

# 1 6. STREETSCAPES & OPEN SPACE CHAPTER

## 2 STRATEGIC STATEMENT

### 3 URBAN DESIGN BENEFITS OF STREETS AND OPEN SPACE

4 Downtown streets and open spaces are the public gathering places for all of Berkeley and  
5 support Downtown's historic and continuing role as Berkeley's social, cultural and  
6 economic heart. Streets and open spaces -- in their many forms -- are essential for  
7 making Downtown more livable, providing healthier ecosystems, advancing social  
8 equity, and enhancing economic vitality. Within urban environments, green and  
9 attractive open spaces are imperative for physical and psychological health. They are  
10 places for relaxation and recreation -- and other forms of personal "re-creation." Public  
11 open spaces also serve as the platform for social interaction, where people can come  
12 together to celebrate, debate, and appreciate the choreography of urban life. The  
13 economic health of businesses in the area and the success of Downtown as a center of  
14 culture and entertainment depend in large part upon the quality of the pedestrian  
15 environment.

16 Through thoughtful design and careful programming, streets and open space must address  
17 complex functional challenges relating to transportation, ecological restoration, regular  
18 and occasional activities, and community life. Some benefits include:

- 19 • accelerated economic revitalization;
- 20 • increased tourism;
- 21 • improved water quality;
- 22 • and more effective and less expensive flood control.

23 Whether in the form of parks, plazas, streets, courtyards or passages, public places should  
24 reflect the highest aspirations of a community and should meet the needs of people of all  
25 ages. This chapter and the chapter on Access include major policy shifts regarding the  
26 design and function of Downtown streets, reflecting the community's new priorities to  
27 enhance walkability and the quality of the pedestrian environment and to support  
28 improved public transit. The Downtown Area has a few parks that need continued  
29 physical improvements, most notably around the installation of public art, improved  
30 safety, and better meeting a larger portion of Downtown's population. MLK Civic  
31 Center Park is Downtown's largest open space and was recently improved to emphasize  
32 its historic significance and introduce a tot lot and skateboarding area to serve Berkeley's

33 youth. Despite numerous design efforts since 1990, Constitution Square (also known as  
34 BART Plaza) has remained unappealing, and has been the subject of redesign to improve  
35 its function as a transportation hub -- and to improve Downtown. "The Crescent," on the  
36 UC Campus, also serves the Downtown with a large grassy slope that has formal  
37 significance but may represent an underutilized resource. Finally, Berkeley High  
38 School's track is used for community recreation when it is not being used for School  
39 activities; City-BUSD agreements seek to balance the community's need for recreational  
40 space and BUSD's need for a secure and well-maintained campus.

#### 41 **HEALTH BENEFITS OF STREETS AND OPEN SPACE**

42 Several studies have examined the effects of urban design and open space planning on  
43 public health. These studies have found that high-quality street design can help to  
44 increase levels of physical activity. Communities with inviting streetscapes, safe bike  
45 lanes, nearby parks, and a rich pedestrian environment have been found to encourage and  
46 support active living. High-quality streets and open spaces can help solve pressing social  
47 challenges by improving physical health, reducing mental stress, and increasing social  
48 interaction. The Trust for Public Land's 2006 white paper "The Benefits of Parks" cites a  
49 range of evidence that supports efforts to create and enhance urban parks and walking  
50 environments, including:

- 51 • increased physical activity and an increase in perceived energy;
- 52 • lower rates of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes;
- 53 • decreased levels of anxiety;
- 54 • increased mental alertness and cognitive performance;
- 55 • greater interest in housing near parks; and
- 56 • cooler temperatures on hot days.

57 Access to open space is important for the health of a community. The presence of nearby  
58 open space has a strong relationship with higher levels of physical activity and the  
59 benefits that come with exercise and outdoor activity, including: protecting against  
60 obesity, heart disease, depression, diabetes, asthma, and other common health risks. Open  
61 spaces and play areas are especially important for children because one's early habits  
62 affect health conditions later in life. Physical activity is also especially important for  
63 elderly populations, as active lifestyles have been found to lessen the psychological  
64 changes associated with aging, help maintain physical capabilities, and prevent against  
65 the onset of common diseases.

66 **OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW PARKS AND PLAZAS**

67 New well-designed open spaces are needed to help make Downtown an attractive  
68 destination, and to make Downtown a more livable place. A park or plaza should be  
69 within walking distance of most residents in the Downtown and in the surrounding  
70 neighborhoods. Many urban design studies use a quarter of a mile as a standard walking  
71 distance. The Downtown Area Plan seeks to ensure that Downtown residents can  
72 conveniently access nearby open spaces. Parks and plazas should offer a range of  
73 recreational options, and places for community events, as well as places for repose within  
74 an urban environment.

75 Several new parks and plazas are called for by the Plan, and are described in a map called  
76 "Potential Streetscape and Open Space Network" which appears at the end of this  
77 chapter. Taken as a whole, parks and plazas should meet the needs of people of all ages,  
78 and encourage their use by a broad cross-section of the community. Thoughtful  
79 programming and design solutions should be attractive and promote public safety.  
80 Major opportunities are described below.

81 **Center Street Plaza.** Center Street, which connects BART to the University of  
82 California, has the highest density of foot trips in the East Bay. It also abuts the site of a  
83 new hotel and a new Berkeley Art Museum. This segment of Center Street has been  
84 characterized as "the future heart of Berkeley" as it is situated at the center of the  
85 Downtown. The segment of Center Street between Shattuck Avenue and Oxford should  
86 be closed to vehicular traffic (except for emergencies and deliveries) to create a  
87 community gathering place, showcase ecologically beneficial features, and extend a sense  
88 of Strawberry Creek (literally or figuratively) to the Downtown.

