

# 5. HISTORIC PRESERVATION & URBAN DESIGN

## STRATEGIC STATEMENT

Berkeley has one of the few intact examples of a pre-World War II downtown of its size in California. Our Downtown has an exemplary and vital heritage of historic buildings in a wide variety of architectural styles and scales. However, Downtown is an incomplete cityscape. It has within it many underused and nondescript properties, and it needs many public improvements.

- Preservation planning and utilization of historic resources have very important benefits:
- Countless studies in America and Europe have shown that historic preservation is good for the economy and for property values.
- Berkeley can and should capitalize on Downtown’s potential for cultural tourism by celebrating its historic character, not just through planning but also through civic improvements and ongoing programs and activities.
- Older buildings tend to offer distinctive retail spaces with taller ceiling heights, deeper retail space, and lower parking requirements.
- Older buildings provide much of Berkeley’s best, most affordable, and most family-friendly housing.
- Conserving existing buildings typically is very “green.” Preservation and rehabilitation use fewer natural resources and less “embodied” energy than new construction, and keep demolition waste out of landfills.
- Preservation helps retain a community’s distinct character and creates a tie with the past that establishes community and builds roots. The tangible presence of buildings and sites that speak of other people and other times is a form of history and enables us to chart some of the paths to the present and future.

Urban design policies, and appropriately located and designed new development, also have very important benefits:

- New construction can fill the gaps within our historic Downtown, heal the scars posed by unsightly properties, and both strengthen and help energize the cityscape.
- New construction and the renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings give needed scope for the exercise of design talents and creativity.

- 33 • New construction and the renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings  
34 encourage pursuing new ideas such as energy-saving designs or innovative  
35 construction techniques.
- 36 • New construction and the renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings can  
37 enable providing needed new housing.
- 38 • Urban design policy guides and stimulates new developments that are necessary  
39 for revitalization and evolution of Downtown’s economy and cultural uses.
- 40 • Urban design policy strategically employs public improvements to complement  
41 private development and achieve an enhanced urban environment for citizens and  
42 visitors.

43 The cityscape of the Downtown plan area is complex. It contains numerous and diverse  
44 subareas. Some of them have a strong visual identity, and these tend to involve very  
45 noticeable concentrations of historic buildings. Downtown’s most important historic  
46 subarea of all generally includes the buildings along Shattuck Avenue from about  
47 University Avenue to Durant, and will be referred to here as “Central Shattuck.” Despite  
48 some unfortunate remodelings, this “Main Street” has retained its basic visual character.  
49 (A map showing "Recognized & Potential Historic Resources" is provided at the end of  
50 this chapter.)

51 Another particularly important historic subarea is the Civic Center. The Landmarks  
52 Preservation Commission may in future determine some additional subareas to be  
53 historically significant, especially within the Downtown plan area’s extensive  
54 residentially zoned sections.

55 Other parts of Downtown contain fewer historic buildings and lack a strong visual  
56 identity. Substantial demolition and rebuilding has occurred since 1950 along many side  
57 streets, where parking lots or other open uses interrupt the urban fabric.

58 A balanced urban design strategy should include both preservation and infill  
59 development, and should (a) conserve with special zeal the character of subareas  
60 including in particular Central Shattuck that have a strong historic character, while  
61 recognizing that sensitive infill development, including where appropriate intensification  
62 of some designated Landmarks, can occur there, and (b) channel much of Downtown’s  
63 new development into sections that now lack a strong visual identity.

64 To help accomplish those aims, two distinct regulatory approaches as to preservation and  
65 design are needed: one for subareas including especially Central Shattuck that have a  
66 strong historic character, and one for Downtown development outside those subareas.

67 For the strongly historic subareas including notably Central Shattuck, the City’s current  
68 design guidelines should be strengthened so as to better protect and reinforce the overall  
69 character of the subarea as such. Furthermore, the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
70 should consider designating the subarea as a Historic District. This could very valuably  
71 supplement the ongoing practice of designating individual properties as Landmarks or  
72 Structures of Merit. Recent years’ additions to the Berkeley Main Library and the Francis  
73 K. Shattuck Building (at 2100 Shattuck) illustrate some ways that design can both respect  
74 and enhance the Central Shattuck subarea.

