

DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN

Revised Final Draft for Planning Commission Adoption

City of Berkeley

in cooperation with

The University of California

April 9, 2009

Refer to April 1 agenda packet for color figures, except for revised Allowable Heights figure that appears at end of clean version.

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386 1- INTRODUCTION

387 THE VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

388 *Downtown is the heart of Berkeley where people enjoy urban life.*

389 *Downtown models Berkeley's commitment to sustainability. Downtown seeks*
390 *to minimize human impacts on the environment, through its emphasis on*
391 *walking, bicycling, transit, green streets, and green architecture.*

392 *Downtown is economically vibrant. Downtown increasingly serves Berkeley's*
393 *residents and visitors with attractive retail, exceptional restaurants,*
394 *community services, and remarkable parks and plazas. Downtown*
395 *celebrates its proximity to a public university internationally renowned for its*
396 *academic accomplishment and its physical beauty. Downtown's cultural,*
397 *educational and historic assets form the foundation for its success.*

398 *Downtown is a great neighborhood that is oriented to the pedestrian. It offers*
399 *diverse housing opportunities for all kinds of people, with an emphasis on*
400 *affordability and supportive services. Safe and tree-lined streets, shops,*
401 *services, and amenities make it possible to meet most daily needs on foot.*

402 PURPOSE AND PROCESS

403 Downtown is more than a place on a map or a collection of buildings and streets. It is a vital,
404 recognizable heart to the city: a place where the community comes together to work, to play, to shop,
405 to walk around, and to meet and connect with other people from the community. It is the place to
406 take out-of-town guests when they say they want to "See Berkeley". Or it should be.

407 Downtown Berkeley has many of the qualities of a great downtown. It has a traditional "main street"
408 character, with buildings built to the edge of the sidewalk, windowed storefronts where you can see
409 people and merchandise, and an eclectic mix of buildings, many with a wonderful historic character.
410 It has a variety of places to eat, shows to see, a great library, a widely used YMCA, and unique
411 stores, to mention just a few of its qualities. It continues to be a major transit hub and has the
412 advantage of a large world-class university on its doorstep.

413 Despite its great qualities, many people – including many Berkeley residents – are disappointed in
414 today's Downtown. Many Berkeley residents remember a vital, family-friendly downtown that existed
415 until the 1980's. They remember Edy's Ice Cream, Hinks department store, JC Penney's, the Blue
416 and Gold Market, Morrison Jewelers and Tupper & Reed music, and many other places that made
417 Downtown a gathering place for everyone – a place where the community came to meet their daily
418 needs, not just where they come to go to the movies, the theater or the library.

419 Many Berkeley residents want the old Downtown back, but fundamental economic conditions that
420 created Berkeley's traditional downtown no longer apply. Yet, it is possible to create a downtown that
421 has vibrancy and energy and becomes once again the heart of the community. Planning for this sort

422 of transformation requires an understanding of current conditions and opportunities -- and a new
423 vision for the future of Downtown.

424 Berkeley's 1990 Downtown Plan achieved some of its goals (see below), however this new
425 Downtown Area Plan pursues a clearer vision of what Downtown should and can become during the
426 21st century. The new Plan connects this vision to result-oriented policies and implementing actions
427 (as will be described on the following pages).

428 **THE 1990 DOWNTOWN PLAN**

429 The previous Downtown Plan was adopted in 1990 after six years of work. That particular planning
430 effort occurred at a time when the characteristics that made downtown a special place were at risk:
431 classic older buildings had been replaced by soulless banks and fast food restaurants. During the
432 1960s and 1970s, new Modernist buildings were built that lacked the character and quality of historic
433 buildings, and BART's construction disrupted Downtown. Some believe it never recovered.

434 The 1990 Downtown Plan emphasizes the importance of protecting Downtown's traditional character:
435 The plan respects the City's values for protecting its historic character, cultural diversity, social equity,
436 and human scale of development while improving vitality and the physical environment. As a result of
437 the 1990 Plan, Downtown has retained much of its traditional character while allowing for change in
438 many positive ways. Cultural uses formed another cornerstone of the 1990 Plan. While Downtown's
439 retail anchors were not saved, cultural uses presented a way of maintaining Downtown as a regional
440 destination. A new Arts District was created through the successful recruitment of live theatres, the
441 preservation of historic facades, and community-inspired street improvements.

442 The 1990 Plan also emphasized high-density housing as being critical to Downtown's revitalization,
443 and the 1993 Downtown Design Guidelines were innovative for their time by emphasizing traditional
444 building types where buildings are built to the street edge and where residences and offices are built
445 over stores that face the street.

