

# DAVIS CITY PLANNING

## 1925-2005

*File 3 of 3, Pages 40-54 of 54*

John Lofland

Published electronically at [www.oldnorthdavishistory.org](http://www.oldnorthdavishistory.org).

Because of its detailed maps, this document is a large digital file.  
In order to make it more up- and download manageable,  
I have broken it into three pdf files labeled File 1, 2, and 3.

JL

**C. OLD NORTH DAVIS**

Support for preserving historic and original neighborhoods that begun in the 1973 Plan continued in the 1987 Plan.

Policy E in the "Historic and Cultural Resources" section of the 1987 Plan mandated effort to:

Maintain a sense of historical continuity by encouraging preservation of cottages remaining within the 1917 boundaries (Davis, 1987:6-7).

Even better (and except for the eastern two blocks), "single-family density" land use for Old North Davis was written into the text of the 1987 General Plan:

*Neighborhoods north of the Core area between Fifth and Eighth streets include many fine examples of modest residential architecture from the first quarter of the century. The single-family density for this area on the General Plan map is intended to preserve the cottage character (p. 6-7, italics in the original).*

For reasons I have not been able to determine, this land use classification for Old North Davis did not make it onto the 1984 zoning map (Map 17, page 37), although we do see it on the October and December, 1987 land use maps (Maps 18 and 19, pages 39 and 42).

In their background, Working Paper #1, Blayney-Dyett struggle with the question of the future of the Original City neighborhoods of Davis. Writing about the future of the University/Rice area, they pose this long term issue about its residential portions:

The long-range planning decision to be made is whether or not it is in the community interest to retain a low-density residential neighborhood that has survived at a location which would be expected to have the highest densities in Davis. Such historical quirks are responsible for low-density areas in similar situations including Telegraph Hill, Georgetown, and Beacon Hill (1987b:51).

In 1987, the "community interest" decision was clearly to retain such areas, including Old North Davis.

(An aside: The persistence of low-density residential use in the University-Rice area was not merely a "historical quirk." Instead, residents of that area worked very hard over many decades to make it happen. For a glimpse of such citizen zeal in the later 1930s, see my "A 1920s-50s Student District," which tells part of the story of how student living groups were pushed out or simply left the University/Rice area [Lofland, 2006].)

(Let me enter a second aside on how the struggle Blayney-Dyett express should not surprise us. This now senior-partner, John Blayney, is the same John Blayney who was the junior partner in Livingston and Blayney, the authors of the Davis Core Area Specific Plan [1961]. Recall that this plan, shown in Map 08.2 [p. 20] called for the virtually complete demolition of Original Davis. Now he was back, writing a plan that was the opposite of the one he had written before!

Curious about such a reversal, I "googled" him and found that in the year 2000 he was living in Sonoma County and referred to in the press as a "retired planner." He was also a prominent spokesperson for a major Sonoma County citizen effort—the Rural Heritage Initiative—to control growth. From afar at least, Mr. Blayney appeared in the end to have seen the light and switched sides.)

**D. AN IRONY OF GROWTH CONTROL**

Oddly and ironically, all the attention to "Allocation Systems" and growth control seemed to have less effect than one might expect. The County of Yolo and the Yolo County cities of Woodland and Winters did not have growth policies like those in Davis. Indeed, Woodland was very open to growth. Yet, over the 1970-85 period, Davis grew faster than these nearby entities. Thus:

**Compounded Annual Growth Rates, 1970-85:**

Davis	3.7 %	
Woodland	3.2 %	
Winters	1.9 %	
Yolo County	1.9 %	(CDDCD, 1985: 5)

