall block and the school district block?
 - vi. Concerned about recent trend of demolishing buildings (usually former single-family homes dating from teens thru 40s) simply because they are not specifically considered a historic "resource"(e.g. Hunt Boyer Mansion). If nothing is sacred but a few Victorians scattered around downtown we lose the aesthetic integrity of our oldest area of town. All buildings in the town are important, though they are all often allowed to fall into disrepair as an excuse to demolish them and build modern buildings, which just do not look coherent in the preexistent neighborhood. Removing any usable building is insensitive to people who grew up here. It reduces familiarity and aesthetic cohesion. Examples of this crime against aesthetics include demolition of 4 structures on C Street; demolition of 3 structures on B (now Mission) and removal of awning on DeLuna jewelers. More demolition is not the answer- I have heard a lot of criticism of the 1961 plan, which demolished older building (then only 40-50 years old) to build modern structures!
That is continuing to happen and many people tonight proposed to tear down the 60-70s structures to build buildings that are even more modern.

- This is the identical phenomenon! Regardless if the 60s demolition was a good idea, the buildings are here now and all buildings need to be preserved, whether from 20s or 60s. This includes lighting and other aesthetically coherent "details". "KEEP DAVIS BORING!"
- vii. The goal of the Downtown Davis Plan if understood correctly is to create a vision plan for "2040 Downtown Plan." How will this plan help Downtown Davis in the next 12 months to 3 years?
 - viii. Q: How do we engage UCD students who are here temporarily and know that they will be gone before the new situation is built out?
Q: People like differentiated spaces- How about 3rd for cycling and 2nd for walking?
Q: Technical feasibility of a 24/7/365 self-driving electrical bus/shuttle on a fixed route, connecting peripheral parking to Downtown and Davis Depot?
 - ix. Does the Consultant team generally concur that the elimination of parking minimums is necessary to create a viable and resonant change downtown?
 - x. Historical preservation grew out of the mid-century plans of demolishing buildings for parking, etc. We need to ask ourselves whether the pendulum has swung too far. Historical preservation is important, but not at the expense of progress.
 - xi. Please put a greater emphasis on the need for affordable housing and the important of a job/housing balance. Let's also question conventional estimates of low/mid income, which are defined by resident income levels. These could show the levels of affordability away from some jobs represented in the city.
 - xii. Please keep the Co-op and strip mall in mind as contiguous with area core. It is a critical northeast anchor to the overall sense of community. Redevelopment of this area, for the role it can play is essential. To leave it out of the plan would be a mistake.
 - xiii. I am very encouraged by the leaders involved and by the thoroughness of the process- both the critique and the affirmation. The vision is progressive- future oriented, yet anchored in the past.
 - xiv. To The Downtown Davis Planning Team, I have read Ashley Muir Bruhn's extremely thorough and thoughtful input regarding the future of Davis downtown. I started to draft responses of my own, then I realized that Ashley had already expressed those opinions better. In my opinion, her answers should be considered a roadmap for this issue. I have, however, added a few thoughts. My family has lived in Davis for four years. I almost never venture into downtown, unless for a quick and unavoidable errand. Sadly, I find a little reason to linger there; when entertaining out-of-town colleagues or family, I typically take them to dinner in Winters. I would far prefer to keep that business in Davis. This opinion is echoed amongst many of my 40-50 year old peers; Davis seems to offer more for the student population (used clothing stores, pizza joints), thanks to the many families of Davis. This is a shame, as the neglected demographic of families with schoolchildren is also a relatively

affluent one. In short, here is the top-four wish list for the future Davis downtown: Replace the E Street Parking Lot with an outdoor public use area, including a play space for children. Without this, families will not linger. This could be an everyday gather spot for all the Davis demographics, families and students alike. It could do what the farmers' market already does so beautifully, but every day, and linked to retail. By the way, I speak not only for those with elementary age kids. I think the middle schoolers and high schoolers would spend time in the area outside Baskin Robbins if the area were more pleasant, less concrete (and less frequently smelled of urine). An eatery modeled after the Oxbow Market in Napa, perhaps in the space vacated by Whole Foods. Five to six restaurants offering limited menus around a central area. Large communal tables. BBQ sandwiches, sushi, craft beers, and oysters on the half shell- all sharing a busy and noisy indoor/outdoor venue. Pedestrian-only downtown days, perhaps once a month. Live music and art events, perhaps food trucks. Park your car on the perimeter and re-acquaint yourself with Davis downtown. Even one hip, upscale restaurant. Thank you for the opportunity to weigh-in. Sincerely, Amy Masselink

- xv. I am very encouraged by the leaders by the leaders involved and by the thoroughness of the process – both the critique and the affirmation. The vision is progressive future oriented yet anchored in the past.

9. Public Comments

- a. Mike Webb, City Manager: Thank you, this is a big undertaking. I am very proud and thankful to each and every one of you. Thank you for your service. Thank you to the consultant team, thank you staff and community members for your interest and participating.
- b. Diagonal parking- We used to have parallel parking, many vehicles jut out. As long as I have lived here, there have been more spaces.
- c. We need to look at safety, not how many cars can we fit onto the street.