89 **Park Blocks.** Presently, open space is sorely lacking in the Downtown and its  
90 surrounding residential neighborhoods. The Shattuck right-of-way is wide enough to  
91 accommodate three new parks that are 80 feet by 270 feet. These parks would run  
92 between Durant and Dwight Way, and could include a multi-purpose lawn, small  
93 amphitheatre, public bathrooms, and small wetlands for the treatment of urban runoff.

94 **University Avenue Gateway.** Another opportunity for enhancements is at the eastern  
95 end of University Avenue -- near the UC campus. This location is an important future  
96 "gateway," where visitors would arrive by car or by transit to visit Downtown or the  
97 University. Two blocks in length, the easternmost blocks of University Avenue have  
98 relatively low traffic volumes, and are lined by several major infill and historic rehab  
99 opportunities, which would benefit from major streetscape enhancements. A redesigned  
100 University Avenue Gateway could include sidewalks wide enough to accommodate retail  
101 kiosks, outdoor dining, extensive landscaping, public bathrooms, and ceremonial

102 expressions fitting of a gateway to Berkeley's Downtown and one of the world's greatest  
103 universities.

104 **Kittredge Green.** The University of California has plans to demolish the "UC  
105 Extension" in front of Edwards Stadium, at the eastern end of Kittredge. The Green will  
106 complement the University and Downtown communities, with special consideration  
107 given to new workforce housing across the street. The Green will be part of a series of  
108 open spaces along Oxford, and will make the historic stadium structure more visible.

109 **Harold Way.** Harold Way is a quiet tree-lined street, which might be a good candidate  
110 to become a slow street or closed to traffic if abutting properties had high levels of  
111 activity. Magnes Museum and Shattuck Hotel have plans to rehab historic buildings  
112 along and near Harold Way.

113 **Berkeley Way.** The chapter on Housing and Community Health & Services calls for an  
114 exemplary housing project where the City's Berkeley Way parking lot is presently  
115 located. This project might also contain a small plaza for the public's enjoyment.

116 **DHS Site.** The former California Department of Health Services site is slated for reuse  
117 by the University of California, and will feature plazas and open spaces, including a  
118 pedestrian connection between Walnut north and south of the site. The precise location  
119 and character of these open spaces will be determined as the program and character of  
120 University uses becomes more clear.

## 121 **MIDBLOCK COURTYARDS & WALKWAYS**

122 Downtown possesses a number of courtyards and walkways that provide spaces that are  
123 more intimate and provide a sense of urban "refuge." Midblock courtyards and walkways  
124 are encouraged, while recognizing that their alignment and arrangement is still to be  
125 determined.

## 126 **CONTEXTUAL DESIGN**

127 Open space must be appropriately designed to meet the special functional needs and  
128 aesthetic considerations of its context. The design of open space and its abutting  
129 development should meet the special needs and opportunities of distinct subareas within  
130 the Downtown, along with Downtown's connection to the University of California, and  
131 Berkeley's commitment to sustainability by "thinking globally and acting locally." As  
132 mentioned in the Historic Preservation & Urban Design chapter, Downtown has an  
133 exemplary collection of historic buildings in a wide variety of architectural styles and  
134 scales. Preservation planning is needed to guard, celebrate, and take profound inspiration  
135 from this rich and vital foundation. At the same time, planning policies are also needed

136 to capitalize on the exceptional regional access afforded by BART and to provide for  
137 Downtown's continued evolution and revitalization, including sensitive, substantial, and  
138 lively new development. In subareas that have a strong historic character, light fixtures  
139 and other street furniture should be designed to complement their character.

140 There are other notable subareas in the Downtown, as well including the "Arts District"  
141 along Addison, and the Civic Center Historic District that includes Martin Luther King  
142 Jr. Civic Center Park and the buildings that surround it.

### 143 **STREET DESIGN**

144 Street design should also correspond with each street's unique function and context. This  
145 contextual approach puts in place conditions that support abutting land uses and walking  
146 for many trips, typically protecting pedestrians, minimizing pedestrian crossing distances,  
147 and reducing vehicular speeds.

148 Streets comprise about 25% of the total land area in most urban areas. In the Downtown,  
149 these public rights-of-way -- which include sidewalks, landscaping, parking lanes and  
150 travel lanes -- embody about 80% of all public open spaces. Consequently, streets are  
151 among the most important determinants of Downtown's future character.

152 As public improvements, streets and open spaces offer an opportunity for direct  
153 community action. Under direct City control, streets and public open spaces can  
154 transform Downtown dramatically and quickly as adequate funding can be secured.

155 Streets must support a wide range of needs. They accommodate motor vehicle access to  
156 uses in the Downtown, and through the Downtown (including private cars and trucks,  
157 service vehicles, and emergency vehicles). Streets also provide the framework for most  
158 utility systems, including water and sewer lines, electricity and gas, and storm gutters,  
159 drains, and sewers.

160 Streets serve pedestrians and bicyclists, and are the most ubiquitous, if not  
161 most important, arena for community life. Unfortunately, vehicular movement and  
162 utilities became the primary focus of civil engineers during the latter half of the 20th  
163 century.