75 For the rest of the Downtown plan area, the existing design review and landmarking  
76 processes should be used to protect individual historic buildings and the general  
77 Downtown cityscape, while allowing for a lively variety of good architecture.

78 The design guidelines in general do, though, need to say more about resource-efficient  
79 design and long-lasting materials and multifamily housing. (*See Policy HD-4.6.*)

80 As implied above, the answer to “What should a new building look like?” will often vary  
81 greatly from place to place. For instance, within the Central Shattuck subarea designers  
82 should pay especially strong attention to the context (including the adjacent properties  
83 and the subarea as a whole). A design can be both highly contextual and quite creative.

84 The urban design strategy should also strongly influence the shaping of zoning patterns  
85 and standards. This is especially important as to building-height controls, which unless  
86 suitably crafted could seriously jeopardize preservation goals in some places while  
87 unduly restricting development in others.

88 Downtown Berkeley needs many improvements to the vital public realm that consists of  
89 streets and open spaces. Public improvements in general should actively support the basic  
90 strategy described above. For example, in the Central Shattuck subarea light fixtures and  
91 other street furniture should be designed to reflect and reinforce this subarea’s strong  
92 historic character. (*See also “Streetscapes and Open Space” chapter.*)

93 The University can play a major role in enhancing the cityscape through development of  
94 its extensive and strategic Downtown landholdings, to the joint benefit of town and  
95 gown. UC development should be integrated closely and sensitively into the regular  
96 urban fabric of Downtown. At the same time, it should include suitable park-like features  
97 that would help relate Downtown to the main campus and/or Ohlone Greenway.

98 **GOALS & POLICIES**

99 **GOAL HD-1: CONSERVE DOWNTOWN’S HISTORIC RESOURCES AND**  
100 **UNIQUE CHARACTER AND SENSE OF PLACE.**

101 **Policy HD-1.1.** Retain Landmarks and Structures of Merit resources in Downtown, and  
102 ensure that necessary seismic retrofit, accessibility, and other safety improvements are  
103 made to them.

104 **Policy HD-1.2.** Designate, where appropriate, additional properties as Landmarks or  
105 Structures of Merit. The City will assist efforts to identify and evaluate resources that  
106 may deserve such recognition.<sup>1</sup>

107 **Policy HD-1.3.** When substantial alterations are proposed for buildings over 40 years  
108 old, the City will encourage the restoration and repair of lost or damaged historic features  
109 whenever feasible and appropriate.

110 **Policy HD-1.4.** Encourage adaptive reuse of older buildings by promoting their  
111 rehabilitation, and allow intensification, where appropriate.

112 **Policy HD-1.5.** Ensure that in any intensification of historic buildings, the historic  
113 facades are maintained/rehabilitated, the character and scale of the addition are  
114 compatible with the historic building, and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for  
115 rehabilitation are met. As one way to help achieve compatibility, require that upper-story  
116 additions be set back in cases where this would be appropriate. The historic building  
117 with its addition(s) should contribute to the spatial definition of streets and public open  
118 spaces, as is typical of traditional urban places. *(For more on the Secretary of the*  
119 *Interior's Standards, see "Background" discussion at end of this chapter.)*

120 **Policy HD-1.6.** Use public communications to enhance citizen awareness of  
121 Downtown’s architectural heritage and of its unique historic circumstances, as  
122 summarized in 2007 Historic Context Statements. *(See "Background" discussion which*  
123 *appears later in this chapter.)*

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Additional analysis will be needed to determine with certainty the merit of resources that were noted as “Contributing” (or in some cases notes as “Significant”) in the 1990 Plan but have not been designated as Landmarks or Structures of Merit. Ongoing efforts and analysis may elevate some of these to designated Landmarks or Structures of Merit. Other undesignated properties that were noted as “Contributing” or “Significant” in the 1990 Plan may be deemed to be not historic after evaluation required under CEQA and vetting through local procedures. *(For a more extensive discussion, see “Background” statement later in this chapter.)*

124 **Policy HD-1.7.**<sup>2</sup> To reduce development pressures in residential-only areas, promote the  
125 rehabilitation of older structures, help conserve the scale of their historic fabric, and  
126 preserve the many remaining historic buildings, implement maintain the R-2A  
127 designation and downzone R-4 areas to R-3, where shown on the Land Use Map.  
128 Strengthen zoning standards to assure visible entrances, porches and stoops, street-facing  
129 windows, and landscaped yards on residential streets.