446 But the 1990 Plan has not been enough to revitalize Downtown, as underlying economic limitations
447 remained unaddressed. High retail vacancy rates persist and the rate of residential construction,
448 while significant, remains relatively small compared with the number of people who commute to the
449 University and Downtown, with the number of units needed for the market to begin to address
450 Berkeley's crisis of affordability – as well as the number of residents needed to create a thriving
451 neighborhood.

452 The 1990 Plan also could not anticipate a new spectrum of concerns. Environmental sustainability
453 and global climate change had not emerged as major issues. "Transit-oriented development" had
454 not been coined, let alone developed as a concept. The place-making potential of well-designed
455 streets and buildings was poorly understood and received little emphasis.

456 **THE DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN PROCESS**

457 A new Downtown Area Plan effort was initiated in 2005 as a result of a settlement of a dispute
458 between the University of California and the City of Berkeley regarding the University's Long Range
459 Development Plan (LRDP). The University's LRDP called for 800,000 square feet of new

460 development in and adjacent to Downtown. It was not clear how UC's Downtown development would
461 be arranged or what its character would be.

462 The City and University recognized that the future of Downtown was of mutual concern, and that to
463 foster a healthy, sustainable, livable, and vibrant Downtown was in the interests of both the City and
464 the University. Specifically, the City and University agreed to foster Downtown revitalization by
465 working together to develop a new Downtown Area Plan that would provide an opportunity to address
466 community goals while shaping the University's development plans.

467 The Downtown Area Plan was developed through the extensive participation of Berkeley's citizens.
468 Community concerns and a community-based process were the central drivers for the Downtown
469 Area Plan. In 2005, Berkeley's City Council appointed a 21-member Downtown Area Plan Advisory
470 Committee (DAPAC), with three additional ex officio University representatives appointed by the
471 University. The DAPAC provided direction for a draft Downtown Area Plan that expressed a shared
472 vision, common goals, and policy objectives. DAPAC and its subcommittees met through two years
473 and nearly one hundred meetings, with assistance by City and University staff. Various experts were
474 brought in to better clarify the complex issues that DAPAC faced.

475 The DAPAC successfully identified all but a few issues that would need to be addressed to have an
476 exemplary Plan. The development of implementing measures was deferred to the Planning
477 Commission that was assigned the next phase of plan development. DAPAC made its final
478 recommendations and forwarded them to City Council and Planning Commission in late 2007.

479 In early 2008, Berkeley's Planning Commission began developing its recommendations for the
480 Downtown Area Plan. Using DAPAC recommendations as a foundation, the Planning Commission
481 considered an array of measures for implementing the Plan. The Commission also sharpened policy
482 language to eliminate redundancies and ambiguities.

483 The Planning Commission differed with DAPAC on few substantive issues, but differences did exist.
484 Most notably a majority of Planning Commission expressed support for taller Downtown buildings
485 than a majority of DAPAC members supported. The Planning Commission agreed with the DAPAC
486 that there were significant public benefits from higher intensity development, but it concluded, based
487 on a development feasibility assessment it requested, that taller buildings would be necessary to
488 achieve those benefits, it found that the economics associated with height, building codes and
489 construction costs are likely to make buildings heights between 75 and 160 feet infeasible under
490 typical conditions.

491 In May 2009, City Council developed a Downtown Area Plan for adoption. The Council considered
492 both DAPAC and Planning Commissions recommendations as it made final revisions. The University
493 of California will use the adopted Plan to guide its plans for properties that it develops in Downtown.

494 **PROJECT LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES**

495 Downtown Berkeley is one of only a few large city centers in the East Bay, and sits adjacent to the
496 University of California, Berkeley (Figure IN-1: Regional Context). The Downtown Area includes the
497 intersection of Shattuck Avenue, a historic link to Oakland, and University Avenue, the historic link
498 between Berkeley's original settlement and uses at the Bay's edge. Shattuck and University continue

499 to be major arterials within the East Bay. Downtown Berkeley is also the second largest transit node
500 in the East Bay, and is served by BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) and many bus lines operated by AC
501 Transit and others.

502 The Downtown Area is generally bounded by Hearst Avenue along its northern edge, Oxford-Fulton
503 Streets along its eastern edge (beyond which lies UC Berkeley's main campus_, Dwight Way to the
504 south, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way to the west (Figure IN-2: City Context).

505 The Downtown Area includes all of the commercial and civic areas considered by Berkeley residents
506 to be "downtown." The planning area for the DAP is significantly bigger larger than the area
507 considered by the 1990 Downtown Plan that focused largely on the blocks closely surrounding the
508 BART station. The current Downtown Area also takes in portions of residential neighborhoods, to
509 allow the DAP to consider boundaries and transitions more carefully (Figure IN-2: Existing Street-
510 Level Uses).

511 **A BRIEF HISTORY OF DOWNTOWN**

512 Downtown Berkeley has a relatively long history, compared with many California cities. Downtown
513 has buildings constructed during several periods and representing a wide variety of architectural
514 styles.