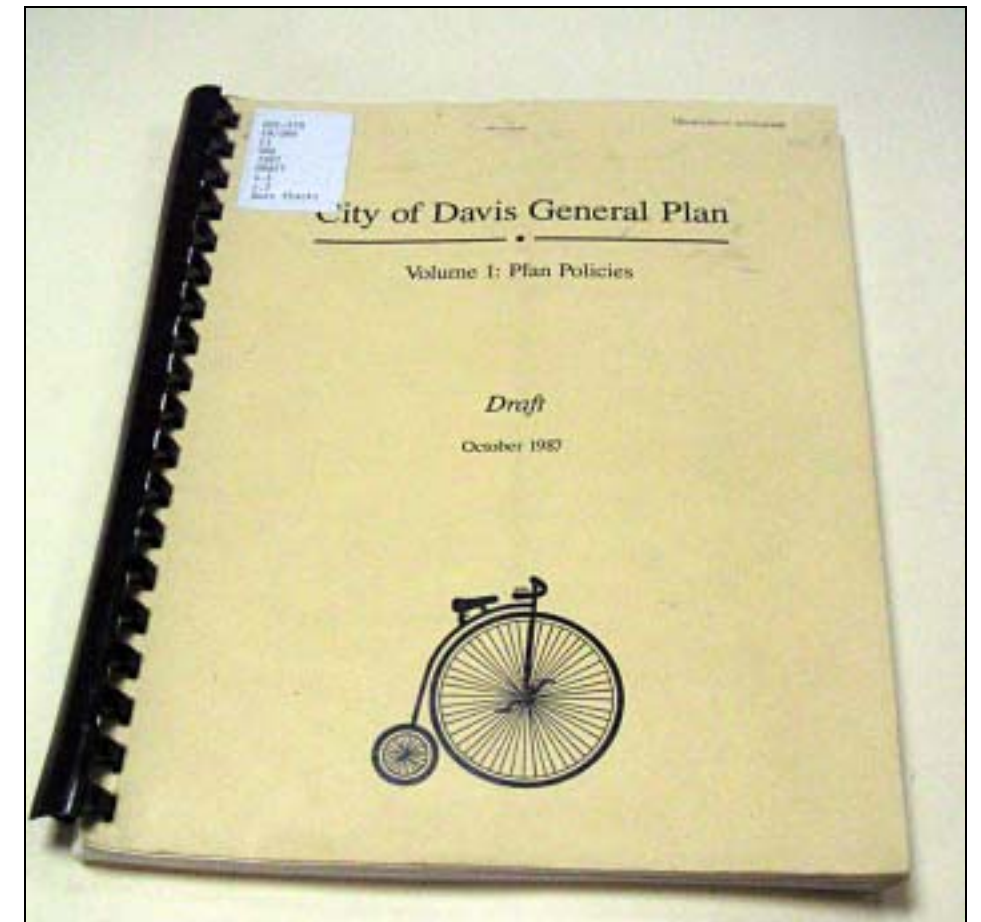
There is of course also the possibility that Davis would have grown even faster than 3.7% had it not had its growth control policies.

**E. MORE HERKY-JERKY: 1987 LAND USE CHANGES**

Maps 18 and 19 on pages 39 and 42 show land use designated in October and then in December 1987.

Old North Davis has the same land use categories on each map, but Old East Davis changed radically from the first to the second map.

On Map 18, it is almost entirely "residential-multifamily." But, two months later, on adopted Map 19, it has become largely "residential single family," with a strip of "retail shopping" added along the railroad tracks. There are other changes as well.



