



Office of the Mayor

Tom Bates  
Mayor

ACTION CALENDAR  
December 9, 2003

Date: November 24, 2003  
To: Members of the City Council  
From: Mayor Tom Bates  
Subject: Planning Commission Review of Potential Hotel/Conference Center

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the City Council direct the Planning Commission to examine the potential hotel and Conference Center in Downtown Berkeley and to report back to the Council no later than May 2004 with preliminary recommendations.

**BACKGROUND:**

Recently, the University of California announced that it is moving forward with a proposal to build a hotel/ conference center and museum complex in Downtown Berkeley. As this potential project has now become a real possibility, it is appropriate that the City begin a serious public discourse about it.

In fact, the City's General Plan (Land Use 17E) calls for a Planning Commission Task Force to evaluate the possibility of a hotel and conference center. (At the time this item was submitted, Planning Commission Chair Zelda Bronstein has activated this provision and is working to schedule the first task force meeting.)

This item will direct that the Planning Commission (with assistance from the Planning Department) undertake this preliminary review of the potential project. The scope of this review will be determined by the Planning Commission, but should include recommendations about appropriate size and massing, design criteria, and other elements. The Planning Commission should also recommend amendments to the zoning ordinance, if necessary, to site the new hotel and conference center at the Center and Shattuck site.

This initial report back to the Council should come no later than May 2004. Following this initial report, it is likely that the task force can continue its work as the project parameters are better defined.

**FISCAL IMPACTS:** Staff time as necessary to assist in this review.

**CONTACT PERSON:** Mayor Tom Bates, 981-7100.