515 A central business district began to take shape in the 1870's, with successive waves of development
516 through the 1920's and 30's. Development of this period followed the traditional pattern of American
517 cities, with a grid street pattern and most buildings built to the edge of the sidewalk with housing or
518 office space above street-level storefronts. Downtown's position as a transportation center played a
519 pivotal role, as Downtown was a convergence point for several rail lines. Shattuck Avenue's
520 generous right-of-way held several intercity rail tracks, and was a focal point for commercial activity.
521 University Avenue intersects Shattuck in the Downtown Area and also offered local streetcar service.

522 Significant retail development continued to happen through the 1960's, but by the 1970's Downtown's
523 role as a regional shopping destination was in decline and the pace of development slowed.
524 Interurban train service ceased in 1958 and when BART opened its Downtown Berkeley station in
525 1973, shopping destinations with easy auto access were eclipsing traditional centers across the
526 nation. BART construction was also a major disruption to Downtown and -- in an effort to make it
527 more welcoming to cars -- Shattuck was reconfigured to maximize diagonal parking spaces while
528 moving through-traffic quickly. Fortunately, Berkeley did not embrace the "urban renewal" schemes
529 of the 1960's and 1970's, in which other cities tore down whole blocks of historic fabric to create large
530 scale redevelopment opportunities. Much of Berkeley's historic fabric remains and is highly valued by
531 Berkeley residents. The DAP reflects this value, as described in more detail in the Historic
532 Preservation and Urban Design chapter.

533 Since the 1960's and 1970's, and continuing to today, the University has played a growing role in
534 Downtown development motivated by expanding programs, but few opportunities for new
535 development on the core-campus (bounded by Oxford, Bancroft and Hearst). University expansion is
536 occurring in Southside, Northside, and Downtown areas. The University, and the affiliated Lawrence
537 Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), have leased and developed space in Downtown, and the
538 University has acquired more land and buildings in recent years, including offices, research space

539 and student housing. As noted earlier, University intentions for continued expansion into Downtown
540 led to this Downtown Area Plan.

541 The 1990's brought a new interest in developing apartment buildings in Downtown. Although
542 students occupy most of this new housing, non-students also occupy a significant number of new
543 housing, however, because at least 20% of all units must be affordable to low- and very low-income
544 households (and most students are dependents and do not qualify, or do not live in Berkeley long
545 enough to qualify).

546 Downtown's reputation as a center for theatre and the arts was also strengthened in the past 20
547 years, with development of the "Arts District" along Addison Street, including a second stage for
548 Berkeley Repertory Theater, the Aurora Theater, and the Freight and Salvage folk-music club, among
549 other arts venues.

550 **LAND USE**

551 The Downtown Area is comprised of a wide mix of uses including a commercial hub along Shattuck
552 near BART, and commercial uses that extend along Shattuck and University Avenues. These
553 commercial areas have largely retained a "main street" character where storefronts are built to the
554 street. Many of these buildings are "mixed-use" with residential units or office space above retail
555 shops or other street-level space.

556 Many buildings in Downtown date from the turn of the 20th Century and contribute greatly to the
557 character of Downtown, but many buildings have been built since that time. Buildings have a mix of
558 heights and styles. The tallest buildings in Downtown are found adjacent to BART, which is also the
559 traditional heart of Downtown near the site of the former railroad depot at Center and Shattuck.
560 Mixed in with the many commercial buildings are a few older residential buildings and some mixed-
561 use residential buildings built in the past 10 years or so.

562 While Downtown has long been a cultural center, recent efforts have cultivated a regionally
563 recognized "Arts District" that includes an especially high concentration of live theaters and music
564 venues along Addison Street. A cluster of cinemas, near Shattuck and Kittredge, and a growing
565 number of museums add to Downtown's identity as a cultural center.

566 Downtown is also a major employment center. A large amount of office space occupies the upper
567 floors of older buildings, especially near BART. Additions and renovations have modernized many of
568 these older spaces. However "class A" office space (i.e., spaces in excellent condition with a full
569 complement of services) are limited to two buildings: the "Great Western" building at BART and the
570 University-owned "Golden Bear" building on University Avenue

571 In its entirety, the Downtown Area makes up 168 acres. Private- and institutionally-owned parcels
572 comprise 113 acres within the Downtown Area. Among these parcels, approximately 27 acres are
573 identified in this plan as underutilized ("opportunity-sites"). They are comprised of vacant, surface
574 parking lots, one-story buildings, and two-story buildings near BART (see Figure IN-3: Potential
575 Development Opportunity Sites). Two-thirds of Downtown Area parcels are occupied by substantial
576 buildings and are much less likely to be used for new development.