130 **Policy HD-1.8.** To promote historic preservation and adaptive reuse, consider a full  
131 range of other policy tools and incentives, such as expedited permit processing, relaxation  
132 of some parking and other zoning standards, and facade improvement loans and/or grants.

133 **GOAL HD-2: PROTECT AND STRENGTHEN SUBAREAS OF SPECIAL**  
134 **CHARACTER WHERE HISTORIC RESOURCES ARE CLUSTERED.**

135 **Policy HD-2.1.** Employ regulations and other programs to protect and reinforce the  
136 character of discrete subareas where historic resources are concentrated, while also  
137 recognizing that sensitive change may occur within such subareas.

138 **Policy HD-2.2.** Ensure that within subareas where historic resources are concentrated,  
139 building alterations and new construction are designed with especially strong respect for  
140 their surroundings.

141 **Policy HD-2.3.** Use streetscape and open space improvements to reinforce the character  
142 of historic subareas. (*See also "Streetscapes & Open Space" chapter.*)

143 **Policy HD-2.4.** The Landmarks Preservation Commission may, as appropriate, designate  
144 one or more historic subareas (in addition to the present Civic Center) as Historic  
145 Districts, in accordance with DAPAC's twin goals of preserving historic structures and  
146 encouraging new and complementary development. The City should support ~~in~~ the  
147 preparation of necessary historic district documentation for consideration by the  
148 Landmarks Preservation Commission.

149 **Policy HD-2.5.** In particular, the Landmarks Preservation Commission should consider  
150 designating a Historic District that would generally include the buildings along Shattuck  
151 Avenue from University Avenue south to Durant Avenue.

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<sup>2</sup> Revise to include related policies adopted in Land Use.

152 **GOAL HD-3: PROVIDE CONTINUITY AND HARMONY BETWEEN THE OLD**  
153 **AND THE NEW IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT.**

154 **Policy HD-3.1.** Ensure that new construction complements Downtown's historic  
155 character.

156 **Policy HD-3.2.** New construction and building alterations should meet streets and public  
157 spaces in contextual ways that create a rewarding and pedestrian-oriented public realm.

158 **Policy HD-3.3.** New construction and building alterations should use entry patterns,  
159 fenestration/ transparency, cadence/modulation, materials, cornice lines, massing, and  
160 other appropriate devices to respect and complement their context.

161 **GOAL HD-4: ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE NEW DEVELOPMENT IN**  
162 **DOWNTOWN.**

163 **Policy HD-4.1.** Support, where appropriate, new development on non-noteworthy  
164 properties to contribute to Berkeley's tradition of architectural excellence.

165 **Policy HD-4.2.** Recognizing that Downtown's commercial cityscape is not  
166 homogeneous in building height, massing, or scale, allow for continued variety that  
167 respects the context of Berkeley's Downtown.

168 **Policy HD-4.3.** Promote the potential for more buildings that support sustainable urban  
169 development and improve social, economic, and cultural vitality in Downtown.

170 **Policy HD-4.4.** Support design creativity in development that promotes active,  
171 interesting, and pleasing streetscapes and street-level commercial spaces.

172 **Policy HD-4.5.** All new construction and building alterations should be of the highest  
173 quality.

174 **Policy HD-4.6.** Use the existing Downtown Design Guidelines but amend them to:

175 a) Strengthen contextual provisions where historic resources are concentrated,  
176 while promoting a variety of architecture -- of excellent design -- in subareas  
177 with relatively few historic resources. (*See also Policies HD-2.1 and HD-2.2.*)

178 b) Add language to address the design of new multi-family housing that attracts a  
179 variety of people to live Downtown.

180 c) Add provisions to support and require buildings that have resource-efficient  
181 design and long-lasting materials, consistent with Environmental Sustainability  
182 chapter policies.