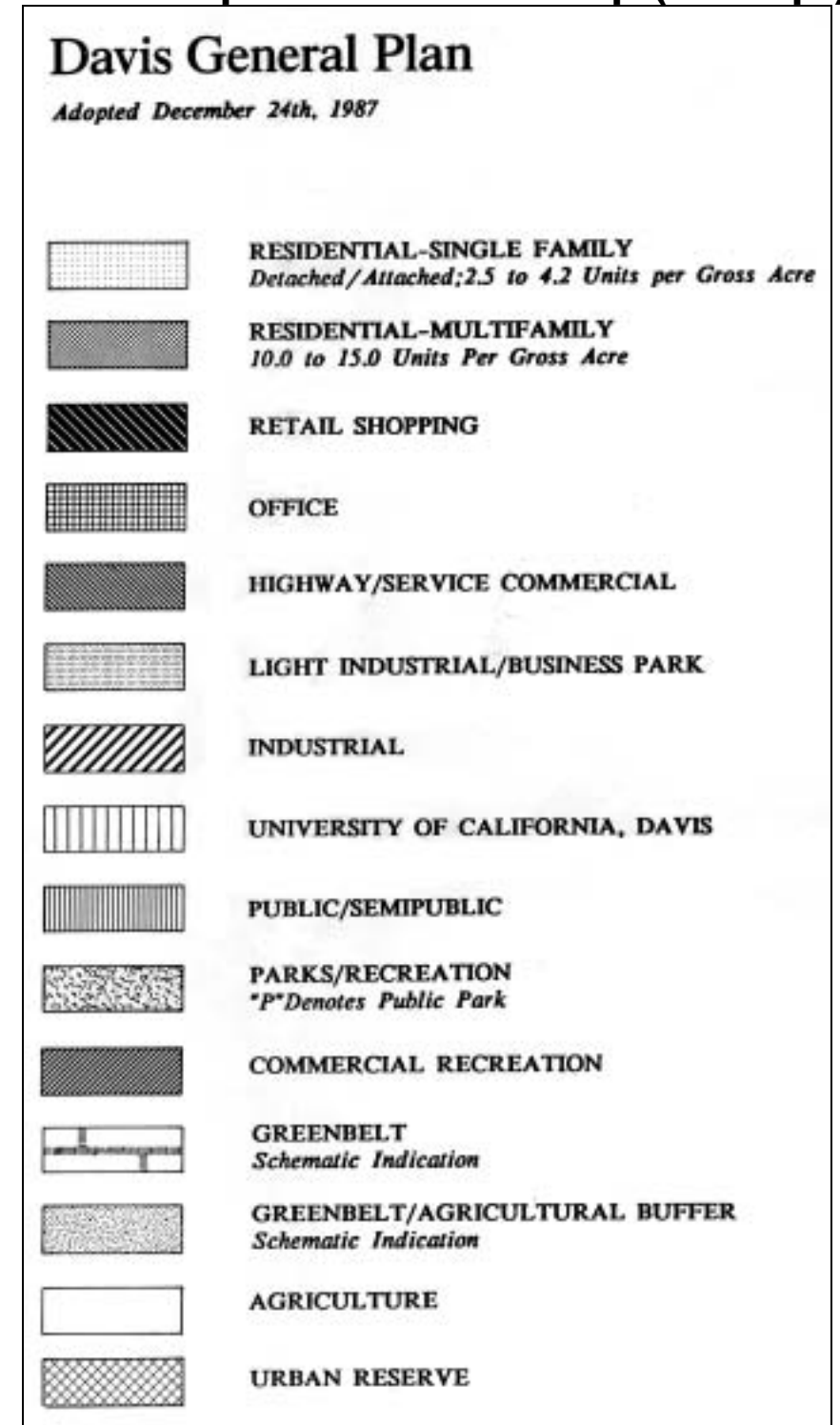
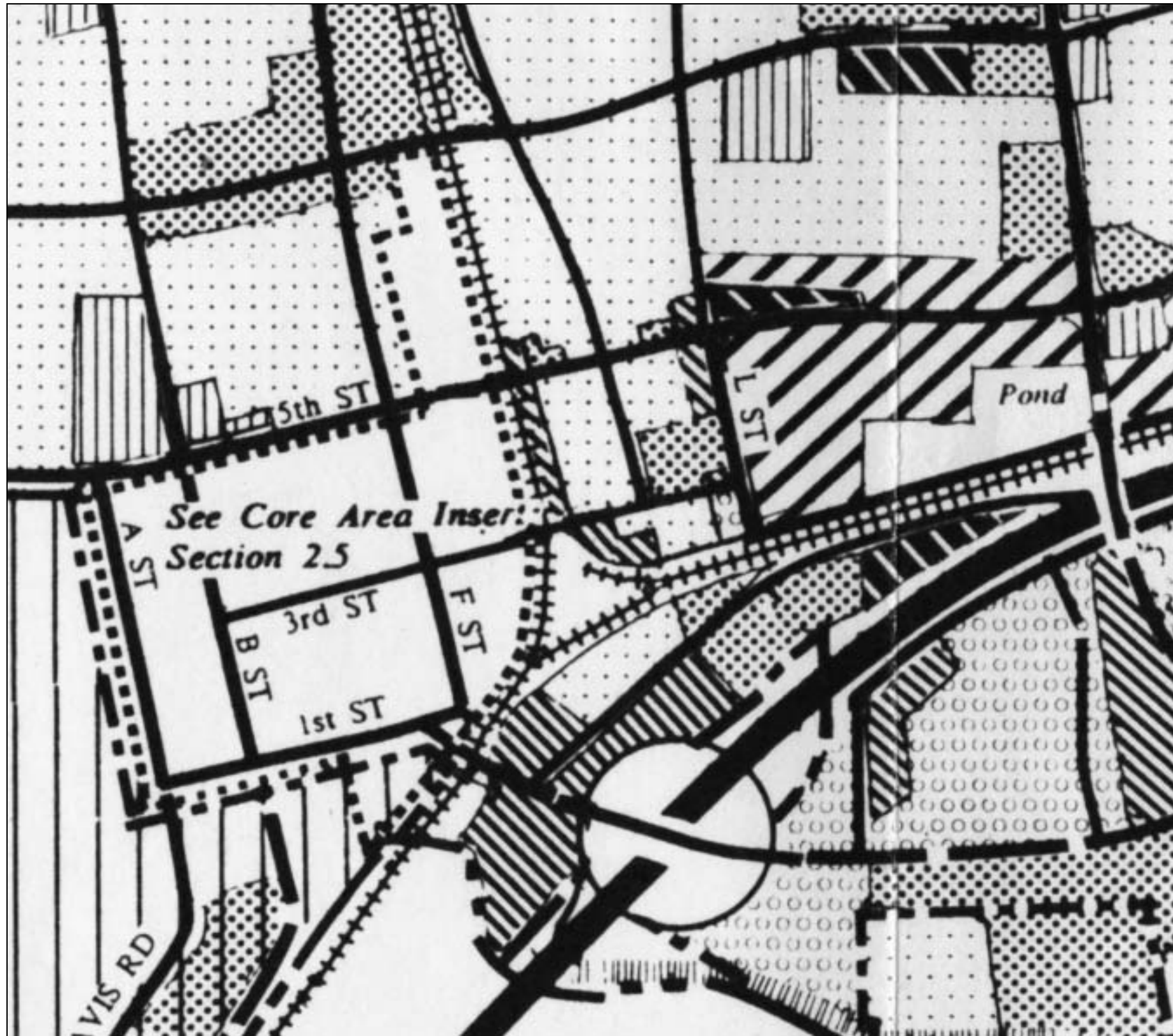
City of Davis General Plan; Volume 1: Plan Policies; letter size paper, comb bound, tan card stock cover; estimated 50 pages (pages not numbered consecutively), 15 fold out maps.