577 There are several major institutions in and immediately adjacent to the Downtown Area. Just east of
578 the Downtown Area is the main campus of the University of California, Berkeley. The University owns
579 several properties in the Downtown Area, most on the blocks immediately adjacent to campus,
580 including the former California Department of Health Services site bounded by Hearst, Shattuck,
581 Oxford/Fulton Street and Berkeley Way, the largest development opportunity site in Downtown. The
582 University also owns and plans development on other key sites on or near Oxford Street at University
583 Avenue, Addison Street, Center Street, Bancroft Way and Durant Avenue.

584 Berkeley High School is located on one side of the Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park (Civic
585 Center Park), the largest open space in the Downtown Area. Other major civic uses line other sides
586 of the Park, including two City administration buildings and Old City Hall (Maudelle Shirek City Hall)
587 across Martin Luther King Boulevard. Several community-serving uses line Allston Way, including
588 the YMCA, Berkeley High School, and Post Office. On Center Street, Berkeley City College opened
589 an atrium-lighted building serving 4,000 students in 2009 with plans for significant expansion.
590 Berkeley's Central Library offers a large collection of books and other media at Kittredge Street at
591 Shattuck. Herrick Hospital is another important institution at the southern edge of the Downtown
592 Area, and offers limited health services as part of the larger Summit/Alta Bates medical system.

593 Unlike the 1990 Downtown Plan, significant residential areas are included in this Downtown Area, in
594 order to consider their relationship to changes in Downtown in the planning process. These
595 residential areas have a mix of higher density multi-family units, and older former single family
596 homes, most of which have been subdivided into apartments, often with newer buildings added on to
597 existing lots.

598 **DOWNTOWN'S ECONOMY**

599 Downtown's economy has five general sectors.

- 600 – A diverse retail sector that includes shops and restaurants that cater to both regional and
601 local patrons.
- 602 – An employment sector that includes government activities, private offices, and education –
603 most notably the University.
- 604 – Services including personal services, medical services, and services that support business
605 activities.
- 606 – Cultural uses that help bring people Downtown and include live theater and music, museums,
607 cinemas, and community uses like the YMCA and Central Branch Library.
- 608 – Residential uses that play a major role supporting Downtown's retail and service sector.

609 **RETAIL**

610 A downtown's vitality is largely defined by its retail environment. More shops attract more people,
611 who choose a location to shop, in part, to enjoy the energy and interest of people together.
612 Downtown's retail must compete on several levels, on the retail mix that it offers, on the quality of its
613 streets, on the access it affords, and on the density of its foot traffic.

614 **Refocusing Retail.** At one time, Berkeley was a major regional retail center, attracting people from
615 many East Bay communities to its department and specialty stores. But Berkeley’s retail sector has
616 declined. It has lost its anchor stores and can no longer attract regional clientele seeking to meet
617 basic needs. Throughout America, department stores and other major retailers have gravitated to
618 locations that offer easy regional access by car.

619 There are exceptions where downtown retail thrives. Downtown San Francisco, the preeminent retail
620 location in the region, continues to be a strong draw. Downtown Santa Rosa, San Diego and
621 Pasadena have also retained department stores, but only through the use of inward-looking shopping
622 centers within their downtowns. Furthermore, these places took exceptional public effort and
623 investment, mostly in developing parking, but also in new streets improvements, subsidies for façade
624 improvements, aggressive marketing, and other efforts. While retailing trends will change again, a
625 desire to return to days when Downtown was a major regional retail destination is unlikely to be
626 realized – and should not be Downtown’s retail strategy.

627 This Plan focuses on other options and opportunities that emphasize Downtown’s unique offerings.
628 These include the Arts District, capitalizing on the University’s large daily population, existing
629 synergies among small shops, supporting Downtown’s exceptional mix of restaurants, access to
630 regional transit, and Downtown as a urban residential neighborhood. Another way to market
631 Downtown is as a model of sustainable development. These options are discussed further in the
632 Economic Development chapter.

633 **EMPLOYMENT**

634 Downtown is a major employment center that is well served by transit. Most people who work
635 Downtown are service workers or professionals serving businesses, government, or the University.
636 Because the retail at street-level is largely built out, employment related to retail is not expected to
637 grow significantly, however office growth should be anticipated.

638 **Offices.** Downtown has low vacancy rates in offices, and office rents are high compared to many
639 portions of the Bay Area. Some of this can be attributed to the fact that the University leases a
640 significant amount of office space in the Downtown Area. Private demand for office space is also
641 high because of Downtown’s proximity to the University and access to the “intellectual capital”
642 generated by University faculty and graduates. As a consequence, demand for office space is likely
643 to continue, especially for start-ups and spinoffs. Furthermore, Berkeley has little high-quality office
644 space, this in spite of the fact that the largest segment of Berkeley’s workforce that commutes out of
645 the City are professionals – some of whom might find working near home more desirable.

