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PAPERS ON DAVIS HISTORY

Paper Number 5

A 1920s-50s Student District in Davis, California

John Lofland

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A 1920s-50s Student District in Davis, California

John Lofland

This is a brief history of a 1920s-50s student district in the Second Street area of Davis, California. Concentrated on and near Second between A and B streets, at its zenith it featured eight fraternity, boarding and rooming houses. I describe this district's origins in the 1910-20s, its flourishing in the 1940s and early 1950s, and its decline and disappearance by the 1970s.

Because of their likely role in explaining the district's disappearance, I also describe the 1938-39 community conflict over fraternity zone districts and the town's student rooming crisis of that same period. These two episodes represented "moral panics" of sorts regarding Davis' obligations to UC students (or lack of them).

1. SURPLUS STUDENTS AND OTHER SINGLES

When University of California State Farm administrators began seriously to enroll students in that institution in 1908, they apparently aimed to house all of them on its campus. North and South Halls and other buildings were among dormitories with this purpose.

But as time went on, appropriations for student on-campus housing lagged enrollment. Students (as well as new staff and faculty) had to seek shelter in the adjacent town of Davis.

Davis housing most available to these single people was of three main sorts. (1) Householders rented out rooms in their homes. Or, at least, August and September issues of the *Davis Enterprise* published over the 1920-40s contain many pleas to Davis householders to let rooms to students.

(2) Surplus male students created a market for fraternity houses that provided off-campus room and board. By the late 1930s, there were more than half a dozen of these in converted large homes or in buildings constructed for that purpose.

(3) Fitting with the time, entrepreneurs organized commercial rooming and boarding houses. A building might be designed and constructed for these purposes. Others were organized in converted homes.

Notice I have not listed what is now a standard way to house single people: the apartment. As near as I can tell, there were few if any of these in Davis before about 1950. (The Davis Townhouse Apartments at Russell and B, built 1952, are sometimes claimed to have been the first or close to first, although the 1945 Sanborn map shows an apartment building—now demolished—at 106 C Street.) Further, with unknown frequency, single people rented or purchased houses.

2. LOCATING FRATERNITY/ROOMING HOUSES

If there was a market for buildings that housed single people involved with the State Farm, where would they, in market logic, locate in Davis?

One market-driven answer is: as close as practical to where these non-automobile owning folks went to study or work. Where would that be? In answering this question, we need first to know something about the organization and operation of the State Farm.

For the first several decades after it was created in 1906, the “Quad” in front of North and South Halls and the area to its immediate south were the centers of campus activities. What are now called First and Second Streets extended as real, used roads into the campus along the north and south sides of the Quad. These were the only roads into the campus from the western edge of the town.

The official entrance to the Farm was on First Street just west of A Street. Entering the campus on First Street, the director’s cottage was on the right.

Trains were still an important means of travel. The Southern Pacific depot was at the foot of Second Street and it extended to the north side of North Hall. Second street was also the main east–west cross–town corridor of Davis (which is why the famous Davis Arch at G Street spanned Second rather than some other street).

As an aid in grasping this micro-geography, let us look at a 1921 aerial photograph of the State Farm Picnic Day, shown as Graphic 1. In it, we are looking east with the campus Quad in the foreground and toward the SP depot (in the upper center background). Second Street is on the left and First Street is on the right

When I first inspected this photo I faulted the photographer for cutting off the view to the left (to the north) of Second Street. “What is over there?” I wanted to know. “Why is this photo so ‘off-center’?” But then I “got it.” From the perspective of 1921, there was nothing of importance “over there” to show. The *relevant* world of the State Farm situated next to Davis is seen in the photo.

If this was the market geography that might drive dwelling locations, where did living accommodations for surplus students and others in fact develop?

An answer involves two kinds of information: 1) Davis political/policy decisions and 2) people “on the ground” facing the realities of dwelling decisions.

3. POLICY

What were Davis political/policy conceptions of where off-campus student housing *should* be located? The three major zoning and planning maps of the 1920s-40s help answer this question.

3.1. The 1925 “Diagram of Use Districts Building Zone Plan”

The practice of “zoning” one’s city was a kind of American bandwagon of the 1910s and 20s. Davis city leaders got on it in 1925. Graphic 2 is a reproduction of the zoning map they created in 1924-25 in consultation with a well-known early figure in the new occupation of city planning (one Charles H. Cheney).

Looking first at this map’s legend, we see four types of zones or “districts:” residence, business, public use, and industrial. These subdivide into eight zones, total.

Of them, Class II and Class II-A are most salient for us. Class II allows “flats, apartments and hotels.” It’s symbol is “slant-right” bars. Class II-A allows “fraternity dwellings” and is symbolized with “slant-left” bars.

Inspecting the map, we find both slant-right and slant-left zones are limited in number and concentrated along Second Street. Slant-left—fraternities—are cramped up along A Street near Second and on Second west of B Street.

I do not think we would characterize provisions for these two types of zones as expansive.

3.2. The 1927 “City Plan of Davis, Calif.”

At the same time the City hired Charles Cheney to help it form the “use district” map seen in Graphic 2, it commissioned him to draw up a vision of how Davis might develop over the next quarter of a century or so; that is, to the early 1950s. Telling us a good deal about the technology of the time, the plan he provided was hand drawn in several colors on heavy linen cloth. The original has disappeared (allegedly stolen while it was at a well known Davis frame shop), but a black and white copy of it survives and is reproduced here as Graphic 3.

Of greatest relevance to us, Cheney projects that Second Street will continue to be, in the early 1950s, the major cross-town corridor of Davis. This status is signaled in zoning both sides of Second between A and F streets as “multiple dwellings.”

In 1925, Rice Lane was still a City street that extended half a block or so west of A Street and “into” the campus. Cheney projects this arrangement to the 1950s and multiple dwellings at the southwest corner of A and Rice (which is in fact today the northwest corner of Voorhies Hall).

I think we would have to say that this map, like the previous one, makes limited provision for “multiple dwellings.”

3.3. The 1939 “Zone District Map”

The 1925 zones were revised in 1938-39 and are shown in Graphic 4. Looking first at this map’s legend, we see the categories have been reduced from eight to five. Moreover, the distinction between Class II and Class II-A has been sharpened into “multiple family” versus “fraternity.” Nicely, the slight-right versus slant-left symbol for each has been retained, making it easier to compare these zones on the 1925 and 1939 maps.

In comparing we see that the slant-right zone—“multiple family”—has been considerably enlarged. It now covers much of the area bounded by B, Third, G and First streets. Indeed, this

zone now also appears along G street between Fifth and Seventh and along Third between I and L streets.

Moreover, the slant-left zone—fraternities—is also somewhat enlarged, but not greatly so.