183 d) Encourage visually interesting, economically viable, and physically adequate  
184 retail spaces.

185 **Policy HD-4.7.** Ensure that proposed new developments will not have significant  
186 adverse impacts on views from and solar access to important public spaces.

187 **GOAL HD-5: IMPROVE THE VISUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF**  
188 **DOWNTOWN, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT.**  
189 **EMPHASIZE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE ACTIVE, SAFE**  
190 **AND VISUALLY ENGAGING.**

191 **Policy HD-5.1.** Improve the pedestrian experience and the aesthetic quality of the  
192 Downtown environment. Street trees and greenery should be added throughout  
193 Downtown. (*See also Policies OS-1.1 and OS-1.2.*)

194 **Policy HD-5.2.** Create and enhance streetscapes, plazas and other urban spaces to  
195 enhance the pedestrian environment and increase the number of people who will use  
196 Downtown. Sidewalks and streetscapes in historic subareas should complement the scale  
197 and architectural quality of Downtown architecture. (*See also Policies OS-1.1 and OS-*  
198 *1.2.*)

199 **Policy HD-5.3.** Create a major public gathering and green space in the heart of  
200 Downtown, on Center Street from Shattuck Avenue to Oxford Street. (*See also Policy*  
201 *OS-1.2.1.*)

202 **Policy HD-5.4.** Encourage street-level entrances and designs, as well as facade  
203 remodeling, which contribute to the pedestrian environment. In commercial areas,  
204 buildings should generally maintain the urban tradition of no setbacks from the street.  
205 (*See also Policy OS-3.2.*)

206 **Policy HD-5.5.** Enhance the quality of the pedestrian environment by encouraging  
207 north-to-south midblock walkways and midblock landscaped open spaces across the long  
208 blocks that flank Shattuck Avenue. (*See also Policies OS-3.1 and OS-3.3.*)

209 **GOAL HD-6: ENHANCE AND IMPROVE THE PHYSICAL CONNECTION**  
210 **BETWEEN DOWNTOWN AND THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.**

211 **Policy HD-6.1.** As part of University development west of Oxford Street, bring park-like  
212 features of the main campus into Downtown.

- 213 **Policy HD-6.2.** Expand the network of green spaces and bicycle paths by extending the  
214 Ohlone Greenway to Oxford Street and the UC Campus. (*See also “Streetscapes and*  
215 *Open Space” Policy OS-1.2.9(a).*)
- 216 **Policy HD-6.3.** Create a more direct pedestrian connection between Walnut Street north  
217 and south of the State Health Services site.
- 218 **Policy HD-6.4.** Encourage midblock pedestrian connections between University Avenue  
219 and Center Street, as part of future UC development.
- 220 **Policy HD-6.5.** To provide a transition between the park-like campus and the urban  
221 Downtown, Oxford Street should be designed as a green boulevard, with active building  
222 fronts along the west edge of Oxford. (*See also “Streetscapes and Open Space Policy*  
223 *OS-1.2.2.*)
- 224 **Policy HD-6.6.** The University should respect historically important buildings, and strive  
225 to integrate them within its development, using the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards,  
226 and consult early in the development design process with appropriate City agencies.
- 227 **Policy HD-6.7.** Along street frontages of University buildings within Downtown, the  
228 ground floor should be pedestrian-friendly, and provide transparency. Encourage active,  
229 publicly-accessible groundfloor uses. (*See related policies in Land Use and Access*  
230 *chapters.*)

231 **BACKGROUND**

232 A longtime core value of the City of Berkeley has been preservation of its cultural  
233 heritage, especially as that heritage is manifest in its historic buildings. Downtown  
234 Berkeley has the City’s largest collection of historic commercial buildings, as well as  
235 many historic residential or civic structures.