The front cover says this is an October 1987 draft, but this volume is also catalogued by the UC Davis library as the document adopted by the City Council in the early morning hours of December 24, 1987.

Volume 2, not shown here, is titled Technical Supplement and is about 100 pages long (pages not numbered consecutively).

Is this "down zoning?" "Up zoning?" "Sideways zoning?" Whatever we call it, it represented an exercise of political will by Old East Davis residents, who had formed an organization of that very name and undertaken political action to achieve this change (Lofland, 2003:106, 110).

19. December, 1987 Adopted Land Use Map (Excerpt)



[City of Davis Department of Public Works map, "Adopted December 24th, 1987.]



## IV. CONTESTED-SCALE HERKY-JERKY GROWTH, 1990s- —

In my assessment, Davis as a place with a proud sense of itself carving out a new urban future was seriously injured in the double-team assault of Mace Ranch Investors and the Yolo County Board of Supervisors. Progressives and moderates alike lost the illusion that they controlled much more than minor aspects of Davis city planning. In the words of then mayor David Rosenberg, "I think it is fair to say that Mace Ranch changed everything" (quoted in Fitch, 1998:6-1). Davis had, symbolically, to submit. It was a set-back from which, I think, it has yet to recover.

### A. MINDSETS IN CONTENTION

The idea of a Davis that could have a "ultimate size" and someday be "complete" was clearly challenged by developer and county power. But such ideas did not disappear. In the more muted form of "slow growth," bearers of this mindset soldiered on as the "progressive" tendency in Davis public life. Against them, a more growth-sympathetic and developer-friendly tendency called "moderates" took form (Lofland, 2004: chs. 8 and 9).