4. REALITY

The above three maps tell us something about leaders' ideas about what residence reality should be. They do not report what is actually there. For this we need to turn to other kinds of information.

4.1. The 1945 Sanborn Map of the Second Street Area

One of these sources is the incredible maps of American towns and cities produced by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company. There are nine known iterations of the one for Davis from the first in 1888 to the last in 1953. Of them, the one for 1945 is most pertinent for our purposes.

Graphic 5 shows the portion of that map depicting buildings on and in the vicinity of Second Street between A and B streets. Reading the labels on buildings, we can see that eight are shown as fraternity, boarding, or rooming houses.

On Graphic 5, I have circled these eight buildings and numbered them 1 through 8 moving from west to east along Second Street.

4.2. Eight Buildings

As I said in the opening paragraph, this district has long since disappeared. Only three of the eight circled buildings are still there and none of them is a fraternity, rooming or boarding house.

Therefore, let me try to bring this lost world back to life at least a little by means of some information on each of the eight buildings. In doing this, I draw heavily on UCD yearbooks, which depict fraternities.

224 A Street housed Phil Alpha Iota, which started as a local fraternity in 1913. In 1952, it affiliated with the national fraternity Sigma Alpha Epsilon. As seen in Graphic 6.1. the building featured a faux log cabin exterior.

136 A Street housed a likewise local fraternity, Bona Amata (founded 1915) and then Philo Delphos, which became a chapter of the national group Sigma Nu in 1952. In Graphic 6.2. we see that it was a classic "Greek house."

217 Second Street was constructed about 1920 by State Farm employee John Leggett to be a rooming house on the second floor with accommodations for Mr. Leggett and his family on the first floor. Like the two fraternity buildings just seen, this structure was "purpose built" rather than adapted (Graphic 6.3).

215 University Avenue, in contrast to both its proximate neighbors seems to be an "ordinary" house design that was used as a rooming house (Graphic 6.4).

212 University Avenue is like 216 Second Street in that it looks as though it was purpose-built as a rooming house (Graphic 6.5).

245 Second Street may have been, from what scant information I have, another ordinary dwelling used as a rooming house (Graphic 6.6).

257 Second Street is among the most colorful of Davis' many celebrated but demolished buildings. Built in 1915 and demolished in 1971, this three-story structure served at various times as a hotel, residence hotel, and fraternity house. Initially called University House, it was Davis' premier hotel in the period after the Buena Vista Hotel burned in 1918 and before the Terminal Hotel opened in 1924 (J. Larkey, "University House," *DE*, 7-6-72). In the later 1920s, it evolved into a student and faculty residence hotel. In her memoirs, fabled UCD professor Celeste Wright reports living there off and on over several periods in the 1930s. In the later 1950s it was home to the Delta Upsilon fraternity (Graphic 6.7).

123 B Street housed the local fraternity Beta Phi (founded in the early 1920s), which became a chapter of the Kappa Sigma national fraternity in 1951. The building is distinctive for its "moderne" motif (Graphic 6.8).

4.3. Fluctuating Numbers and Buildings

The exact number of fraternity/rooming/boarding houses and their locations in this district fluctuated. For example, in its *Central Davis Historic Conservation District Historical Resources Survey*, Roland-Nawi Associates report that the houses at 215 Second Street (built 1923) and 219 University Avenue (built 1914) were constructed "for boarding students" (p. 32). The labels as "D" or dwelling on these buildings on the 1945 Sanborn map (Graphic 5), suggests that while perhaps originally used for rooming or boarding, these uses had changed.

4.4. A 1956 Aerial View of the Second Street Area

This district's days were numbered by the 1950s and it would be gone by about 1970. But from the air in the 1950s, it still appeared robust. Graphic 7, taken in 1956, provides such a view. (In addition to revealing a great many demolished or radically remodeled buildings, we see that there were *five* automobile service stations on B between First and Second.)

4.5. Fraternity/Boarding/Rooming Houses in the Rest of Davis

This history is focused on Second Street adjacent to the UCD campus, but it needs also to be clear that dwellings for surplus singles were not confined to this area.

They did not, though, concentrate to the degree we would want to speak of one or more additional districts. Moving west to east and north to south from the campus, these buildings included:

101 Russell Blvd. (Zeta XI, Phi Sigma Kappa)
 239 University (Phi Alpha Iota)
 241 B Street (Beta Phi)
 336 B Street (Calpha, Phi Delta Theta)
 501 G Street (Rooms)
 703 Third Street ((Alpha Gamma Rho)
 502 Second Street (Board and Rooms)

217 F Street (Rooms)
515 First Street (Theta Xi)
705 First Street (Delta Sigma Phi)

(Reviewing UCD yearbooks from the first one in 1911 through 1945 I have accumulated photographs of seven demolished fraternity buildings existing before World War II whose exact former locations I have yet to identify.)

5. THE FADING OF FRATERNITY/ROOMING/BOARDING HOUSES

As said previously, the Second Street district—as well as fraternities, boarding, and rooming houses in the larger downtown—declined and all but disappeared after World War II. Why this happened is likely at least somewhat different for fraternities and rooming and boarding houses.

5.1. Fraternity Removal: Some 1938-39 Roots

We have seen that there were three fraternities (or more depending on the period used and boundaries drawn) in the Second Street area. Expanding the boundaries north to Fifth and east to G, there were perhaps a dozen buildings so used at one time or another before and through the 1950s. In contrast, there are now three in that area (and *none* in the original Second Street district).

This decline in the Original City (A to L, First to Seventh) has occurred in spite of the massive growth of the UCD student body and the continued robustness of the Greek system. (In 2006, the Davis Wiki listed 17 UCD fraternities, 11 with houses and six without.)

Why their decline in (that is, removal from) the Original City? The answer is complicated and multidimensional, of course. Let me here only try to contribute the piece of an answer that pertains to the community conflict over the major zoning revision of 1938-39, the clash of mindsets that were put on display in that conflict, and the zoning precedents that were set in motion.

5.1.1. A Move To Rollback the Fraternity District. This story of a fateful clash of sentiments about fraternities begins in early 1938 when the City Council hired Sacramento planning consultant R. C. Jaqueth to draw up a new zoning map and code. He presented his “Preliminary Zone Ordinance” to the public at a Planning Commission meeting held in the brand new city hall on September 14, 1938.

The preliminary map unveiled that evening would turn out to be quite close to the one finally made law by the City Council five months later, on February 20, 1939 (and shown as Graphic 3). But, the road to that final map would be quite bumpy.

According to the minutes of this September 14 meeting, when

Mr. Jaqueth called for questions . . . [there] started an avalanche that prompted [Planning Commission] Pres. Wilson to ask for a show of hands as to how many of the audience were in favor of any kind of zoning ordinance. The sentiment seemed to be very much in favor of an ordinance, but not to the proposed one as applied to their own vicinity (Commission Minutes, 9-14-38).