236 In the mid-19th century Francis Kittredge Shattuck and his brother-in-law George Blake  
237 acquired huge strips of land, flanking today’s Shattuck Avenue, that would include most  
238 of the 2007 Downtown plan area. Downtown’s early development was stimulated  
239 especially by the opening of a railroad spur line in 1876 to stations that were located at  
240 Dwight Way and at what is now known as Berkeley Square. Shattuck was made into a  
241 very wide street to accommodate the train tracks in addition to horses, carriages, and  
242 pedestrians. The City of Berkeley was incorporated in 1878, by which time most of  
243 Downtown’s street pattern had been clearly established. In the 20th century’s first decade  
244 or so, dramatic growth and rebuilding were stimulated by electric rail service, which  
245 linked Berkeley to Oakland and San Francisco; by the move of many San Franciscans to  
246 the East Bay after the 1906 earthquake and fire; and by growth of the University of  
247 California. Downtown Berkeley experienced another strong wave of development in the  
248 1920s. There was much less development during the Great Depression, although some of  
249 Downtown’s finest historic buildings such as the Public Library and the Kress Building  
250 date from the 1930s.

251 The core of Downtown Berkeley escaped much of the redevelopment that affected many  
252 California cities during the 1960s and 1970s. Some demolition and new construction did  
253 occur along Shattuck during the BART construction era from about 1966 to 1972, when  
254 two early-1900s large structures at Shattuck and Center were torn down and replaced by  
255 the present high-rise Great Western building (at the southwest corner of Shattuck and  
256 Center) and suburban-style Bank of America building (at the northeast corner of Shattuck  
257 and Center). Recent development has occurred mainly on side streets east and west of  
258 Shattuck, or on Shattuck’s lower portion south of Durant. The scale, massing, and visual  
259 character of most of Shattuck itself—and many other parts of the plan area—remain  
260 much as they were in the 1930s. Downtown’s character is largely due to the fact that so  
261 many of its buildings were constructed between 1900 and 1940 and so many of them  
262 have basically retained their historic appearance. They also relate to the street in  
263 traditional urban ways in keeping with the character of their time. For instance,  
264 commercial buildings fronted directly onto the public sidewalk, rather than being set back  
265 to accommodate automobile parking.

266 Partially in response to the demolition of some important historic buildings in  
267 Downtown, the City adopted the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO) in 1974. This  
268 ordinance authorizes the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to designate  
269 properties as Landmarks, Structures of Merit, or Historic Districts and gives it regulatory  
270 power over the properties it designates. Between 1974 and the present, 63 properties  
271 within the expanded Downtown plan area have been designated as Landmarks. Three  
272 have been designated as Structures of Merit.

273 Nine properties (all of them also City-designated Landmarks) have gone through the  
274 separate process to be individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A  
275 number of properties are contained within the Civic Center Historic District that is listed  
276 on the National Register. The City has also designated the Civic Center Historic District,  
277 under the LPO.

278 In 1977–1979 the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) in conjunction  
279 with the City, with grants from the State Office of Historic Preservation and the San  
280 Francisco Foundation, did a survey and documentation of about 650 structures and sites  
281 throughout Berkeley. This well-regarded survey was accepted by the State and is referred  
282 to as the State Historic Resources Inventory (SHRI).

283 The SHRI was a representative survey of Berkeley’s historic resources rather than a full  
284 compendium. It did include a particular focus on the Downtown business district, where  
285 development pressure had led to the demolition of older buildings. The SHRI gathered a  
286 significant amount of information on a great many of Downtown’s buildings.

287 In 1987, BAHA assembled all available information on historic resources in Downtown  
288 into a single report, entitled “Historic Survey of Downtown.” This document contained  
289 all the forms that had been completed by the SHRI for structures in the 1990 Downtown  
290 plan area. The report also contained a list of “Historically Significant Buildings  
291 Downtown with State Inventory or other documentation” (virtually all of these being  
292 ones on the SHRI). It provided various other useful material, including a “Downtown  
293 Property List” that gave year of construction, architect if known, and some other data for  
294 all Downtown buildings (even those omitted by the SHRI). There were also several maps,  
295 including one that showed the properties it classified as:

296 City Landmarks (and in some cases also “National Register”),

297 Included on State Inventory [but not landmarked], or

298 Contributing.

299 (There were some unexplained discrepancies between this map and the report’s own list  
300 of “Historically Significant Buildings Downtown with State Inventory or other  
301 documentation.” They presumably were due simply to mistakes in drawing the map.)

302 The “Contributing” properties were defined in BAHA’s 1987 report as:

303 Properties [that] could be considered contributing to the existing fabric of  
304 downtown by virtue of age, scale, height, massing, materials.