164 While not altogether neglected, the needs of pedestrians and bicycles -- and the  
165 importance of the pedestrian realm to community livability and economic vitality -- were  
166 not properly emphasized. To illustrate, diagonal parking on Shattuck (with its backup  
167 lane) comprises nearly 40% of Shattuck's right-of-way, and fast-moving travel lanes  
168 comprise about the same dimension. The Downtown Area Plan can play an important

169 role in re-prioritizing the use and design of public lands to serve the needs and comfort of  
170 pedestrians.

171 Inviting pedestrian paths are critical to the success of the Downtown. By shading or  
172 shedding rain, street trees, building awnings, and other canopies are essential  
173 accompaniments for their utility and enjoyment -- and for a sense of spatial enclosure,  
174 which is a hallmark for many successful urban places.

175 To be livable and functional, streets must accommodate many demands simultaneously.  
176 Vehicular movement and safety will remain of critical concern, but the new Downtown  
177 Area Plan asserts that the pedestrian environment should not be compromised for the  
178 sake of vehicle speed or traffic congestion. In all instances, thoughtful design and  
179 improvements can result in streets where traffic flows but is calmed, and where  
180 pedestrians and bicyclists move comfortably within large portions of public rights-of-  
181 way. Research has shown that pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries decrease  
182 dramatically with a decrease in average vehicle speeds. Traffic calming efforts include a  
183 range of strategies such as reducing pedestrian crossing distances, slowing traffic with  
184 narrower travel lanes and landscaped features, and designing vehicular zones so that  
185 motorists yield more frequently to pedestrians.

186 Pedestrian pathways must also be enhanced with wider sidewalks, frequent street trees,  
187 pedestrian-scaled lighting, and architecture and landscaping that line streets with activity  
188 and beauty.

189 Creating beautiful streets and open space is essential to the success of Downtown as a  
190 successful retail district and regional destination, and a highly livable residential  
191 neighborhood. Presently, Downtown's streets and some of its open spaces leave a poor  
192 impression. Stepping up maintenance will continue to enhance Downtown, but in a  
193 limited way. To address a myriad of functional issues while also delivering a superior  
194 public environment, many policies emphasize comprehensive design efforts for the  
195 Downtown as a whole and locations with special opportunity.

196 A new Public Improvements Plan is one vehicle for pulling together and coordinating  
197 among several design efforts that are being undertaken in the Constitution Square area,  
198 on Center Street, and for the possibility of Bus Rapid Transit. The Public Improvements  
199 Plan would look at all of the other streets and open space opportunities in Downtown as  
200 well, and provide a proactive road map for future action as developer, City or grant-based  
201 funding becomes available. The Improvements Plan would assure consistent emphasis  
202 on pedestrian comfort, street trees, and greenery having aesthetic and ecological benefits,  
203 while at the same time recognizing the unique character and opportunities presented by  
204 individual streets and subareas in the Downtown. (The adopted Public Improvements

205 Plan, adopted in 1994, presents many recommendations worthy of incorporation into a  
206 new Plan, but assumes a limited scope compared with more ambitious transformations of  
207 Shattuck, University Avenue, Hearst and Oxford-Fulton presently envisioned.)

208 **Shattuck Avenue.** Shattuck Avenue deserves special note. Shattuck is Berkeley's "main  
209 street," and while it is lined with significant historic buildings and development  
210 opportunities, Shattuck's circa 1970 streetscape gives priority to through traffic and  
211 parking as well as some pedestrian improvements. The Downtown Area Plan establishes  
212 a new emphasis on pedestrian improvements, and landscaping forms an essential  
213 cornerstone to revitalizing the Downtown through extensive new landscaping and by  
214 expanding the pedestrian realm. Streetscape improvements are expected to incorporate  
215 advanced stormwater quality and urban forestry practices. Initial studies have  
216 demonstrated the potential for extensive bio-swales, street tree trenches, and permeable  
217 green- and hardscapes along Shattuck.

218 **Street Trees.** Of the many components of an attractive street, street trees are perhaps the  
219 most important ways to improve any neighborhood's character. An extensive canopy  
220 from trees creates a continuous series of attractive outdoor rooms. Healthy street trees  
221 bring demonstrable psychological and economic benefits, and will be the most common  
222 and visible dimensions of a "great and green" Downtown.

## 223 **THE BENEFITS OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

224 All open spaces have the potential to be part of an advanced and integrated stormwater  
225 system that promotes stormwater quality, reduces downstream flooding, and (with  
226 techniques that emphasize vegetation) reinvigorates Downtown with greenery and  
227 connections with nature.

228 **Stormwater.** Pollution from urban runoff (stormwater) is the greatest contributor to  
229 degraded water quality in the Bay Area. Increased urban runoff is a direct consequence  
230 of development and the associated loss of natural water retention and filtration through  
231 the installation of impervious surfaces. At the same time, engineered stormwater  
232 treatment systems that were installed 50-60 years ago are now failing throughout the Bay  
233 Area (and California) as they reach the end of their projected "lifespans."

234 Much of the city's paved, impervious surfaces serve the automobile. By reducing  
235 dependency on cars and converting pavement to landscaping, we can reduce impervious  
236 surface coverage within the city. The narrowing and elimination of vehicle travel ways,  
237 and increasing landscaping and permeable hardscapes associated with private and public  
238 projects benefit not only to the environment but also to the social life of neighborhoods.

239 Open spaces, big and small, formal and informal, also play a vital role in reducing our  
240 environmental footprint and providing comfort and enjoyment. However, plantings and  
241 landscaping must be designed in special ways to enable them to serve as integral  
242 ecological components in the stormwater treatment process.