This mini-uproar from the audience centered on the fraternity zoning at and near Second and A streets (seen in Graphic 3). Led by Professor Lyle Leach of 234 Rice Lane (father of Joanne Leach Larky, author of *Davisville 68*), “eleven property owners on Rice Lane” and others present at the meeting wanted fraternities west of B Street restricted to “lots facing B Street between Second and Third Streets.” All other lots west of B should be rezoned to “single family dwellings only.” Further, the minutes record the suggestion that the “University should set aside property” for fraternities and “thereby avoid the necessity of zoning the City for that use” (Minutes, 9-14-38).

5.1.2. A Countermove To Expand the Fraternity District. September 14 was the first of two previously scheduled public meetings on the new zoning proposal. The second was on September 26 and appears to have been attended by a mostly different set of residents. The dominant sentiment at it was opposite the first meeting. Several men “protested the proposed fraternity zone on the ground that it was too restricted.” Two kinds of enlargement were advocated. First, zone all the lots west of B for fraternities. Second, include in the zone “all property bounded by B, D, First, and Third Streets” (Commission Minutes, 9-26-38).

In his *Davis Enterprise* report on this meeting, editor Chelso Maghetti characterized it as “in absolute reverse of the meeting held by the Commission last week” (*DE*, 9-30-38). Moreover, the Planning Commission was accused of being “against the fraternities.”

So: the Planning Commission was faced with sharply divided Davis residents. On the one side, single family home dwellers did not like the prospect of fraternity houses being next or close to them. Against this, a number of people argued that the community had a responsibility to provide such housing for students. Moreover, they claimed, with proper regulation, fraternities made fine neighbors.

5.1.3. Slightly Expanded Zone. Meeting on October 13, the Commission constructed a compromise plan. It accepted the inherited 1925 fraternity zoning (seen in Graphic 2), placed all other lots owned by fraternities in the zone, and removed and included a few other lots. In his *Enterprise* report Editor Meghetti termed this plan “similar to the old one with the addition of three other sites now owned or occupied by a fraternity house” (*DE*, 10-21-38).

This plan was sent to the City Council for action. But at its meeting on October 15, the Council straight away sent it back to the Commission for further consideration, some of which involved additional zoning for an auto service station at Rice Lane and B.

5.1.4. Impasse and Advisory Vote. Yet another special Commission meeting was set for November 1. The front page of the October 28 *Enterprise* announced it with the report that “rumors . . . [that] the Commission is attempting to ‘railroad’ the issue through” were circulating. But, this story added, Commission members said these rumors were “absolutely without foundation.”

The Commission’s Minutes and the *Enterprise* report both suggest that the November meeting was an occasion of high drama and a fine example of emergent, community problem-solving. In order best to convey what happened, I reproduce the *Enterprise* account as Graphic 8. Please read it now.

Editor Maghetti captures the occasion, I think, when he writes that the participants were “vociferous and succeeded in upsetting the conclusion previously reached as a result of . . . two other meetings” (DE, 11-4-38 and Graphic 8).

This was, it would seem, democracy in action. The upshot was that the Planning Commission accepted the suggestion by audience members that an advisory vote among affected property owners be taken.

5.1.5. The Vote. Clearly desiring to conclude the zoning matter quickly, the ballot was drawn up and distributed to property owners with a cut-off return date of November 20, a period a little less than three weeks after deciding to hold a vote.

In order to provide a closer sense of this vote, I reproduce, as Graphic 9, one of the 98 individual ballots cast. The “bottom line” of the ballot reads “Are you in favor of zoning your property . . . in the Fraternity Residence Zone?” Notice that the question is not, for example, “Do you favor the zones proposed by the Planning Commission?” That is, the ballot question is framed in a self- rather than community-centric manner.

The votes were counted and reported by **lots**, not by persons. The 98 people voting owned 185 lots and the vote came out:

Yes:	73	39%
No:	112	60%
Total	185	99%

Reports to the Council and in the *Enterprise* also mentioned that the owners of 99 affected lots (an unknown number of people) did not vote. If one added in the 99 non-voting lots, the results were:

Yes:	73	26%
No:	112	39%
<u>Not voting</u>	99	35%
Total	284	100%

I think we can be certain that the Planning Commission and City Council were also interested in how the vote came out when counted by person. Here it is:

Yes:	38	39%
No:	60	61%
Total	98	100%

5.1.6. The Conclusion. The Commission received the “fraternity zone” voting results at a meeting on December 1. Its response was to add a few lots in Block 49 to their previously approved compromise scheme and to send the plan to the Council. The minutes of this meeting are very brief and do not report any citizen speakers. The fraternity zone brouhaha had ended.

On December 19, the Council accepted the Commission's report without further consideration. Following time lapse rules of law-making, the Council took final adoption action on February 20, 1939.

I interpret these events as showing a sharp division among Davis propertied interests on the place of fraternity housing in the town. The “no” ballot I reproduce as Graphic 9 is that of William Henry Scott, Davis' chief development proponent and booster for many decades. It is hard to think of an economic enterprise about which he was not enthusiastic, *except* for fraternity and boarding houses! As the town's elected judge for decades and the *Davis Enterprise* editor for 36 years, his views were presumably the same as the faction that dominated Davis. (Indeed, he was a major shaper of those dominant views.)

(Other ballots are also signed. Prominent other “no” voters included, in addition to Lyle Leach, Tracy Storer, Mrs Forest Plant, and Hattie Weber—voting for the lots on which the Weber mansion stood at the northeast corner of Second and E Streets.)

5.2. Rooming and Boarding House Decline

The rooming and boarding of individuals in homes and in “houses” devoted to these activities has also declined and virtually disappeared. The causes of these declines in the Davis Original City are likely at least somewhat different than those for fraternities. For example, fraternities present themselves to the world as corporate entities that act in concert in ways that neighborhoods and others are likely to disapprove. Roomers and boarders do not as often act in such corporate ways or corporately at all.

Reading Davis public records for the later 1930s, I was struck with the degree to which rooming and boarding were thought to be important **social problems** in college towns throughout California.

The Depression is the context in terms of which (or the background against which) to understand the rise of student housing as a social problem. As in other periods of economic downturn, lack of jobs prompted youth to attend (low cost) colleges rather than to be merely unemployed.

Depression-strapped UC budgets could not adequately support increased student demand. But University officials increased enrollments anyway. So, by the later 1930s, there was something of a student housing crisis at all UC campuses, and especially at Davis, which, at long last, had begun to encourage the enrollment of women.