305 And it appears that the 1987 report envisioned a potential historic district, covering most  
306 of the 1990 plan area, to which district those buildings could “contribute.”

307 In its “Existing Conditions” discussion, the 1990 Downtown Plan referenced (on page  
308 12) BAHA’s “Historic Survey of Downtown” report and the SHRI. The BAHA Historic  
309 Survey was also cited as the source of the Downtown Plan’s Figure 1.1, “Downtown  
310 Historical Structure Locations” (page 13). This map had three resource categories:

311 Landmark Building - City and/or National Register,

312 Significant Structure (BAHA), or

313 Contributing Structure (BAHA).

314 These evidently corresponded to the three resource categories of the previously described  
315 map in the 1987 BAHA report. The two maps were virtually identical as to which  
316 buildings they showed in each category.

317 In 1993 the Landmarks Preservation Commission adopted a list entitled “Historically  
318 Significant Buildings in the Downtown.” This was described as “the . . . Commission’s  
319 list of buildings which have been either officially designated City of Berkeley Landmarks  
320 or appear to be eligible for designation, based on preliminary research . . . because of  
321 their cultural, architectural or historic contribution to the city, state or nation.”

322 Comparison with the 1987 BAHA report’s “Historically Significant Buildings . . .” list  
323 shows that the LPC’s 1993 list added some buildings. On the other hand, it omitted the  
324 Great Western building.

325 In 1994 the Planning Commission formally adopted the document entitled “Downtown  
326 Berkeley Design Guidelines.” (Design review is required for new construction and  
327 exterior alterations in all commercial zones, and in the case of commercial or mixed-use  
328 projects in the R-4 District.) This document has continued to provide valuable and  
329 comprehensive guidance on diverse aspects of both alterations and new construction. Its  
330 chapters on various topics distinguish between guidelines for “Landmark Buildings,”  
331 “Significant Buildings,” and “All Buildings.” The document contains lists of the

332 Landmark Buildings and Significant Buildings—and a map depicting these. (The map  
333 cautioned that “This map may change over time as new buildings are designated . . . .”)  
334 Comparison with the above-described 1987 and 1993 lists reveals that the Design  
335 Guidelines’ list omitted a number of structures, such as the Constitution Square Building  
336 at 2168 Shattuck and the Hinkel/Hulbert (“Edy’s”) Block at 2201 Shattuck. On the other  
337 hand, it added some buildings, such as those at 1941 and 2001–2003 University Avenue.

338 In 2006, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) was selected by the City to evaluate and  
339 advise regarding historic resources in the expanded Downtown plan area. One task done  
340 by ARG has been producing a set of “Context Statements,” a tool that is very important  
341 for assessing the merits of potential resources. The Context Statements prepared by ARG  
342 in 2006–2007 are organized by a number of distinct major historic themes, such as  
343 “Transportation,” “Commerce,” “Commercial Architecture,” “Residential Development,”  
344 and “Health and Medicine.”

345 ARG has also conducted a “Reconnaissance Survey” involving roughly 500 structures  
346 within the overall plan area, as well as about 100 structures located just outside its  
347 boundaries. ARG’s work has focused on attributes recognized by the State Office of  
348 Historic Preservation as important for evaluating resources. However, ARG has had  
349 insufficient budget to perform a definitive level of analysis for any structure (such as  
350 identifying alterations precisely using historic photos).

351 One attribute applied by ARG was historical “integrity,” which is an important factor in  
352 analyzing historic resources. (For example, to be listed in the National Register of  
353 Historic Places, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the National  
354 Register criteria of significance, but it must also have integrity.) The evaluation of  
355 integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an  
356 understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. To  
357 have historical integrity, a property need not be pristinely unaltered. Rather, it needs to  
358 retain enough of its historic character or appearance to convey its particular significance.

359 ARG rated nearly all of the study area’s pre-1961 buildings as having either “High,”  
360 “Good,” “Fair,” or “Poor” integrity. Subcommittee members have cited a number of  
361 structures where they disagreed with ARG’s assessment of integrity. In any case, though,  
362 ARG has emphasized that its integrity ratings are just “preliminary.”