**1. THE 2001 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE.** In the early 1990s, some moderates began to promote the idea that the 1987 General Plan needed "updating." A formal effort to do so was launched in 1993. It is indicative of contest and struggle between progressives and moderates that it took almost a decade to achieve a revised plan (spring, 1993 to spring, 2001). This was true even though the revision was considered only an "update." (The 2001 Plan reported: The "1987 General Plan was to be used as the base document" [p. 7].)

Many workshops were held, committees created, and reports written. Along the way there was a 346 page "Public Review Draft" in November 1996 and a 346 page "Final Draft" in November, 1999 (Davis, 2001, pp. 8-9) (Both are pictured to the right on this page.). At the time of adoption, it was reported that more than a million dollars in staff time and consultant fees had been spent on it (DE, 5-22-01).

Although guarded, the 2001 Update still contained brave language about ultimate size. Under the heading "Small Town Character" one key "vision statement" read:

- Maintain Davis as a cohesive, compact, university-oriented city surrounded by and containing farmlands, greenbelts, natural habitats and natural resources (p. 41).

However, the concepts of (1) an absolute ultimate population size with a (2) wind-down period as that size was approached disappeared. Instead the word "ultimate" was now used to refer to the situation in the year 2010:

The General Plan Map is a representation of the ultimate geographical size of the city in the year 2010. No expansion of the City beyond those areas shown for urban use on the land use map will be permitted unless authorized through the Measure J process (p. 87).

Notice that the size referred to was now a *geographical area* rather than a population number.

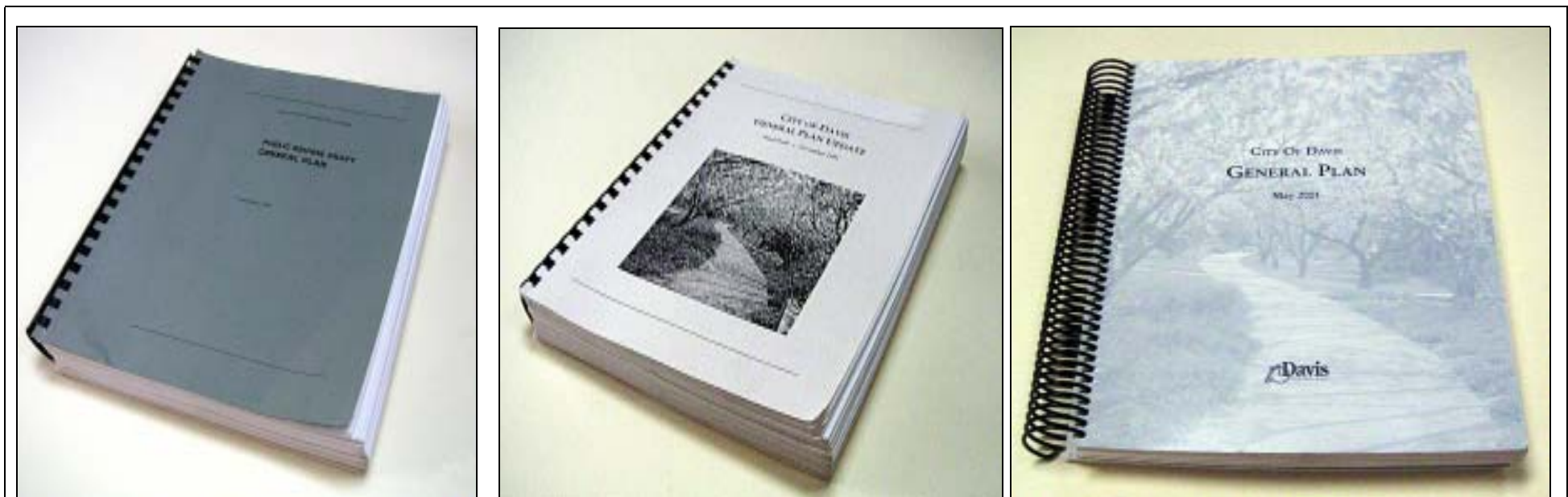
This Update adhered, however, to the 1987 numbers regarding the population size of the city in 2010. The aim was to

keep the population of the City below 64,000 and the number of single-family dwellings below 15,500 in 2010 . . . (Davis, 2001a:88)

At 2010 buildout, there would be 25,531 total residential units (Table 5, p. 98). Total population of the Davis planning area was projected to be 73-75,000 (p. 167).