5.2.1. 1939 Student Rooming Problems. The *Enterprise* of May 5, 1939 highlighted the crisis with a front page story titled “Exaggerated Reports on Student Housing Not Justified.” The story's main claim was that it was not true that students “have been compelled to sleep in worked-over hog pens and chicken coops, which were unsanitary and unlivable.” While it may be true that some students “have been required to sleep in basements of private homes,” it is also true that, for the most part, “these rooms are neat and attractive . . .”

According to this article, such negative claims certainly did not apply in any significant way to Davis. Instead, “the people of this community have stretched every angle in attempting to cooperate with University authorities in housing the boys and girls. Possibly there are isolated

cases where quarters have been offered that are not ideal; that is to be expected. But, by far and large, the majority of rooms and accommodations are acceptable.”

Exaggerated or not, the rooming situation was seen as serious enough for the Director of the Farm, Dean Knowles Ryerson, to convene a June 9, 1939 town meeting on the subject. Symbolizing the event’s significance, it was held in the main chamber of the still-new city hall. The advance publicity framed the occasion this way:

While University authorities are willing to lean over backwards in the matter of rooms they are, however, bound by state law to see that certain requirements are met (DE, 6-9-39).

Also suggesting importance, representatives of three government agencies were present to speak: The Yolo County Health Department (speaking on cubic feet requirements and tuberculosis, among other topics); the California Division of Housing (whose agents were conducting inspections of rooms in Davis and in other college towns), and, of course UC officials, led by Ryerson.

Even though the meeting began at 8:00 PM on a Friday night (when people might well have other things to do), the *Enterprise* reported a “large attendance” of “about sixty residents.” The better to convey the tenor of this event I have reproduce the entire *Enterprise* report of it as Graphic 10.

I read the report in Graphic 10 as Dean Ryerson and others telling the good folks of Davis that they were going to have to raise the standards of their rental and rooming practices that were, by implication, seriously deficient.

Complaints about student housing were not only about the services provided. Householders also had their complaints about students. The behavior of the latter was irritating enough for State Farm authorities to draw up and print for householders and students “an agreement . . . whereby students will do certain things and not do others; also the length of their stay in the home . . . [so as to not to leave] the householder a vacant room or an empty place at the table for the rest of the semester” (Maghetti, Editorial, DE, 8-12-38). Abrupt leaving to move into a fraternity was a particularly frequent householder complaint.

5.2.2. The Decline of Rooming and Boarding. Rooming and boarding may have inherent troubles such as those just described that help account for their decline. But other forces likely loom larger in explaining why we no longer see either practice very much in Davis or elsewhere.

On the provider side, there has been a decrease in the kinds of family units likely to view rooming and boarding as an attractive way to make money. Of concomitant importance, the economics of construction and renting have favored the spread of the *apartment building*. The single-family home was the most conspicuous and widespread physical feature of Davis following World War II. But, the apartment building was not far behind it.

The new and abundant availability of apartments meant that students could be absorbed by them rather than by on-campus dormitories, fraternities houses, boarding houses, or rooming houses.

6. CONCLUSIONS

I offer some brief conclusions to a brief report.

1. A single student dwelling district composed of fraternity, boarding, and rooming houses developed in Davis on and near Second Street close to the State Farm Campus in the 1920s-50s.
2. A number of factors, including Davis householder resistance, led to the decline and then disappearance of this district. In addition, these forms of housing per se went into decline in the entire Original City.
3. The fact that fraternities were largely removed from the Original City is an especially conspicuous change. One large factor in that change may have been the strong and prolonged negative reaction of property owners to them. These negative sentiments were placed on clear display in 1938-39 and may have continued virtually unabated. In later decades, these sentiments were seen with special clarity and persistence among residents of the southern section of University Avenue and of Rice Lane.

I conclude these conclusions with a puzzle. It begins with the fact that there has been a major shift

from Davis students dominantly dwelling in dormitories, fraternities, rooming houses, or boarding houses before WWII

to students living in apartment buildings after WWII.

With the possible exception of rooming houses, these prior student living situations tended to have a larger structure of some enduring kind that itself had a standing and enduring relation to larger worlds: a dormitory organization, a fraternity culture, a family structure.

In contrast, ad hoc student-sharing of apartments often creates an internal organization with little or no history and little connection to larger worlds.

This is a shift from “doing college” in a world of pre-existing, connected and enduring groups to doing college in a world of immediately invented, isolated, and temporary groups.

The effects (or lack of them) of such massive shifts in the college experience are hard to identify much less to verify. It remains, therefore, a puzzle.

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APPENDIX ON SOURCES

This history has been assembled with and from several Davis history sources and resources.

I. UCD Special Collection D-344, Box 5. I discovered the district I have described in this report while I was going through materials in what is now called Davis History Collection D-344 at the UC Davis Department of Special Collections. Box 5 of this collection contains 1930s City of Davis Planning Commission and other files that bring that period to life (including detailed

materials on the original city hall). In addition, some City materials from this period have found their way into the Yolo County Archives and I have reviewed them as well. (The dramatic story of the origin of UC Davis Collection D-344 is told in a pdf document titled “The Rescued From the City Hall Basement Collection” available on the website of the Davis History Research Group — www.davishistoryresearch.org.)

2. The Davis Enterprise. Having learned the basic facts in City documents, I augmented them with reports in the *Davis Enterprise*. In the 1930s and few decades afterwards, this newspaper provided many and excellent accounts of Davis events.

3. UC Davis Yearbooks. I found that UCD yearbooks from before and a little after WWII are quite informative about where students lived and even provided pictures. A complete collection of them (1911-2006) is in the reading room of the UC Davis Department of Special Collections, where I read those I did not already own (about half of them).