10. Breakout Session

- a. Dan explains breakout session and room layout. The breakout session was a means for the community to discuss the homework assignment and existing conditions with the consultants.
- b. Comments on the post-it cards:
 - Economic and Market Analysis**
 - i. Can we normalize this \$/acre by year purchased (to factor at prop 13) and sq. ft.? -Catherine Brinkley
 - ii. It would be wonderful to pair this value/acre with projected tax base impact of any new development and cost of services to compare. - Catherine Brinkley
 - iii. Financial ideas about how to think with money movement/ investment in city budget

Sustainability

- iv. Keeping a big goal in mind is important, whether or not you make it.
- v. An ambitious vision, oriented towards the next generation of Davisites, is essential to our survival. We must let go of our fears, and we must embrace our potential to once again be a global leader in sustainability.
- vi. Need to consider "embodied energy" in evaluating our carbon future.
- vii. One way other countries have cut GHG emissions in half and improved our quality is district heating. The UCD currently is designing their heating in order to make CO2 reduction goals. Could be town-grown partnership.
- viii. Micro grids- get at resilience vs. sustainability and localization
- ix. Model for implementation- Nishi Project stopped short of priority listing
- x. Resilience- places to strengthen community relationships- resilience is undervalued
- xi. Carbon scenarios
- xii. Make downtown an exhibition area for all these great ideas and unbundled parking and micro grids, etc.
- xiii. Rooftop gardens
- xiv. Sacramento Green City money for grid impact and duck curve- workplace storage and coordinated demand management
- xv. City needs to be using the smart meter data rather than monthly averages
- xvi. Let's look at energy consumption for land use and transportation simultaneously
- xvii. Electric vehicle pressure on power grid- old infrastructure disallows plugging into main grid
- xviii. Reach code has barrier from state in that it needs to be cost-effective
- xix. Make landowner value add of up-zoning more transparent- only asking a little in terms of performance
- xx. Combine parking reform with mobility network
- xxi. Super progressive energy code in downtown
- xxii. Separating cost of parking from cost of building
- xxiii. No permeable paving actually drained, there are impervious membranes
- xxiv. Trees that help cooling canals- grow too tall so they block solar panels on a 4-story building
- xxv. Wooden buildings
- xxvi. Cost sharing with UC Davis in district energy- getting away from natural gas
- xxvii. We have not been able to adopt platinum- let's skip it altogether
- xxviii. On-call transit and mobility option
- xxix. PHIUS as stretch code- emphasis on cartoon

Parking and Transportation

- xxx. Explore making several blocks bike and pedestrians only. Or at a minimum close thru traffic by use of bollards.
- xxxi. Need safe bike paths to Amtrak and within Downtown
- xxxii. Please analyze spatially resolved travel patterns, including place-type specificity (e.g. Amtrak, businesses, etc.)

- xxxiii. How do we reverse the trend of decreasing numbers of people who take public transportation?

Urban Form

- xxxiv. Ped-centric and not Auto-centric
- xxxv. Downtown bathrooms, showers, and lockers
- xxxvi. Signage guidelines- No backlit chain store signs like Best Western and no ugly painted windows
- xxxvii. More experiential spaces- alleys, etc. and Library Branch Downtown, Shrem Art Labs, Downtown Exploit, Art Center, etc.
- xxxviii. Please provide a hashtag to involve the younger generations (also business cards with website and number
- xxxix. Get newspaper on board about involving public- a lot of these problems will require public perception to change
 - xl. Let's build for future generations, not just our own and increase building heights.
 - xli. Save the old street lamps!
 - xlii. Food trucks!
 - xliii. Downtown needs an audible clock
 - xliv. Playground downtown and other child play structures in plazas. Lots of sidewalk seating.
 - xlv. More park/family spaces. Lose E Street surface lot and expand square. Bring in pop-ups, food trucks, temporary things to get public on board.
 - xlvi. Downtown should extend until University- 2nd and 3rd Street
 - xlvii. Mixed multi-zone, please
 - xlviii. City Hall should remain public space- multiple options
 - xlix. Can building height include basements and underground parking?
 - 1. An indoor space large enough to use for community gatherings such as school auctions.
 - li. Surface parking could be a surface park with underground utilities or parking.
 - lii. Now on 3rd Street, between A and B, is a "gateway". Why not convert the rest of 3rd Street up to D Street?
 - liii. 3+ and 4 story multi-use coffee shops and bakeries on ground floor.
 - liv. Create green space that feels safe
 - lv. Outdoor dining/beer garden at edge of the plaza with co-op.
 - lvi. An urban teaching farm for education near 3rd and G Street (e.g. Vauxhall Farm in London)
 - lvii. Underground parking on E and 2nd Street instead of surface parking... Surface parks?
 - lviii. Close streets to cars for events (e.g. farmers market, etc.)
 - lix. Create hierarchy for shopping/retail area with walking malls on 2nd, 3rd, E, and F Streets.
 - lx. Remove Amtrak Train along H Street and create greenbelt.
 - lxi. Third Street- Bike and pedestrian
 - lxii. Entrance to UC Davis- Third Street improvements and bike counter
 - lxiii. More parking at Amtrak Station and on the corner of 1st Street

- lxiv. 4th Street needs better viewing and access during the 4th of July parade.
- lxv. Between 3rd and 4th Street along E and F Street, redevelop and include public spaces.
- lxvi. On the corner of 3rd and B Street, there is a high rate of accidents.
- lxvii. What is the draw to live downtown? What to walk to? Shop? There needs to be a benefit.
- lxviii. Create a central plaza for social interaction
- lxix. Bring back downtown events like the flea market with music in E Street plaza
- lxx. Add public transportation that will accommodate big purchases from hardware store
- lxxi. Extend Arboretum connection/ corridor into downtown
- lxxii. More public lawns- small grassy areas to sit downtown
- lxxiii. Preserve the older street lights (mostly on G Street)

11. Adjournment, Next Scheduled Meeting Date

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m. The next scheduled committee meeting date is February 15, 2018 (to be confirmed by an agenda prior).