243 Municipal standards throughout the country often present an obstacle to better ways to  
244 design streets and open spaces. City engineers and established stakeholders often express  
245 concern around the cost of improvements, concern over ongoing maintenance, and the  
246 risk of trying something new. The path to adoption and implementation will likely  
247 require considerable discussion and a willingness to address the full range of  
248 interconnected concerns.

249 **Flooding.** Green strategies can influence both localized and downstream flooding.  
250 Traditionally, drainage and stormwater management have focused on “conveyance” –  
251 moving water easily into a network of pipes and channels, and delivering it unimpeded to  
252 a river or bay. Because water moves swiftly within a conveyance-based system, little lag  
253 time occurs between heavy rains and when the water from those rains enters streets, pipes  
254 and channels, resulting in flooding in some locations. A green approach to stormwater  
255 creates a decentralized network for stormwater retention that holds water back. Ideally,  
256 retention features also provide for stormwater “infiltration,” where stormwater seeps into  
257 the soil and ultimately reaches local aquifers, if underlying soil conditions permit.

258 **Water Conservation/Recycling.** Downtown Berkeley can play an important role in  
259 conserving water resources, for which there will be increasing competition statewide.  
260 For landscaped areas, drought resistant plants and low-water irrigation systems are  
261 important components. Conservation techniques available for buildings include low-flow  
262 fixtures and the use of graywater for flushing and irrigation. At a larger scale, water  
263 recycling could serve to irrigate city and University green spaces.

264 **Urban Forest.** Planting trees has more than aesthetic appeal. Air quality authorities  
265 across the country are promoting street trees in urban areas to reduce the extent of heat  
266 sinks generated by unshaded asphalt. Heat increases the ozone from automobile exhaust,  
267 which contributes to smog and respiratory ailments. A computer simulation of Los  
268 Angeles by Berkeley National Laboratory showed a 6-degree reduction in peak summer  
269 temperatures and the potential for a 10% reduction in smog.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> San Francisco Chronicle, March 6, 2000.

270 **GOALS & POLICIES**

271 **GOAL OS-1: ENHANCE PUBLIC OPEN SPACES AND STREETS TO BENEFIT**  
272 **PEDESTRIANS, IMPROVE DOWNTOWN'S LIVABILITY, AND FOSTER AN**  
273 **EXCEPTIONAL SENSE OF PLACE. IN PARTICULAR, CREATE NEW**  
274 **PUBLIC GATHERING PLACES THAT SUPPORT NEARBY USES AND**  
275 **DOWNTOWN AS A DESTINATION.**

276 **Policy OS-1.1.** Make significant alterations and additions to parks, plazas, and  
277 streetscapes that result in Downtown environments that are more attractive, are more  
278 supportive of pedestrians and abutting uses, calm traffic, and use a consistent vocabulary  
279 of features to create a unified sense of place, while recognizing that particular conditions  
280 may call for special treatments. *(See also “Historic Preservation and Urban Design”*  
281 *Policy HD-5.2 for special provisions for subareas where historic resources are*  
282 *concentrated.)*

283 **Policy OS-1.2.** Develop and adopt a Public Improvements Plan to guide the design and  
284 implementation of alterations and additions in a comprehensive way *(including those*  
285 *features noted Potential Streetscapes and Open Space Network shown at the end of this*  
286 *chapter)*. Emphasize the creation and enhancement of public gathering places, with  
287 special emphasis on a new pedestrian plaza on Center Street between Shattuck and  
288 Oxford, as well as the Constitution Square area. Strengthen Center Street as the primary  
289 pedestrian connection between Downtown, the BART station, and the UC Campus. Also  
290 develop preferred cross-sections for all streets in the Downtown, which increase street  
291 trees and other vegetation, widen sidewalks in areas of high pedestrian activity, and  
292 support abutting ground-floor uses. Incorporate policies pertaining to ecologically  
293 beneficial features (see Goal OS-2) and public safety (see Goal OS-4).

294 (The following paragraph is also Policy ES-5.3.) Develop standards and guidelines for  
295 streets, parks and plazas, which emphasize trees, landscaping, and pedestrian-scaled  
296 lighting. Develop a Street Tree Master Plan (in association with a new Public  
297 Improvements Plan) that selects appropriate tree and plant species for streets and open  
298 spaces. Relate design features to the special character and predominant uses along each  
299 street and around each open space. Consider native tree and plant species near existing  
300 and future naturalized features. Develop standards for street lighting for energy efficient  
301 and to minimize intrusion (glare) in the upper stories of adjacent buildings.

302 **Policy OS-1.2.1: Center Street Plaza.**

- 303 a) Establish a Center Street Plaza (for the right-of-way of Center Street east of  
304 Shattuck) as the major public gathering place in the Downtown and as a model