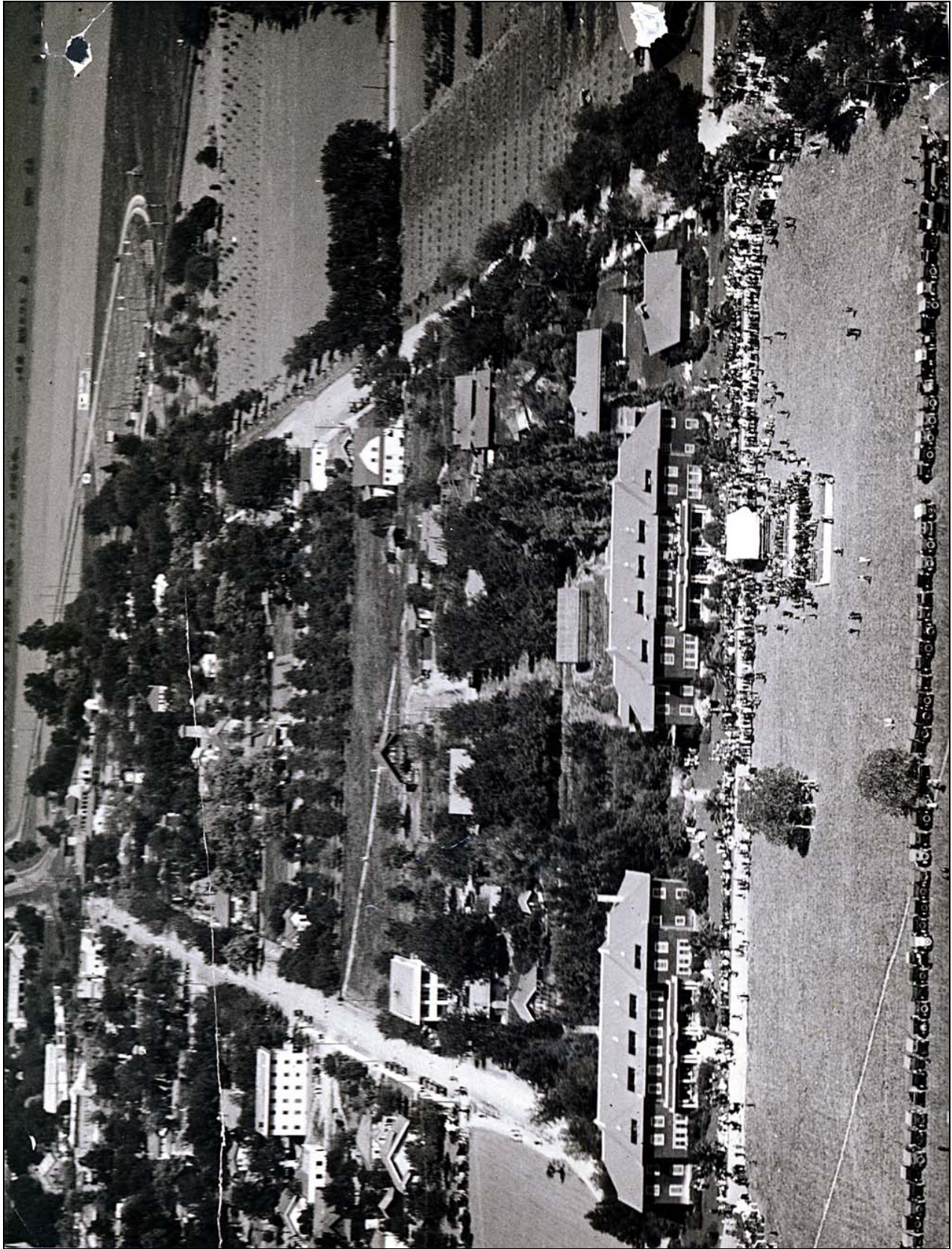
4. UC Davis Special Collections Aerials Photographs. UC Davis Special Collections has several dozen aerial photographs of the UCD campus taken over the 1920s-60s that also include neighboring areas of Davis. I found it useful to review all of them in an effort to grasp Second Street’s physical continuity and change.

5. Broader Accounts. Of course, information from specialized sources such as the four just listed makes little sense absent understanding larger, relevant contexts. I have tried to form a sense of those contexts from study of Joann Larkey’s *Davisville 68*, Ann Scheuring’s *Abundant Harvest*, and many additional works listed on the website of the Davis History Research Group (www.davishistoryresearch.org) and the Davis History website of the Davis Historical Society (www.davishistoricalsociety.org).

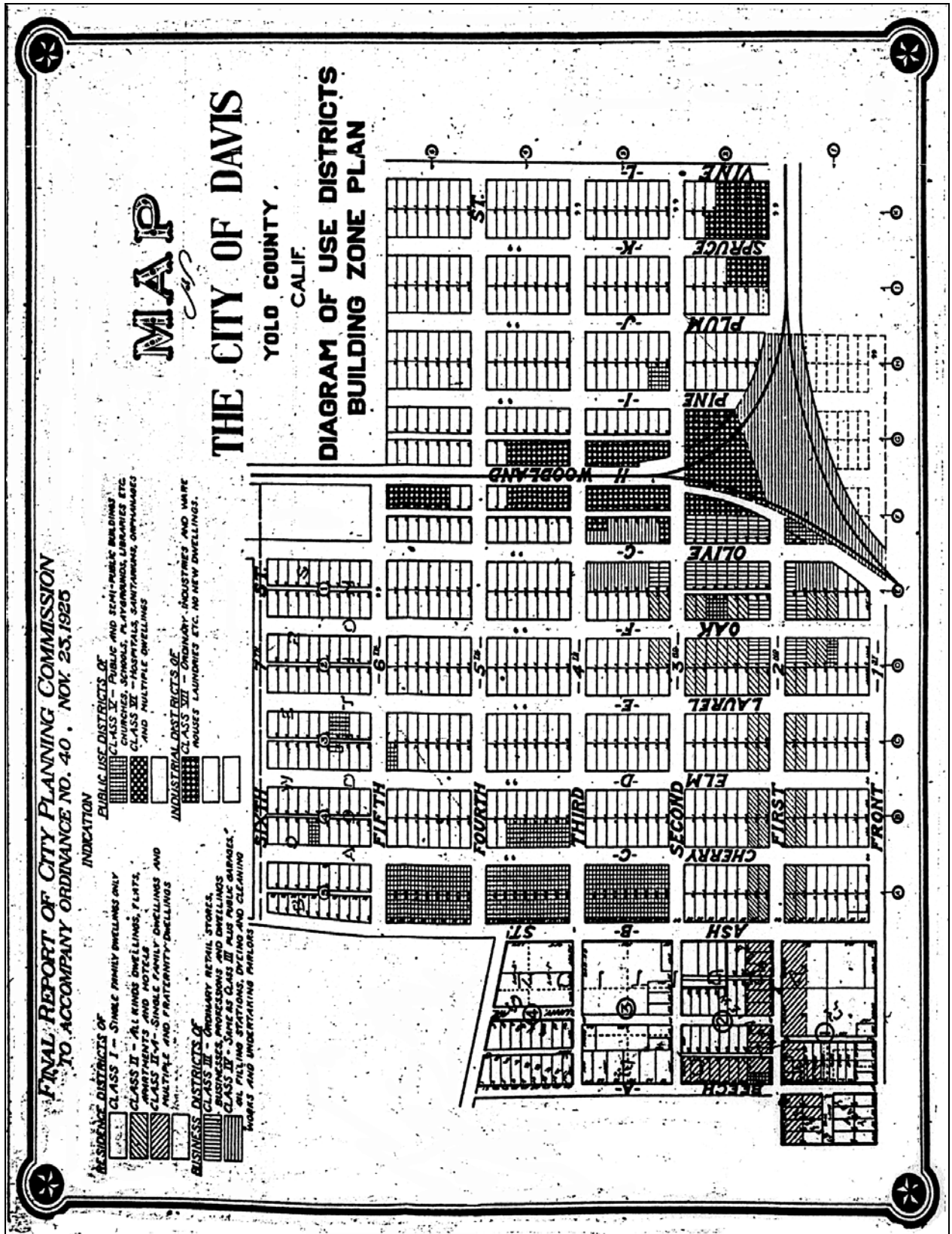
I am once again indebted to John Skarstad, UCD University Archivist, and to Mel Russell, Yolo County Archivist, for their help well beyond the call of duty as I was working in their respective shops.