646 Berkeley is also home to a large number of non-profit organizations, many of which find Downtown an
647 advantageous location for serving the community. These non-profits include: institutes on public
648 policy, high-tech “think tanks,” cultural organizations, and community service providers, such as the
649 YMCA and BOSS (Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency).

650 Despite the low vacancy rate and relatively high rental rates, there has been very little office
651 development in Downtown Berkeley for many years. While new office growth is desirable from the
652 standpoint of economic development, it is also important to recognize that such growth will add to

653 existing pressures for more housing. The Downtown Area Plan allows for office development but
654 offers no incentives for it.

655 **The University of California.** The University of California is the city's largest employer and plans
656 development that will greatly increase the amount of employment in Downtown. The University has
657 also long held property in Downtown, and much of it is vacant or underutilized. The University's
658 "Long Range Development Plan" (LRDP) anticipates new construction of up to 800,000 square feet in
659 the Downtown Area and abutting Tang parking lot. The LRDP targets the blocks adjacent to campus
660 (including the "West Adjacent Blocks" in the Downtown Area) for uses that are: museums, public
661 services, and other visitor-intensive uses, along with research and development uses and office uses
662 without substantial student engagement. The University also plans construction of administrative
663 office space that will free up space presently leased by the University and may improve the
664 availability of Downtown office space.

665 While the University's growth into the surrounding city has sometimes been a source of town-gown
666 tension (partly because the University is under the State of California's jurisdiction, it is not subject to
667 City property taxes or regulations), the Downtown Area Plan offers a new model for University-City
668 relations. University students, staff and faculty already help support Downtown restaurants, cinemas
669 and other businesses. If planned appropriately, University growth can accelerate revitalization in
670 Downtown, by bringing additional employees and public-serving uses -- and by enhancing the look of
671 Downtown through attractive new buildings and landscaping. With both city and campus goals in
672 mind collaborative planning between the University and City will yield major benefits, as discussed in
673 several chapters.

674 **Other Institutions.** Besides the University, other Downtown institutions that employ people include
675 Berkeley High School, Berkeley City College and Herrick Hospital (discussed below). These
676 institutions contribute to Downtown activity and sense of vitality.

677 **SERVICES**

678 **Personal and Business Services.** Downtown contains many kinds of services. Businesses that
679 offer personal services add to the vitality of the area, and include uses like hair stylists, tailors,
680 computer repair. Business-related services, for photocopying or shipping packages, support not only
681 local businesses but the University community as well. Most of these uses fit into the many
682 storefronts available Downtown.

683 **Community Services.** Many community services are provided in and around Downtown. Many of
684 these are delivered in the Civic Center area, where the YMCA serves the community and offers
685 programs for people of all ages and abilities.

686 The Civic Center area also provides social services that serve those with physical and mental
687 disabilities, recovering from drug and alcohol abuse, needing job skills and assistance in getting
688 employment, and who are homeless or hungry. The array of available services attracts many people
689 with special needs to Downtown. Downtown Berkeley has a high concentration of homeless
690 individuals relative to most places in the Bay Area.

691 **Health Services.** Herrick Hospital is situated just inside the southern boundary of the Downtown
692 Area, and is a part of the Summit/Alta Bates medical system. This site provides targeted services for
693 particular illnesses, and has not been a general service hospital for many years. The University is
694 considering establishing a “health campus” Downtown on the former Department of Health Services
695 site, which would improve access to and availability of many health services to the general public.
696 How health services, and other community services, can be encouraged and enhanced for the benefit
697 of Downtown and the City are presented in the Housing and Community Health & Services chapter.

698 **CULTURAL USES**

699 The arts and entertainment community plays a crucial role in Downtown. Live theater, music clubs,
700 cinemas and museums bring people to Downtown from all over the Bay Area. Significant new
701 additions to the Downtown Area will be the University’s Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film
702 Archive, and the Magnes Museum on Jewish heritage.

703 **HOUSING**

704 Housing is an essential component to Downtown’s economy. Residents support – and will continue
705 to strengthen -- local businesses and cultural events. Without the freeway access that is essential for
706 regional department stores, housing is an important part of the foundation on which Downtown’s
707 economy must stand. (Housing is further discussed below.)

708 **TRANSPORTATION**

709 The Downtown Area has been, and continues to be, a major regional transportation hub, where
710 numerous buses and BART converge. There are 40,000 daily transit trips to and from Downtown
711 Berkeley, with BART trips comprising 22,000 of those trips. Of the people who work in Downtown
712 Berkeley (both Berkeley residents and non-residents), 52% drive alone to work, 11% carpool, 10%
713 walk, 10% take BART, and 5% bicycle. Because of Downtown’s extensive transit resources and City
714 and University programs to encourage employees and students to use alternatives to the single-
715 occupant vehicle, the rate of transit use to and from Downtown is higher than citywide rates. Transit
716 access also makes Downtown housing attractive to individuals employed along the regional transit
717 corridors, and gives it a unique advantage as an employment center and regional destination.