363 In the City of Berkeley, some properties that may not retain sufficient integrity to qualify  
364 for the National Register may still be eligible for local designation as a Landmark,  
365 Structure of Merit, or part of a Historic District.

366 It must also be realized that some buildings have potential to regain historical integrity by  
367 reversing harmful remodelings that departed from the building’s prior character. The

368 Joint Subcommittee asked ARG to look for such “opportunities” to recover lost character,  
369 but ARG replied that its budget was too limited to enable identifying them.

370 Supplementing ARG’s work is the field survey that City staff did in 2006 in the expanded  
371 plan area’s “new” sections—that is, the portions that were not covered by the 1990 plan  
372 area. (Most of these are residentially zoned but they also include substantial commercial  
373 zoning along Shattuck Avenue from Durant to Dwight, and at and adjoining the Health  
374 Services site north of Berkeley Way.) Here, staff rated quite a number of buildings as  
375 either “significant” or “contributing.” However, staff regards these ratings as tentative.

376 A map showing Historic Resources and Development Opportunity sites (appearing at the  
377 end of this chapter) provides a partial summary of the overall situation. It distinguishes  
378 the following classes of individual properties<sup>3</sup>:

379 “Designated Landmark or Structure of Merit.” This includes the properties so  
380 designated as of August 27, 2007.

381 “Significant per BOTH LPC List and Design Guidelines.” The previously  
382 described 1993 LPC list of significant buildings and 1994 Design Guidelines’  
383 comparable one are the latest such officially adopted comprehensive listings.  
384 Each of them is for the existing Downtown Plan’s plan area. Although the listings  
385 are mostly identical, some buildings are on one but not the other (the differences  
386 cut both ways). A building’s presence on BOTH lists appears to indicate broad  
387 consensus about its significance.

388 “Building on the SHRI.” This consists of buildings (other than those in the above  
389 two categories) recorded by the well-regarded SHRI of 1977–1979. But it  
390 excludes SHRI buildings that have been demolished.

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<sup>3</sup> Special thanks to John English for helping to develop this map and in greatly enhancing the accuracy of the "Reconnaissance Survey" performed for all Downtown properties (available on request). Staff's redrafting is identical to English's map except that it separates the 1987 BAHA report from the same category as the Council-adopted Downtown Plan and Downtown Design Guidelines, and the LPC adopted Downtown List -- the practical effect results in the use of a note (rather than color) on "Building C" of the Berkeley High School campus. In addition, staff's analysis of development opportunity sites focuses on vacant lots, parking lots, and one-story buildings that are not historic or may not be historic pending analysis of "Contributing" structures shown in the 1990 Downtown Plan; staff's analysis of development opportunity sites does not include multi-story buildings in disrepair, which appear in the English map.

391 “Other Building Called Contributing or Significant by BAHA Report, Downtown  
392 Plan, LPC List, or Design Guidelines.” Many of these are buildings—such as  
393 several structures (including McDonald’s) near the northwest corner of Shattuck  
394 and University—that the present Downtown Plan shows as “contributing.”  
395 Among the others are buildings that the LPC’s list called significant but the  
396 Design Guidelines did not, or vice versa. Within the Berkeley High School  
397 campus, Building C was identified as significant by the 1987 BAHA report.

398 “Building Called Contributing or Significant by Staff Survey.” Virtually all of  
399 these are located outside the 1990 plan area.

400 “Development Opportunity Site Apparently Containing No Historic Resource.”  
401 The mapping of these sites is tentative and illustrative. Virtually all of them  
402 involve one-story buildings, parking lots or other open uses, or vacant land.  
403 Properties with two-or-more-story buildings are shown in a few special cases,  
404 such as the Banway Building (2113 Bancroft between Shattuck and Fulton) and  
405 the Center Street Garage (both of which have serious seismic problems).

406 “Existing Development Assumed to Remain.” This mapping, too, is tentative and  
407 illustrative. It attempts to show properties (other than historic resources) on which  
408 the present physical structures will likely remain basically unchanged during the  
409 plan period.