- 305 for sustainable design. (See also “*Historic Preservation and Urban Design*”  
306 *Policy HD-5.3*)
- 307 b) (Same as Policy AC-2.1g.ii.) Close Center Street between Shattuck Avenue and  
308 Oxford to traffic so that a pedestrian plaza can be created. Provide for adequate  
309 emergency vehicle access and for deliveries to plaza-facing businesses. To  
310 minimize construction impacts on Center Street merchants, construct the new  
311 Center Street Plaza so that it will become operational at the same time as the  
312 development on the north side of Center Street. Monitor impacts on retail that  
313 may result from Center Street's closure, considering design options that might  
314 provide for one-way traffic in the future, if limited access becomes necessary.  
315 Incorporate multiple midblock crossings into the design of Center Street.
- 316 c) Provide suitably designed open space for gathering and performances. Design  
317 Center Street so as to maximize the usefulness, ambiance, and amenities of the  
318 new public open space for pedestrians and those with mobility impairments.  
319 Include a variety of pedestrian amenities such as benches, trees, and plantings, a  
320 mix of hardscape and greenscape, and public art in order to make the public  
321 space an attractive place to walk, sit, and linger.
- 322 d) Incorporate ecologically beneficial features, as described in Goal OS-2.
- 323 e) Use design and a water feature to suggest the extension of Strawberry Creek  
324 through the Plaza. Study whether it is practical to redirect water from  
325 Strawberry Creek for the creation of this water feature, and study the relative  
326 merits of redirecting Strawberry Creek versus using recirculated water.
- 327 f) Work with AC Transit to identify suitable bus stop and layover locations, such  
328 that changes to Center Street do not result in degraded service.
- 329 g) Work with developers of abutting projects (i.e., the Hotel-Conference Center  
330 and Berkeley Art Museum / Pacific Film Archive) to ensure an active and  
331 transparent edge along Center Street, and consideration of modulated edges and  
332 pockets of open space. Work with designers of abutting projects to ensure that  
333 their projects relate to the design of Center Street and strengthen the relationship  
334 between Downtown and the UC Campus.

335 **Policy OS-1.2.2: Oxford-Fulton & Abutting Open Spaces.**

- 336 a) Support the University in its efforts to maintain and enhance natural areas along  
337 Strawberry Creek, and work with the University to construct a small overlook and  
338 pavilion where Strawberry Creek enters a culvert near Oxford Street.

- 339 b) Redesign the Oxford-Fulton right-of-way to create a green boulevard, designed to  
340 greatly increase vegetation along this corridor, and facilitate pedestrian crossing  
341 and programmatic connections between the UC campus and Downtown. New  
342 University development should help make Oxford more active. Street trees  
343 should be greatly increased, and mature stands of trees within and abutting the  
344 right-of-way should be retained, if feasible (see Policy 1.2.2(c) below).  
345 Incorporate ecologically beneficial features, as described in Goal OS-2. Consider  
346 removing on-street parking and/or reducing travel lanes, if deemed feasible from  
347 the standpoint of traffic and transit operations in Downtown. (*See also "Access"*  
348 *Policy AC-2.1g, which gives priority to pedestrians over vehicles and accepts*  
349 *increased traffic congestion Downtown, and "Historic Preservation and Urban*  
350 *Design" Policies HD-6.1 and HD-6.5.)*
- 351 c) Encourage the University to maintain the Crescent as a green open space, while  
352 also considering its redesign to: replace irrigated lawn with native and drought-  
353 tolerant plantings; enhance views into the campus, especially towards riparian  
354 vegetation along Strawberry Creek; provide public seating and gathering space;  
355 and relate to the new Berkeley Art Museum, possibly through the creation of a  
356 sculpture garden. The existing grove of conifer trees at the corner of Addison and  
357 Oxford should be retained, if feasible. The design of Oxford should support and  
358 enhance planned features in the Crescent.
- 359 d) Encourage Museum landscaping along Oxford Street that relates to both the  
360 building and to an overall landscape plan for the street. (*See Goal HD-4 for other*  
361 *recommendations pertaining to the design of the Berkeley Art Museum.)*
- 362 e) Support the University in its plans to create a new publicly accessible open space  
363 between Edwards Field and Fulton, and at the end of Kittredge (referred to in this  
364 Plan as "Kittredge Green"). Encourage the University to include features that  
365 serve families (such as a playground and multi-use lawn area) within Kittredge  
366 Green (to serve new family housing in the Brower Center and potential new  
367 faculty/student housing in the vicinity). Consider eliminating parking lanes,  
368 travel lanes, and the sweeping right turn on Fulton to enlarge Kittredge Green.
- 369 f) Visually connect Kittredge Green with the Crescent through the design of Oxford-  
370 Fulton, and by encouraging vines and other vertical greenery along street-facing  
371 walls that enclose University facilities.

372 **Policy OS-1.2.3: Center Street Greenway and Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center**  
373 **Park.**

- 374 a) Enhance visual and pedestrian connections between MLK Civic Center Park  
375 and the UC Campus, with the creation of a "Center Street Greenway."  
376 Enhancements between Shattuck and Oxford will be addressed through the  
377 creation of the Center Street Plaza (see Policy OS-1.2.1). Enhancements  
378 between Shattuck and MLK will be comprised of narrowing of travel lanes --  
379 and potential elimination of bike lanes and on-street parking -- to yield  
380 continuous landscaping with new street trees, shrubs and groundcover. (Because  
381 of the loss of Center Street bike lanes, Allston Way should be designated as a  
382 Bicycle Route in recognition of the traffic signal on Allston at Martin Luther  
383 King and the location of UC Berkeley's bike route between Allston and Center,  
384 and Allston's status as a bike route west of Downtown.) No new entrances to  
385 parking facilities should be permitted on Center, if feasible. (See also "Historic  
386 Preservation and Urban Design" Policy HD-5.3.)
- 387 b) Incorporate ecologically beneficial features, as described in Goal OS-2.
- 388 c) Use design features to suggest the extension of Strawberry Creek along Center  
389 Street. Study whether it is practical to introduce a water feature. Consider the  
390 relative merits of redirecting Strawberry Creek versus using recirculated water.  
391 Also consider the feasibility of daylighting Strawberry Creek in MLK Civic  
392 Center Park or in the Center Street right-of-way just north of Civic Center Park.
- 393 d) Encourage diverse activities, including cultural and performance activities, by  
394 providing space for the civic, cultural and social needs of the community.
- 395 e) Improve pedestrian amenities and comfort within Civic Center Park, such as by  
396 restoring the fountain in Civic Center Park.
- 397 f) Maintain the Farmers Market in Downtown. Retain the Farmers Market on  
398 Center Street, unless a suitable long-term location can be found which places  
399 the Farmers Market next to another Downtown open space.
- 400 g) Complete the physical master plan for MLK Civic Center Park.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Include image of park master plan in future draft.