718 Downtown is best enjoyed on foot. The quality of Downtown’s pedestrian environment is critical to
719 enhancing its role as a unique urban destination and to making it a highly livable place to live and
720 work. Downtown’s walking environment also plays a significant role in reducing use of cars and
721 corresponding generation of greenhouse gases. Downtown Berkeley residents already walk more
722 and drive less when getting to work than the City as a whole. Transit and walking account for 55
723 percent of commute trips to Downtown, compared to 36 percent of commute trips citywide. Of
724 roughly 2,000 households in Downtown Area, 40 percent do not own a car.

725 Downtown has some of the best transit service in the Bay Area, however access to and from
726 Berkeley’s neighborhoods can be more challenging. Although the rates of walking and bicycling to
727 Downtown are high relative to other Bay Area cities, they can be further increased by improving
728 pedestrian and bicycle routes.

729 For many people, the automobile remains the only practical means of getting to and from Downtown.
730 For those who cannot walk or bicycle downtown or for whom a short trip is not worth waiting for public
731 transit, driving (and parking) is critical to attract Berkeley residents for such shorter trips, as shopping
732 or services, as well as for night-time activities when transit service is limited and safety is more of an
733 issue.

734 Parking will continue to play an important role in Downtown. It is important that parking programs be
735 designed to can help assure that adequate, but not excessive, parking is provided and used
736 efficiently. Parking strategies can also be devised that discourage commuting by car, while
737 simultaneously making Downtown an attractive destination for retail, services, and cultural events (as
738 is discussed in the Access Chapter).

739 **DEMOGRAPHICS AND HOUSING**

740 Downtown Berkeley continues to grow in population, and is becoming home to a greater share of the
741 citywide population. Overall, the City of Berkeley's population shrank from 1970 to 1990. Beginning
742 in the 1990s, Berkeley's population began to grow again, and had returned to its 1980 population
743 level by 2000. While the City's population of about 102,000 has remained steady since 1990,
744 Downtown's population has grown by nearly 10 percent since 1990. And while average driving rates
745 per household have increased across the City, driving rates Downtown are lower, illustrating the
746 importance of focusing Berkeley's growth in Downtown's transit- and pedestrian-oriented environs.

747 A significant amount of Downtown's housing is affordable and occupied by households with lower
748 incomes. Sixty percent of Downtown households earn less than \$25,000, compared to 32 percent for
749 the City of Berkeley and 21 percent for Alameda County. These statistics are partly attributable to the
750 fact that Downtown is increasingly becoming a home to students. From 1990 to 2000, the number of
751 Downtown residents under the age of 24 increased by nearly 40 percent. Families occupy only four
752 percent of Downtown households and just four percent of Downtown housing units are owner-
753 occupied compared to 43 percent citywide.

754 Since only nine percent of Downtown households earn more than \$75,000 annually, their incomes
755 play a minor role in supporting local businesses, which must instead rely more on employees,
756 students and visitors for support.

757 There are more jobs citywide than there are workers living in Berkeley. The Association of Bay Area
758 Governments estimates that the City of Berkeley has about 20% more jobs than working residents
759 (Projections 2007). Between 2005 and 2020, the University alone is expected to add 2,900 jobs, not
760 including LBNL. As a result of this jobs/housing imbalance, the accessible location of Berkeley in the
761 region, and its overall attractiveness as a community, the demand for housing in Berkeley is likely to
762 continue to outstrip supply.

763 As a result of these pressures, Berkeley's housing costs are likely to remain higher than in other
764 nearby cities, and many current long time residents could not afford to live in Berkeley without rent
765 control. With vacancy decontrol, when current tenants move on, they are generally replaced with
766 higher income renters. Oldtimers and newcomers on modest or fixed incomes will have an
767 increasingly difficult time finding affordable housing. The public policy issue is how to retain diversity
768 and meet diverse housing needs in the face of these trends.

769 State laws mandate that cities accommodate their fair share of regional growth. Because of the high
770 demand and state requirements, there will be a continuing need for Berkeley to accommodate
771 significant growth in its housing supply. If the City and the region are going to address greenhouse
772 gas emissions, meeting housing needs near jobs and transit will be a growing imperative.

773 The Downtown Area Plan has made the provision of housing in Downtown one of its cornerstones,
774 Increasing the number of residents in supports its economic vitality, accommodates the growing
775 demand for housing (with the least impact on Berkeley’s lower density neighborhoods), and helps
776 minimize auto use and greenhouse gases. Housing strategies appear in the Housing and
777 Community Health & Services chapter.