Valiere Vann offered many helpful comments on a draft that I have used in revisions. Mike Harrington’s serious commitment to restoring historic Davis properties prompted me to turn a long-standing curiosity about Second street into an empirical examination. Thanks, Mike.

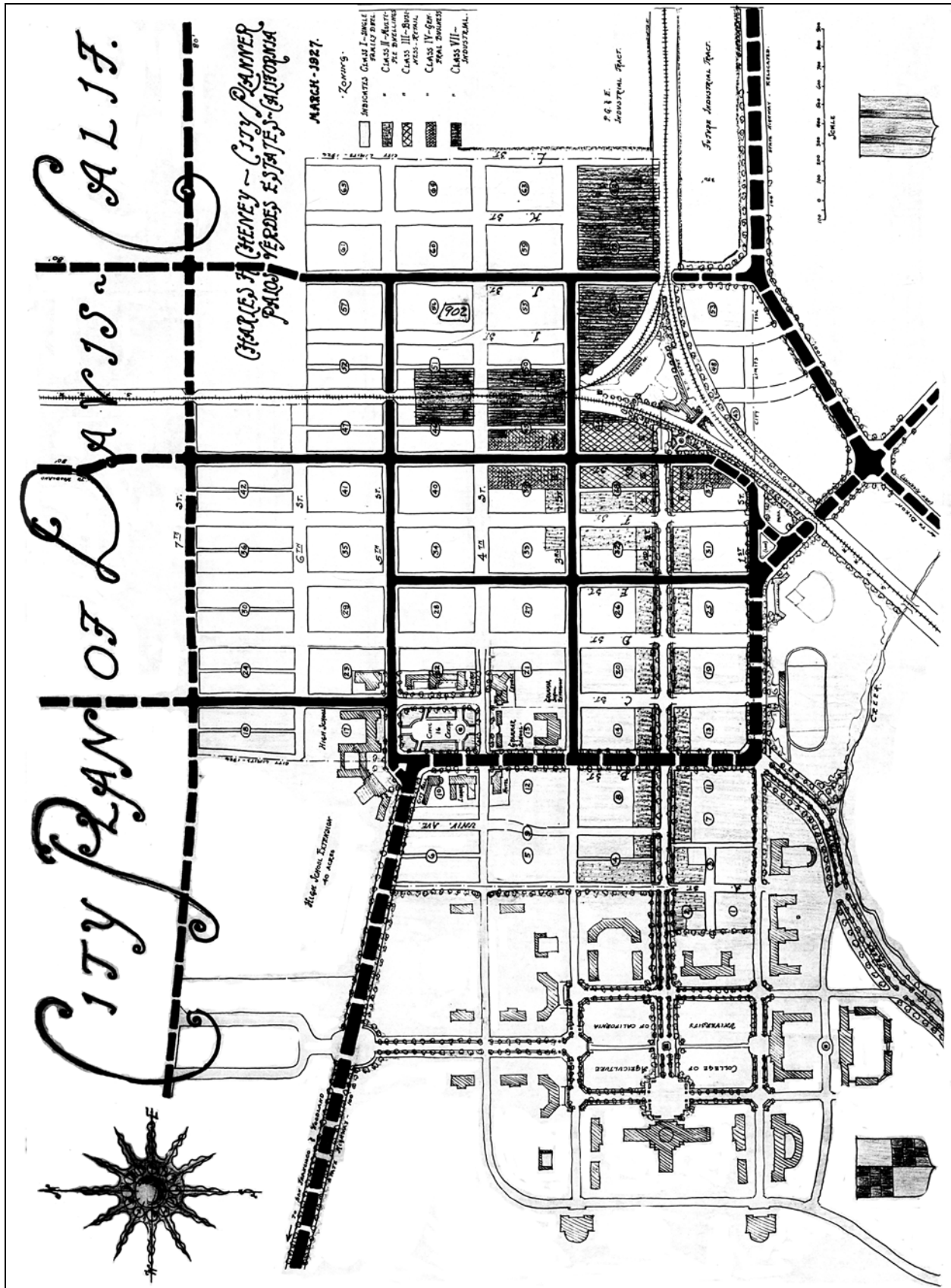
The editor of the Davis Historical Society Papers on Davis History Series, Lyn Lofland, did a fine job of editing this paper and I am very grateful to her.



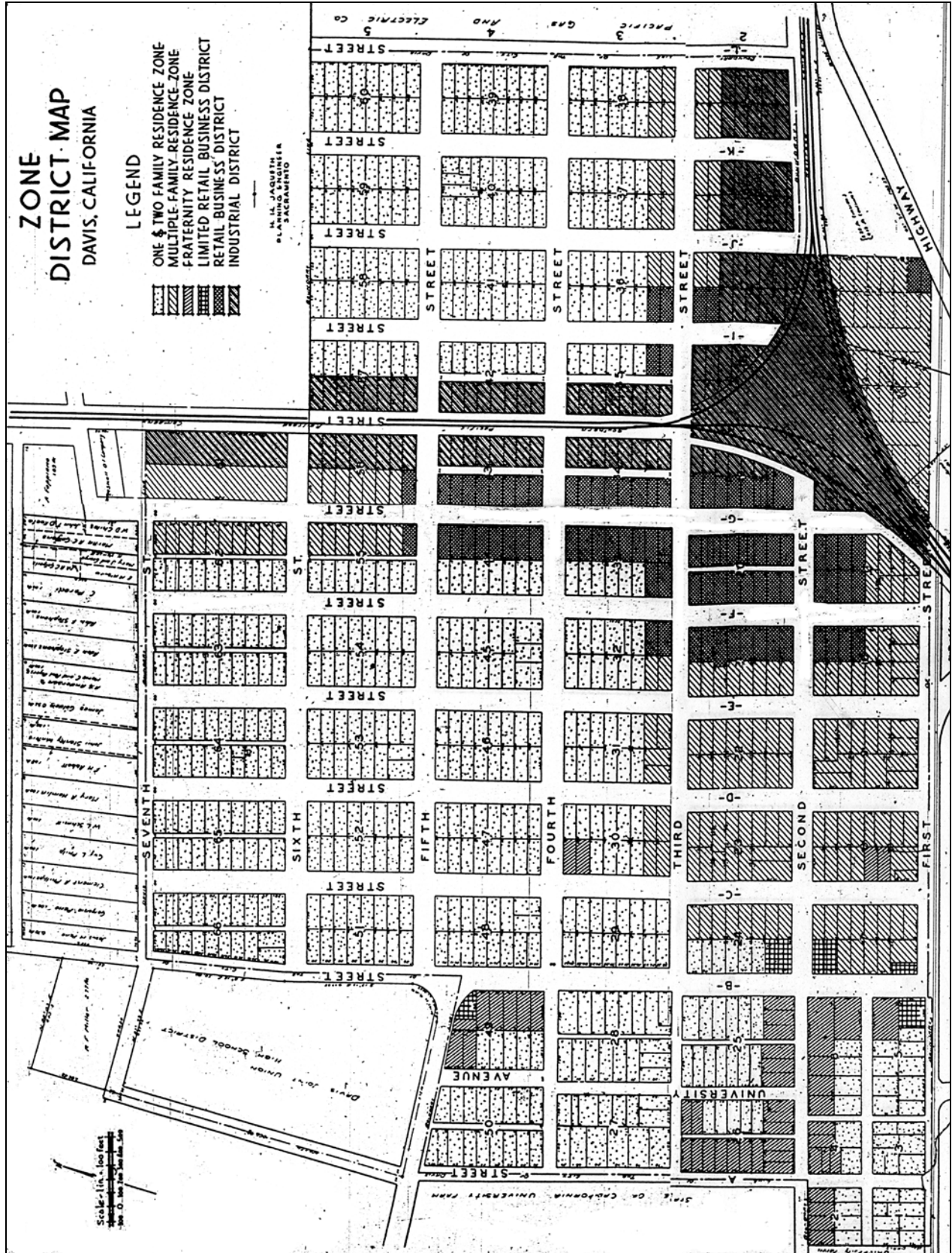
Graphic 1. UC State Farm Picnic day, 1921. Looking east toward the SP depot (in the top center-left). First Street is on the right and Second Street is on the left. (UC Davis Department of Special Collections.)