401 **Policy OS-1.2.4: University Avenue Gateway.**

- 402 a) Encourage UC Berkeley to direct near-term development to the end of  
403 University Avenue, between Walnut and Oxford. As a major node for potential  
404 new development, this location can be expected to become an important  
405 "Gateway" for persons arriving (especially via University Avenue), whether  
406 visiting the University or Downtown. Encourage UC Berkeley to place entry  
407 lobbies, retail, visitor arrival facilities, and other active uses adjacent to the  
408 Gateway. *(See also Goal LU-7)*
- 409 b) Redesign University Avenue between Shattuck Avenue and Oxford to expand  
410 sidewalks, landscaping, and pedestrian amenities. Remove travel lanes to  
411 maximize the extent of pedestrian improvements and reduce pedestrian crossing  
412 distances, if deemed feasible from the standpoint of traffic and transit  
413 operations. Capitalize on opportunities for new street trees, landscaping,  
414 outdoor dining, retail kiosks and ecologically beneficial features. Incorporate  
415 ecologically beneficial features, as described in Goal OS-2.
- 416 c) Coordinate the design of the Gateway with University uses, other abutting uses,  
417 and significant historic resources in the vicinity. Given its location at the end of  
418 University Avenue and near transit, consider the inclusion of visitors' facilities  
419 for visitors to the University and Downtown, as well as wayfinding signage.  
420 *(See also Policy 1.2.6(a) on visitors facilities and wayfinding throughout*  
421 *Downtown.)*

422 **Policy OS-1.2.5: Shattuck Avenue: General.**

- 423 a) Redesign the Shattuck right-of-way to create a tree-lined boulevard, designed to  
424 facilitate pedestrian crossing, accommodate transit, and greatly increase  
425 landscaping along this corridor. Opportunities for improving pedestrian  
426 comfort, street trees and ecologically beneficial features (such as vegetated  
427 swales) should be optimized. *(See also Goal OS-2).*

428           b)    Reduce travel lanes and convert diagonal parking to parallel parking, if deemed  
429                   feasible from the standpoint of traffic and transit operations in Downtown. (*See*  
430                   *also related policies in Access chapter.*)

431   **Policy OS-1.2.6: Shattuck Avenue: Constitution Square (also known as BART**  
432   **Plaza) and Shattuck/Berkeley Squares.**

433           a)    From Durant to University, provide for intensive transit use by: enhancing  
434                   pedestrian and bicycle accessibility; enhancing wayfinding (such as maps and  
435                   signage to orient visitors to streets, destinations, transit availability, transit  
436                   schedule, events, etc.); and enhancing multimodal transit access (including  
437                   enhanced bus service, as discussed in “Access” Policy AC-2.1g). Use street  
438                   features and furnishings that support surrounding ground-floor uses (such as by  
439                   allowing street vendors and outdoor dining) and that complement the historic  
440                   resources that are concentrated in this subarea. (*See also Policy HD-5.2.*)

441           b)    Improve the Constitution Square area's function as a universally accessible  
442                   transportation hub with a high-quality, pedestrian-friendly environment.  
443                   Enhance access on foot and by bike. Provide public space for social, cultural,  
444                   and community activities (including public gatherings). Incorporate  
445                   ecologically beneficial features, as described in Goal OS-2.

446           c)    Make additional pedestrian improvements to Shattuck and Berkeley Squares.  
447                   Move two-way through traffic to the west side of these Squares, if feasible, to  
448                   accommodate intensive pedestrian improvements to the east side.

449           d)    Create a new entrance to BART on the east side of Shattuck to provide  
450                   immediate and uninterrupted pedestrian access to the Center Street Plaza and  
451                   the east side of Shattuck/Berkeley Square, and this might take advantage of new  
452                   plaza space yielded if through traffic is made two-way along the west side of  
453                   Shattuck/Berkeley Squares.

454           e)    Recognize that the east leg of Shattuck Square might become an important retail  
455                   street longer-term with changes in its traffic function and character.

456   **Policy OS-1.2.7: Shattuck Avenue: North of University.**

457           a)    Continue the concept of the boulevard (as described above) north of University,  
458                   and explore opportunities to increase street trees by eliminating travel lanes or  
459                   by planting street trees within parking lanes. At Hearst, include Shattuck  
460                   Avenue improvements that support the creation of the Ohlone Greenway (see  
461                   below) and create a visual "gateway" at this northern entry point to the  
462                   Downtown.

463 **Policy OS-1.2.8: Shattuck Avenue "Park Blocks": South of Durant.**

- 464 a) Extend the boulevard south of Durant by converting excessive travel ways and  
465 parking areas to a linear park (referred to as the "Park Blocks"), provided that it  
466 is feasible from the standpoint of traffic and transit operations. Engage the  
467 residential and business community in a process for determining program and  
468 design character of the Park Blocks. Consider features and facilities that appeal  
469 to a range of ages (such as features for children), and incorporate ecological  
470 features (such as a small wetland), and public restrooms. Give consideration to  
471 the importance of curbside parking near established shops, as well as safe and  
472 comfortable access to the new park areas.