778 **PUBLIC SPACES**

779 Attractive public spaces are an essential ingredient of livable urban communities. Downtown contains
780 a few beautiful places, such as the Addison Street “Poetry Walk” or the southern edge of Center
781 Street, where generous sidewalks are lined with active human-scaled building fronts and the shelter
782 of street trees and awnings. But too many other Downtown streets provide only narrow sidewalks
783 bounded by unsightly conditions such as vacant storefronts, blank walls, and parking lots.

784 Unattractive streets and an absence of public open spaces affect Downtown’s livability but and its
785 economic vitality. In a regional economy where shoppers have myriad options, improving
786 Downtown’s unique character is one of the critical ways that it can compete.

787 With the two notable exceptions described above, little investment has occurred in public streets and
788 open spaces since BART was built almost 40 years ago. The public environment needs to be
789 enhanced, maintained and made to feel more secure if Downtown is to thrive.

790 The Downtown Area presents several significant opportunities to enhance the pedestrian
791 environment through sidewalk widenings and substantial landscaping. Because Downtown is built-
792 out, the creation of new parks and plazas may primarily rely on the elimination of unnecessary traffic
793 lanes and excessive lane widths. Public improvement strategies are described in the Streetscape and
794 Open Space chapter.

795 **SUSTAINABILITY**

796 Berkeley has been an advocate of sustainable development for many years, and in the last decade it
797 has become clear that this philosophy is imperative. Sustainability has many implications for
798 Downtown, from the design of energy efficient buildings, to the importance of enhancing transit, to the
799 way that rain water is treated to reduce pollutants. While Downtown can be more sustainable within
800 the City of Berkeley, Downtown is a unique and significant resource for creating a sustainable region.
801 Options for a sustainable future for the Bay Area are set forth in “Projections 2009, What If?,” a report
802 published by the Association of Bay Area Governments that makes clear that it is essential to connect
803 the region’s land use to transit infrastructure.

804 Empirical research shows that people in high-density city centers that have good transit drive one-
805 third as much as people in urban neighborhoods and one-sixth as much as those living in suburban
806 areas (see Figure IN-5: Driving and Residential Density). Two million more people are expected to

807 live in the Bay Area within the next in 30 years, and emphasizing growth in urban centers is a critical
808 sustainability strategy. Urban growth near transit centers also reduces market pressures for growth in
809 outlying, less transit-accessible locations, which also supports the preservation of open space and
810 agricultural land.

811 Although needed on a number of levels, care must be taken to ensure that sustainable growth
812 enhances the character and quality of Downtown. Specifically, it is critical to retain Downtown's
813 sense of history by demanding that new architecture respect Downtown's historic context while also
814 being authentic for the time period in which it is being built. Similarly, taller buildings will need to be
815 designed so as not to overwhelm Downtown streets or block solar access to public open space for
816 long periods of time. Appropriate street-level amenities also need to accompany Downtown change.

817 Advancements toward highly energy efficient buildings can also be promoted, and Downtown
818 Berkeley can be a showcase of innovations in green building. In addition, ecologically beneficial
819 features can be incorporated into street and open space improvements, such as special landscaping
820 and permeable forms of paving. Sustainability is addressed in every chapter of this plan, but is the
821 focus of the Environmental Sustainability chapter.

822 **Figure IN-5: Driving and Residential Density.** Adapted from Holzclaw et al, 2002.