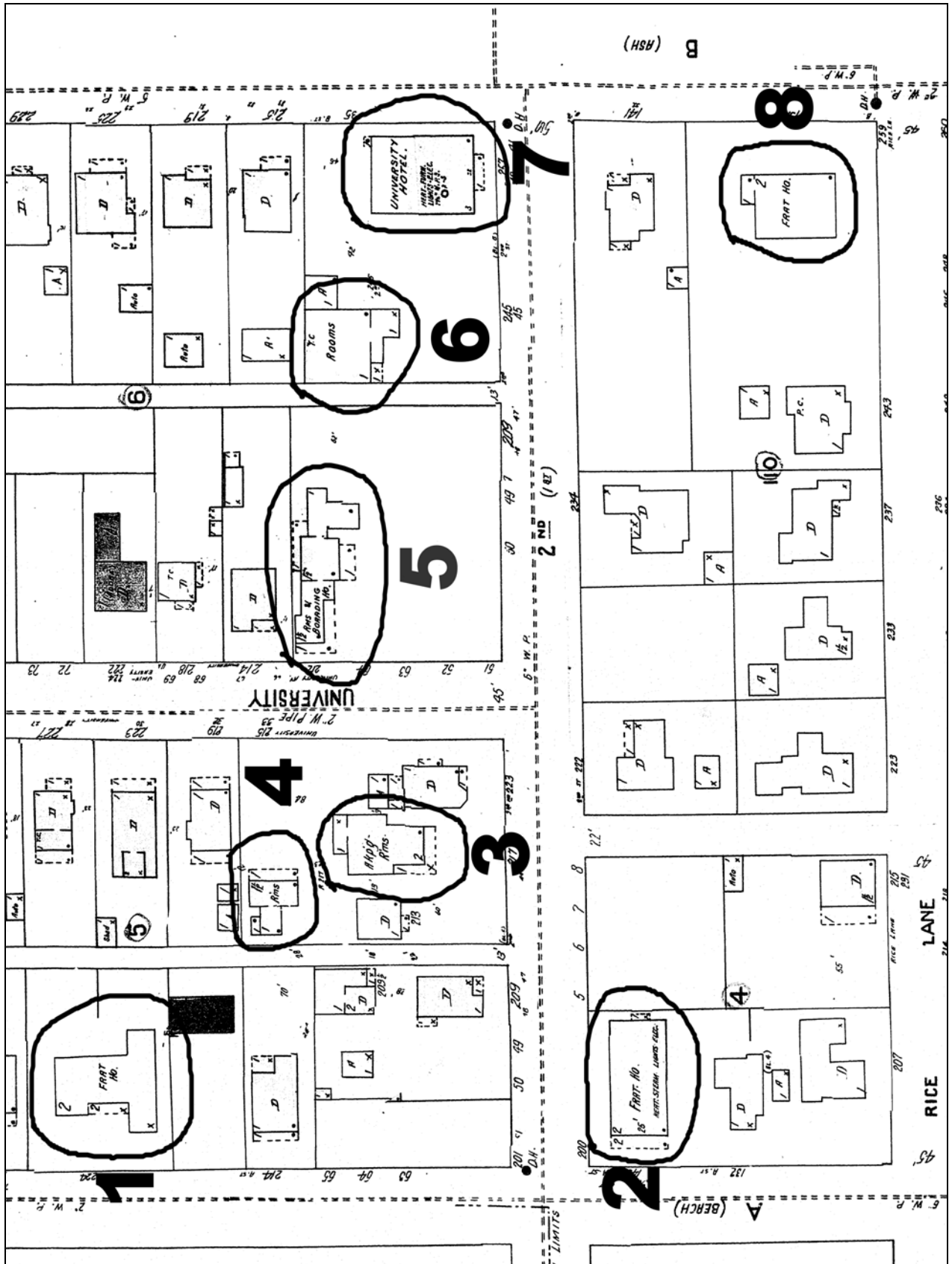
Graphic 2. 1925 City of Davis Zoning Map (the first such map in the history of the city). (City of Davis Public Works Department.)



Graphic 3. Charles H. Cheney's 1927 Plan for the City of Davis, a view of how the town would appear in the early 1950s. (Hattie Weber Museum of Davis.)



Graphic 4. 1939 City of Davis "Zone District Map." (Davis Enterprise, March 3, 1939.)



Graphic 5. 1945 Sanborn map of the Davis Second Street area showing fraternity/rooming/boarding houses Numbered 1 through 8.



6.1. 224 A Street, c. 1953. (*El Rodeo*, 1953.)



6.3. 217 Second Street, 2006. (John Lofland.)



6.2. 136 A Street, c. 1962. (*El Rodeo*, 1962.)



6.4. 215 University Avenue, 2006. (John Lofland.)

Graphic 6, Begun. Western four of eight buildings in the Second Street fraternity/rooming house district



6.5. 212 University Avenue, 2006. (John Lofland.)