473 **Policy OS-1.2.9: Ohlone Greenway Extension.**

- 474 a) Maintain only two travel lanes on Hearst Way between MLK and Oxford, so  
475 that bicycle lanes and enhanced landscaping can be provided without  
476 interruption between the Ohlone Greenway and the UC campus. Consider  
477 intermittent street trees within parallel parking lanes in this corridor.  
478 Coordinate the design of street trees and other vegetation to give visual  
479 emphasis to its status as a "greenway." Consider closing Henry Street at Hearst  
480 to provide a more continuous and protected path, while factoring that vehicular  
481 access along Henry Street may be desirable to the Berkeley Way parking lot (or  
482 future development), and that emergency vehicle access will need to be  
483 maintained. *(See related policies in Access chapter.)*

484 **Policy OS-1.2.10: Harold Way.**

- 485 a) Promote Harold Way as a special street and consider whether it should have  
486 widened sidewalks for seating or be a plaza closed to traffic. Future plans for  
487 Harold Way should recognize that the library, library gardens, and the future  
488 Judah L. Magnes Museum all have a visual connection with Harold Way. Also  
489 consider that future Shattuck Hotel and conference facilities could have their  
490 address on Harold Way.

491 **Policy OS-1.2.11: Allston Way as a Special Civic Street.**

- 492 a) Celebrate Allston Way as an important civic connection between MLK Civic  
493 Center Park and the UC Campus, through the use of special light standards,  
494 special paving treatments, street furnishings, and banners. Street improvements  
495 should highlight and enhance civic destinations along Allston Way including  
496 Old City Hall, Berkeley High School, the Post Office, the YMCA, the Library  
497 (via Harold Way, see Policy OS-1.2.10), the new Brower Center, and the UC

498 Campus and Kittredge Green (see Policy OS-1.2.2). Increase bicycle along this  
499 destination-rich street.

500 **Policy OS-1.3.** In Downtown's residential areas and surrounding residential areas,  
501 encourage the creation of new "pocket parks" and traffic calming features.

502 **Policy OS-1.4.** Prioritize major public improvements based on community prominence,  
503 benefit to retailers, high levels of pedestrian activity, proximity to historic resources, and  
504 the amenity they can provide to residents that are presently underserved, particularly  
505 along Shattuck, the length of Center Street, and at the University Avenue Gateway area.

506 **Policy OS-1.5.** Develop standards and guidelines for lighting and signage in public  
507 rights-of-way to make them more human-scaled, to reduce visual clutter, to provide  
508 greater energy efficiency, to minimize intrusion (glare) in the upper stories of adjacent  
509 buildings, and to help visitors navigate the Downtown. Remove existing "cobrahead"  
510 light fixtures.

511 **Policy OS-1.6.** Maintain clean and attractive streets, parks, and plazas. Establish  
512 standards for the maintenance of public spaces, and develop funding mechanisms and  
513 City priorities that maintain adequate budget at all times. Emphasize durability and "life-  
514 cycle" costing in the design of new construction.

515 **Policy OS-1.7.** Encourage public utilities to underground utilities, as development and  
516 street improvements occur.

517 **GOAL OS-2. PROMOTE ECOLOGICALLY BENEFICIAL LANDSCAPING**  
518 **AND INCORPORATE NATURAL FEATURES THROUGHOUT THE**  
519 **DOWNTOWN TO IMPROVE ITS VISUAL QUALITY, HELP RESTORE**  
520 **NATURAL PROCESSES, AND REINFORCE THE COMMUNITY'S**  
521 **COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.**

522 **Policy OS-2.1.** Adopt City standards that promote green stormwater quality and  
523 retention features within the design of public open spaces and streets, such as vegetated  
524 swales, rain gardens, permeable pavements, and sub-grade infiltration features. Where  
525 possible, develop connected and vegetated drainage systems that receive and treat urban  
526 runoff, and provide attractive, linear open space features. Maximize trees, shrubs,  
527 vegetative groundcovers, and "bee-habitat" landscaping as part of public open space and  
528 street improvements, while recognizing the utility of hardscapes in areas of heavy use.

529 Create of an integrated system to promote stormwater infiltration, filter waterborn  
530 pollutants, and reduce flooding within watersheds that include Downtown. Consider use  
531 of connected linear features along Shattuck Avenue, Center Street, Ohlone Greenway, the

532 edge of the UC campus (as illustrated conceptually in the map titled "Potential Green  
533 Stormwater Network" which appears at the end of this chapter).

534 **Policy OS-2.2.** Develop guidelines for private development that provide for additional  
535 greenery and environmental enhancement on-site, as described under Goal OS-3, and in  
536 public streets and open spaces.

537 **Policy OS-2.3.** All tree installations should be accompanied by soil and drainage  
538 systems to encourage each tree's healthy maturation. To be most effective, seek the  
539 support of urban forestry experts and organizations, and seek the support of utility  
540 companies. Consider native tree and plant species near existing and future natural  
541 features.

542 **Policy OS-2.4 (same as Policy ES-5.8).** Maintain mature trees wherever possible.  
543 Permit the elimination of mature trees only in instances of transmissible disease, public  
544 safety, or overriding public benefits, but only after opportunities for public comment, and  
545 only after findings have been made according to criteria to be established by the Street  
546 Tree Masterplan. Establish standards and guidelines for the retention of trees and the of  
547 replacement trees for instances when tree removal is unavoidable.