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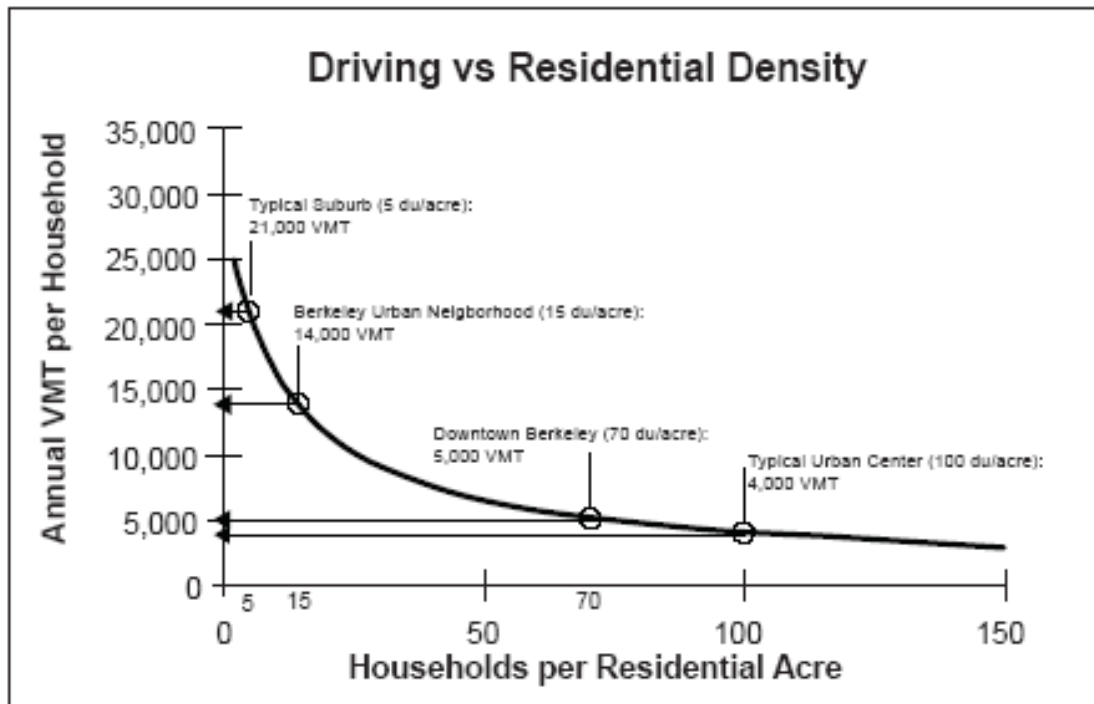
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834 **ELEMENTS OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN**

835 **CHAPTERS & APPENDICES OF THE PLAN**

836 The Downtown Area Plan contains the following chapters: Environmental Sustainability (ES), Land
837 Use (LU), Access (AC), Historic Preservation & Urban Design (HD), Streets and Open Space (OS),
838 Housing and Community Health & Services (HC), and Economic Development (ED).

839 Each chapter begins with a Strategic Statement that discusses issues of critical concern and
840 background information, followed by goals, policies and implementing actions. Goals are a general
841 and ultimate purpose. Policies describe a guiding strategy. Implementing actions are the tools and
842 techniques to carry out policies.

843 **SUMMARY OF GOALS**

844 Goals for each chapter are summarized here: GOALS TO BE ADDED – SEE TABLE OF
845 CONTENTS FOR SUMMARY.

- 846 – Environmental Sustainability (ES).
- 847 – Land Use (LU).
- 848 – Access (AC).
- 849 – Historic Preservation and Urban Design (HD).
- 850 – Streetscapes and Open Space (OS).
- 851 – Housing and Community Health & Services (HC).
- 852 – Economic Development (ED).

853 **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

854 Upon adoption, the DAP will replace the current Berkeley Downtown Plan, which was adopted in
855 November 1990 and will apply to a larger area than was considered in the 1990 Downtown Plan. The
856 Downtown Area Plan will amend the General Plan policies specific to the Downtown Area.

857 There are numerous implementing actions contained in each chapter of the DAP. The measures that
858 will have the greatest impact include the four major initiatives describe below.

859 **Revised Zoning Provisions.** New zoning provisions are needed to translate DAP policies into
860 standards that are more appropriate to Berkeley’s urban mixed-use city center, rather than continued
861 use of existing commercial zoning. New zoning provisions will better address community character
862 (or "form-based") considerations, by addressing factors such as building envelope, active street-
863 frontage, on-site open space, while simultaneously retaining appropriate flexibility regarding use.
864 Measurable standards will be used to the extent practical, to facilitate administrative review and so
865 that discretionary review can focus on issues for which public debate is essential.

866 **Amended Downtown Design Guidelines.** The Downtown Design Guidelines adopted in 1993 to
867 help implement the 1990 Downtown Plan provide excellent guidance on ways that buildings should

868 face streets in order to reinforce Downtown’s “Main Street” character. Additions are needed to better
869 describe relationships between historic buildings and new development, and to provide stronger and
870 more specific guidelines for pedestrian-oriented, sustainable design.

871 **Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP).** A “Streets and Open Space Improvement
872 Plan” will provide schematic designs and guidelines for public realm improvements vital to Downtown
873 Berkeley’s revitalization. Community members will participate in developing the SOSIP, and will help
874 set near-term priorities as part of an accompanying financing plan.

875 **Parking Master Plan (PMP).** The Downtown “Parking Master Plan” will address Downtown’s existing
876 and future parking needs. This PMP will consider on-street, off-street, public and private parking
877 facilities. It will consider innovative strategies for meeting parking demand, while minimizing
878 commuter parking and optimizing parking use. It will also consider ways to manage the demand for
879 parking by encouraging transit, bicycling, ridesharing and walking. To minimize the negative impacts
880 that parking can have on the vitality of a Downtown, the PMP will also establish a parking strategy for
881 new consolidated facilities that are shared by multiple uses and whose construction will be dependent
882 on financial planning.