Many Aggies such as Ed Mathews and Tom Gooding take advantage of the fine accommodations at the UNIVERSITY HOTEL, 2nd and B Streets, Davis.

6.7. 257 Second Street, c. 1958. (*El Rodeo*, 1958.)



6.6. 245 Second (left), 257 Second (right), 1953. (Eastman B-8044.)



6.8. 123 B Street, c. 1956. (*El Rodeo*, 1956.)

Graphic 6, Concluded. Eastern four of eight Buildings in the Second Street fraternity/rooming house district.



Graphic 7. 1956 Aerial View of the Davis Second Street fraternity/rooming house district looking west from the southeast corner of First Street (lower left) and B Street (lower right). The buildings numbered 1 through 8 here are numbered the same as those shown in Graphic 5 and Graphic 6. (UC Davis Department of Special Collections.)

COMMISSION TO MAKE SURVEY OF PROPERTY

Will Seek Opinion On
Fraternity Houses
Through Questionnaires.

Still wrestling with the knotty problem of Fraternity House locations, the City Planning Commission met again last Tuesday evening and "got practically nowhere" in its effort to find a satisfactory solution. It was generally agreed that space should be allotted for these buildings, but the matter of saying where that should be, continually ran into the snag of objection for one reason or another.

Only a small group of people attended the third hearing, but it was a vociferous group and succeeded in upsetting the conclusions previously reached by the Commission, as a result of its two other meetings. This conclusion had placed the fraternities in the same zone as before with but two additions.

In a lengthy analysis of the situation, J. D. Long charged the Commission with falling to take a long time view of the question, as well as bias. He believed the logical boundary zone for fraternities should include all the territory bounded by A and B streets, First and the highway.

Long stated unless a satisfactory solution was found to the fraternity problem at this time and that greater area be allotted than at present contemplated, the matter would remain a sore spot for the next ten or fifteen years to come. The student houses can't be held out indefinitely, he stated, and as one who is a faculty adviser and resides close to a fraternity, he failed to see the objection to them.

J. F. Wilson, Chairman of the Commission, stated it was not the Board's intention to "freeze" to the present limitations as set forth in the map and voiced objection to the charge of bias. He recalled the first meeting which was largely attended by residents in the suggested area and at which it was stated, property owners purchased lots with the understanding they were in single dwelling zones.

At the second meeting, which was principally attended by proponents of the larger zone idea, it was agreed another public meeting was to be held, according to Long, whereby further discussion would be held on the merits or demerits of the proposition. However, reports that the Commission reached a conclusion limiting the zone to its former boundaries was objected to by Long and others who were present.

The suggestion was later offered that a poll be taken of the property owners in the affected areas as to their feelings in the matter. It was further suggested, the territory be increased to include several blocks to the east, namely from B street to F, and First to Third. As a result of this agreement, the Commission will send questionnaires to all property owners in the near future.

Others called upon for expressions of opinions were Mrs. A. H. Williamson, Dr. Lyle Leach, Carl Hansen, Miss Anna Hall, Dr. Elliott Weier and Mrs. Elizabeth Broemer.

Graphic 8. Decision to make an advisory survey of property owners. (Davis Enterprise, November 4, 1939.)

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION - ADVISORY BALLOT

Certain property owners have proposed that all that area west of B Street within The City of Davis, and all that area within said City bounded on the west by B Street, on the north by Third Street, on the east by F Street, and on the south by First Street, shall be placed in a Fraternity Residence District Zone, in which the following uses are permitted:

Single Family dwellings	Boarding, Lodging and Rooming Houses
Two family dwellings	Institutions of an Educational or Philanthropic Nature
Schools	Private Clubs, Lodges, and Community Centers
Parks and Public Owned Playgrounds	Fraternity Houses
Non-profit Libraries	Private Schools and Colleges
Non-profit Museums	Sorority Houses
Multiple and Group Dwellings	
Club Houses	
Hotels	

For the purpose of guiding the Planning Commission in its deliberations, one of these advisory ballots is being sent to each property owner within the above-described boundaries.

Will you please vote on the following proposition, place this ballot in the enclosed return envelope, and deposit it in the United States Post Office on or before November 20, 1938.

PROPOSITION

Are you in favor of zoning your property, described as Lot ^{8, 81-28} 15-4 10 in Block _____, in the Fraternity Residence Zone? Yes _____ No

[Signature]
(Please sign here)

Graphic 9. W. H. Scott's Advisory Ballot. (Collection D-344, Box 5, UC Davis Department of Special Collections.)

MANY ATTEND HOUSING MEET AT CITY HALL

University Authorities Explain Minimum Requirements for Student Rental

A large attendance was on hand at a meeting last Friday night to hear a general discussion on the student rooming situation for Davis. Dean Knowles Ryerson presided.

The dean called the meeting to order at eight o'clock and told the group the purpose of the occasion. Papers were distributed on which were typed a list of "Minimum Requirements for Rooming Houses" and each in turn was described.

Ryerson explained the reasons leading up to room surveys being made by the University on all of its campuses. Because of the acute situation at Davis, the first survey was made here. He called attention to the State laws and what steps should be taken to learn what they are and what minimum requirements must be met and the most inexpensive way to do so.

Ryerson estimated the population of Davis to be about 1500. He said the student enrollment last year was about 1200, a few hundred short of the city's population and praised the efforts of the community in attempting to house them.

According to present indications, he said, it is expected the registration this coming fall will exceed any other year so far. Already the dormitories are filled and many rooms in town spoken for.

Another matter which the dean considers of first importance is the matter of proper screening of rooms where students reside. Because of the increase of malaria in the state, one of the requirements which must be met, he said, was that of protection against the mosquito.

While undue publicity was given about the rooming situation in Davis, the dean stated it was a fact that bad rooms were the exception instead of the rule.

Dr. John Raffety, of the Yolo County Health Department, was present and discussed the situation from a health standpoint. He explained the reason for requiring a certain number of cubic feet per student was because of the danger of tuberculosis. Already two students were sent home because of the disease.

To prove that the survey did not apply only to Davis, inspectors for the state covered the dormitories on the campus and as a result an item of some \$30,000 will be expended at once to remove objectionable features by the opening of the fall semester.

Also present at the meeting was E. D. Clabaugh, inspector for the Division of Housing and Immigration of the state. Clabaugh prepared a complete report of his findings and with some exceptions, gave the community a high rating.

Others at the meeting were W. S. Mangold, University of California at Berkeley and S. M. Anderson of the county health department. About sixty residents of the community attended and took advantage of the opportunity of asking questions concerning renting rooms to student, and different requirements.

Graphic 10. State Farm Director Ryerson City Hall meeting on student roomers and boarders. (Davis Enterprise, June 16, 1939.)