548 **Policy OS-2.5.** Establish standards for substantial water conservation and recycling in  
549 new landscaping and retrofits. Require use of drought tolerant plants and advanced  
550 irrigation systems to substantially reduce water usage. Consider the feasibility of  
551 graywater recycling, in partnership with the University of California, and give  
552 consideration to a water recycling plant that could make water available for the irrigation  
553 of public and University open spaces.

554 **Policy OS-2.6.** Promote programs and educational mechanisms to enhance and highlight  
555 benefits of "nature in the city" (e.g., improved songbird habitat, fish habitat restoration).

556 **GOAL OS-3. REQUIRE THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTE TO**  
557 **GREENERY AND OPEN SPACE.**

558 **Policy OS-3.1.** Enhance and amend standards and guidelines for open space associated  
559 with private development. Standards and guidelines could address, but are not limited to,  
560 midblock walkways, mid-block courtyards, street-facing courtyards, or roof gardens.  
561 Establish standards and guidelines for environmentally beneficial features. Establish  
562 minimum requirements, as well as incentives for features that exceed the minimum. (See  
563 "Historic Preservation and Urban Design" Policy HD-5.5.)

564 **Policy OS-3.2.** Require private development to contribute to street-level open space and  
565 improved ecological/environmental functions through significant contributions to

566 greenery on-site and in the public realm, including components such as: landscaping in  
567 public streets and open spaces, landscaped setbacks, vegetated street-facing courtyards,  
568 and vegetated midblock walkways. These "green" features will serve to provide the  
569 multiple public benefits of aesthetic improvement, stormwater retention, flood mitigation,  
570 and local climate change mitigation.

571 Establish standards and enhanced guidelines for landscaping. Standards should respect  
572 historical context and setback patterns, as well as retail needs -- but should also  
573 incorporate the greatest level of open space and greenery within those constraints. Assess  
574 on a block-by-block basis creative alternatives for replacing hardscape with landscaped  
575 setbacks or pockets of greenery. Preserve existing building setbacks, where feasible and  
576 appropriate. Residential developments, and projects that do not have active ground-floor  
577 uses, should be required to implement larger "green" setbacks.

578 Maintain lot coverage maximums as provided for in Policy LU-1.5. Allow usable  
579 ground-floor open space to be applied toward "per unit" open space requirements. For  
580 any "per unit" open space requirements that cannot be yielded by lot coverage  
581 limitations, permit an "in-lieu" fee option for streetscape and public open space  
582 improvements described in Policy OS-1.2.

583 **Policy OS-3.3.** Examine potential midblock walkways on a case-by-case basis to  
584 evaluate their feasibility (given ownership, development opportunities, and anticipated  
585 levels of pedestrian activity). Emphasize safety in the design of midblock walkways (see  
586 Goal OS-4). Site-specific evaluation and alignment recommendation, should be included  
587 as part of a Public Improvements Plan. (*See also Policy HD-5.5*)

588 **Policy OS-3.4.** Establish a Downtown Open Space Fund, or similar mechanism for the  
589 creation of new and enhancement of existing streetscapes and public open space. Require  
590 all new development to contribute to the Downtown Open Space Fees (see also Policy  
591 LU-9.1). The fee structure should be based on the size and intensity of use of the  
592 development project.

593 **Possible Implementation Measure:** A significant portion of Hotel  
594 Occupancy Tax revenues generated in the Downtown should be allocated  
595 to the creation, enhancement, and maintenance of streetscapes and open  
596 space in Downtown.

597 **Policy OS-3.5.** Provide for the ongoing maintenance of on-site landscaping through  
598 developer agreements and enforcement mechanisms.

599 **GOAL OS-4. ENSURE THAT PARKS, PLAZAS, STREETS, AND MIDBLOCK**  
600 **OPEN SPACES ARE SAFE, COMFORTABLE, AND INVITING.**

601 **Policy OS-4.1.** Provide adequate pedestrian-scaled lighting in parks, plazas, streets, and  
602 midblock open spaces. Amend design guidelines to promote illumination on buildings to  
603 enhance safety and accentuate architectural rhythms and special features. At the same  
604 time, minimize light pollution and glare in residential dwellings. Establish lighting  
605 standards for different conditions and types of space.

606 **Policy OS-4.2.** New street-level open spaces should be directly accessible at grade level,  
607 and, where possible, should connect seamlessly with abutting streets and sidewalks  
608 visually and physically. New open spaces should avoid locations that will have blank  
609 walls, low levels of pedestrian activity, and/or locations that cannot be seen easily.

610 **Policy OS-4.3.** Establish and maintain high standards for clean streets and open spaces,  
611 for the repair of furnishings and features, and for the removal of graffiti.

612 **Policy OS-4.4.** Provide for public restrooms and drinking fountains that are distributed  
613 throughout the Downtown, and available 24/7.

614 **Policy OS-4.5.** Encourage the enforcement of laws that prohibit aggressive, abusive, and  
615 unsanitary behavior. *(See also related policies in chapter on Housing and Community*  
616 *Health & Services.)*

617 **GOAL OS-5. LOCATE AND DESIGN NEW PARKING TO MINIMIZE**  
618 **INTRUSION IN THE PEDESTRIAN QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN.**

619 **Policy OS-5.1.** Consolidate all parking available to the public in relatively few locations,  
620 to provide a large number of spaces while minimizing the visual and other negative  
621 impacts from parking. Enlarge the capacity of existing parking areas as feasible.

622 **Policy OS-5.2.** Locate all new parking underground, if financially feasible.

623 **Policy OS-5.3.** Locate, design, and size entrances and exits to parking to minimize  
624 impact on the pedestrian realm.

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