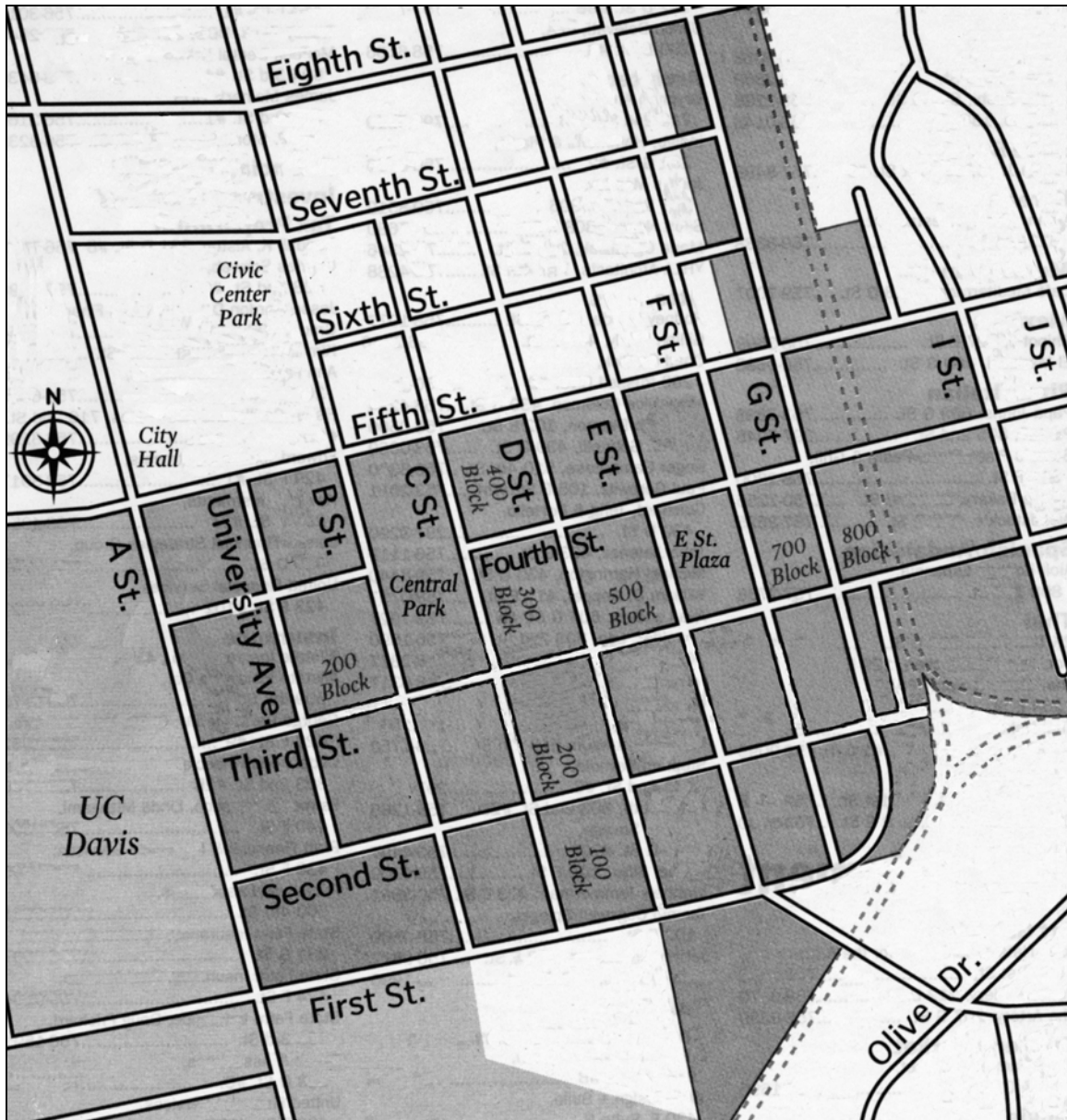


## 2

### **Overview of Six Remarkable Decades of Change From Dingy District to Robust Downtown**

As stated in the Introduction, over the six decades of the 1950s-2000s, Davis, California leaders remade a dingy three block “business district” into a vibrant, forty block downtown. From only a handful of enterprises in 1950, Downtown Davis in the 2000s has some 500 retail, professional and service businesses and more than 70 restaurants and cafes.