410 In addition the map depicts the boundary of the Civic Center Historic District.

411 It also shows which portions of the plan area are now in the R-2A zoning district, which  
412 is relatively low-density and thus helps protect the historic buildings in it, or in the R-4  
413 district, which is high-density and thus tends to make the historic buildings in it more  
414 vulnerable.

415 The patterns revealed by the map are very pertinent. Among them is a strong clustering of  
416 historic resources along Shattuck from about University to Durant, as well as in the Civic  
417 Center area.

418 The “Development Opportunity Site[s] Apparently Containing No Historic Resource” are  
419 quite numerous. They form particularly strong patterns in the general Oxford/Fulton  
420 corridor, along Shattuck south of Bancroft or Durant, and at various places along  
421 University Avenue and Berkeley Way. It is quite plausible that new construction, or at  
422 least intensification, might also occur on some of the sites that the map shows in other  
423 categories, such as “Other Building Called Contributing or Significant by BAHA Report,  
424 Downtown Plan, LPC List, or Design Guidelines.”

425 Though there is still no absolutely complete or “definitive” survey of the plan area’s  
426 historic resources, this should not excuse reticence about protecting them. The perfect  
427 should not become the enemy of the good. The various past surveys and the work by  
428 ARG already give us, in combination, a wealth of information. While there are gaps and  
429 some inconsistencies, these can be addressed on a focused or case-by-case basis.

430 Much of this can be handled through the review process for specific development  
431 projects. A building that is on a “local register” of historic resources is presumed to be a  
432 “historical resource” for the purpose of CEQA analysis “unless the preponderance of  
433 evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant” (CEQA  
434 Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(2)). Thus for example if a development application were  
435 filed to demolish or alter one of the buildings that the 1990 Downtown Plan showed as  
436 “contributing,” the LPC would take a closer look at the property. Upon doing so it could,  
437 in some cases, find either that the building is not actually significant or (where only  
438 alteration is proposed) that the alteration would not significantly detract from the  
439 building’s historical value. If so, the project likely could then proceed with a Mitigated  
440 Negative Declaration or perhaps even a simple Negative Declaration.

441 The LPC has had long experience of involvement in such matters and, in this, has proven  
442 itself to be both conscientious and reasonable.

443 Meanwhile the landmarking of additional buildings, and even active consideration by the  
444 LPC of establishing one or more Historic Districts, can and should proceed. When  
445 designation proposals are made for specific properties, additional research will need to be  
446 done, to the satisfaction of the LPC. In the case of designation of a Historic District, the  
447 LPC will decide the precise boundaries, the period or periods of significance, and the  
448 identity of the particular buildings within the district that are either contributors or  
449 noncontributors.

450 Some persons have suggested that design review within historic subareas could be  
451 sufficiently improved by making subarea-specific amendments to the Design Guidelines.  
452 Under this approach there would be two separate design review tracks. For any and all  
453 specific properties that happen to be designated as Landmarks or Structures of Merit, the  
454 design review would be done, as now, by the LPC. For all other properties within the  
455 subarea, design review would continue to be handled by the Zoning Adjustments Board’s  
456 Design Review Committee (or in some cases by staff).

457 But that two-track arrangement invites potential inconsistency and conflicts. A historic  
458 subarea is likely to contain within it a number of designated Landmarks or Structures of  
459 Merit closely interspersed with various properties that have not been so designated. In  
460 such cheek-to-jowl situations it makes little sense to have a landmarked property handled

461 by one body but its immediate neighbor by a different body. It is vital to deeply  
462 understand, and consistently implement a vision for, the subarea as a whole. For a  
463 “historic” subarea the body with the proper expertise and mission is, by definition, the  
464 LPC—and the aptest tool is, also by definition, a Historic District. The LPC is  
465 responsible for design review for all properties within designated Historic Districts.

466 That is not something to be feared by architects, applicants, or owners. Design review as  
467 such is already required for all properties in all commercial zones. Even in many cases  
468 where the Design Review Committee now has the basic role, proposals already also get  
469 referred for comment to the LPC. Designating a Historic District could help applicants by  
470 simplifying the review process and avoiding separate and inconsistent “readings.”  
471 Furthermore, being in a clearly recognized Historic District has its own potential  
472 economic benefits. In city after city such districts have been good for business.