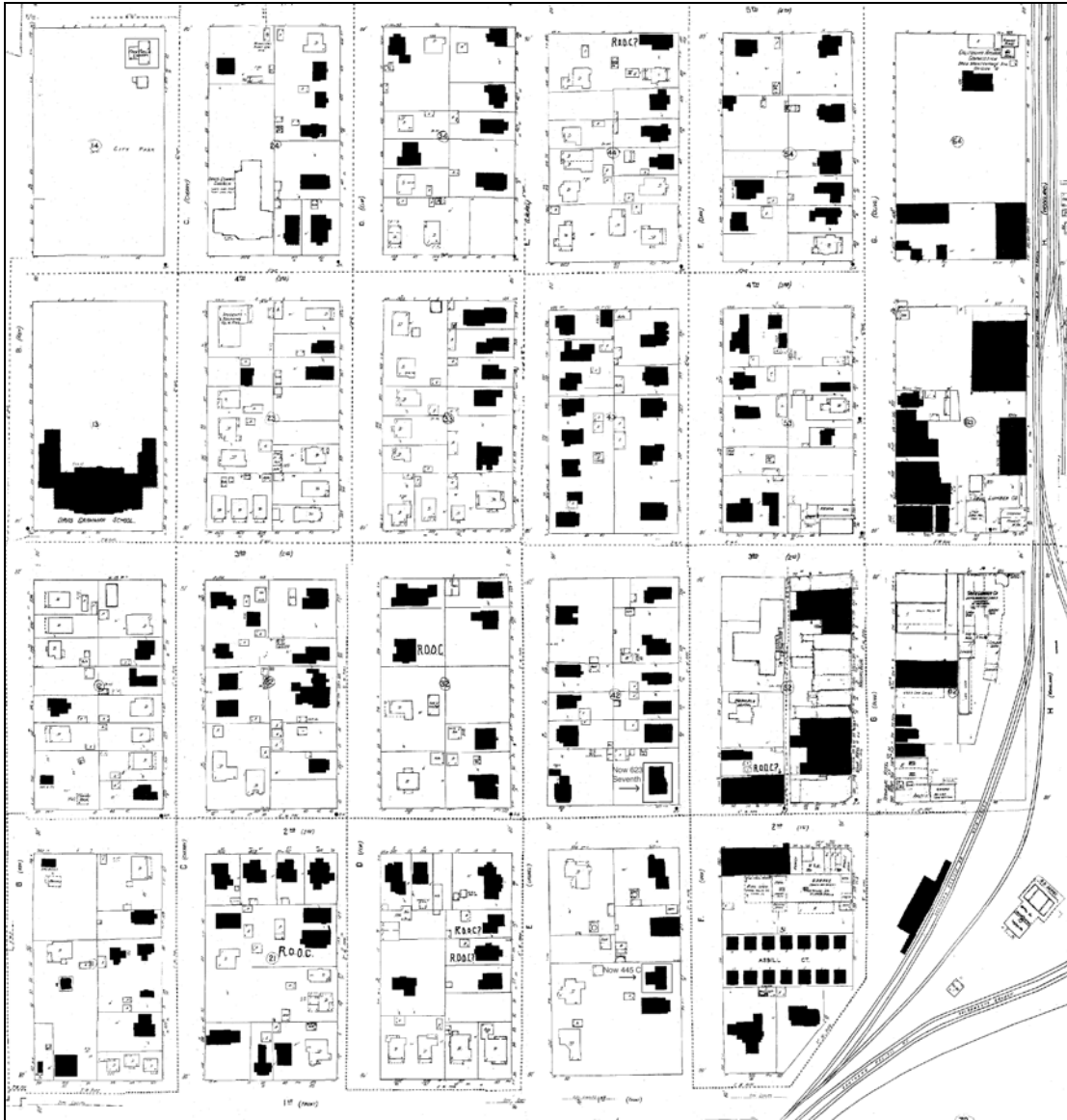
This unit contains maps and a photograph providing an overview introduction to these profound changes. In subsequent units I strive to examine aspects of this transformation face-block by face-block.



**2. 1. 2008 Map of Downtown Davis.** The darker shaded area of this map represents the official Davis Downtown. For the purposes of this account, the key unit of the Downtown is the “face-block,” the space created on a street between two cross streets, as, for example, G Street between Second and Third streets. By my count, the Davis downtown contains 62 such face-blocks. To the degree feasible, I have organized Davis Downtown images in terms of these face-blocks. As seen on the map, blocks are numbered by “hundreds” starting from First and A streets. Using this numbering, the G street face-block between Second and Third streets is, for example, the “G Street 200s.” (Davis Downtown Business Association.)



**2.2. C. 1950 Aerial View of the then “downtown” Davis.** This image looks northwest over the intersection of Second St. (running west-east) and G St. (running north-south) in the near-center foreground. We see the all-important train depot in the lower-right corner. This “Business District” consists of barely three blocks. The town becomes residential west of F St. (next to the west from G) and north of Third St. (running west-east in the upper center). (Larkey Collection.)



**2. 3. Two-thirds of c. 1950 downtown buildings not there in 2000.** In late 1999 and early 2000 John Lofland walked the downtown with the 1946 Sanborn map of that area in hand identifying which 1946 structures were still there and which were not. He found that in the core area of the Downtown (B to G, First to Fifth), some two-thirds of buildings there in 1946 were gone. These are shown above in black. (John Lofland.)



**2.4. 2005 map of the footprints of Downtown buildings.** This City of Davis planning map depicts the same area as the previous map—B to G and First to Fifth. It differs in showing the footprints of buildings in the same area some six decades later. As even the most causal comparison makes clear, there are many fewer buildings that are on average very much larger. (City of Davis Department of Community Development.)