Ironically, the 2001 Update was hailed as a "no new growth" document (a phrase used by the *Enterprise*, 5-24-01). Provisions contributing to this perception included an increased agricultural "mitigation ratio" for new development, refusal to dedicate land for a high technology research park, changing Covell Center's zoning from urban development to agriculture, and stressing infill and densification as the direction of growth (DE, 5-24-01).

One member of the Council was frequently critical of the direction in which the Update was moving. A prominent leader of the moderates, this member thought the document "does nothing to create a long-term vision for the community" (DE, 5-22-01). In particular, it ignored "what will be a growing demand for housing in Davis" (DE, 5-24-01).



#### The long and tortured road to the 2001 General Plan Update.

**On the left:** *City of Davis General Plan Update, Public Review Draft, November, 1996*; 346 pages plus appendices, comb bound.

**In the middle:** *City of Davis General Plan Update, Final Draft*; November, 1999; 346 pages plus appendices; 17 fold out maps; comb bound.

**On the right:** *City of Davis General Plan, May 2001*; 366 pages plus appendices and cardstock section dividers; numerous fold-out 11 by 17 maps; light blue cardstock cover and section dividers with stylized photographs of bucolic Davis scenes; coil bound.

### 20. 1998 Zoning Districts (Excerpt)



PD	=PLANNED DEVELOPMENT - CONTACT PLANNING DEPT. FOR SPECIFICS	R-T	=RESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONAL
A	=AGRICULTURAL	RC	=INTERIM RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION
R-1	=RESIDENTIAL ONE-FAMILY	C-N	=COMMERCIAL NEIGHBORHOOD COMBINING DISTRICT
R-2	=RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY	C-D	=CORE AREA COMBINING DISTRICT
C-RI	=CORE AREA RESIDENTIAL INFILL	C-C	=CENTRAL COMMERCIAL
R-R	=RESIDENTIAL RESTRICTED	M-U	=MIXED USE
R-2MH	=RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY AND MOBILE HOME	A-C	=AUTO CENTER
R-3	=RESIDENTIAL GARDEN APARTMENTS	C-S	=COMMERCIAL SERVICE
R-HD	=RESIDENTIAL HIGH DENSITY APARTMENTS	I	=INDUSTRIAL
		H-C	=HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL

[City of Davis Department of Public Works, December, 1998.]



**2. THE MEASURE J PROCESS.** The 2001 Update also made reference to an explicit means by which the geographical area of Davis could be enlarged. This was called the "Measure J process" in reference to the ballot letter assigned a citizen referendum vote held on March 7, 2000. Measure J required that housing development annexations to the City that convert agricultural land to housing be approved by a majority of those voting in an election on the matter. Fifty-four percent voted for Measure J. It's provisions became Article 40.41 of the zoning chapter in the Municipal Code.

**3. HERKY-JERKY GROWTH.** Even though not practiced consistently, the 1970s-80s policy of controlled growth called for yearly allocations (authorizations) of given numbers of residential units. This was abandoned after 1990. The practice replacing it was called "developer agreements," which meant responding ad hoc to developer proposals.

This resulted in the up and down swings seen plotted in the Davis planner graph reproduced below on this page. Some came to refer to this "pattern" as "stop-and-go" growth.

**4. GROWTH CAPS REACHED CIRCA 2003.** As noted, the 2001 General Plan update held to the 1987 idea of no more than 64,000 Davis residents and some 25,500 residential units by the year 2010. Like the caps in the previous period, these were reached and passed significantly ahead of schedule.

- A population projection exercise conducted by city planning staff in 2003 used the assumption that the Davis population would be 64,000 in January, 2003 (Emlen & Wolcott, 2003:8). The City's Annual Financial Report (2005:129) gave the 2004 population as 64,259.

- The "Resolution to Implement Annual City Growth Parameter" adopted on September 23, 2003 estimated the City had some 25,000 residential units in January of that year (02-174, Series 2003).

Recall that in the human-scale controlled growth period (Section III, above), reaching the announced "caps" ahead of schedule was a matter of considerable concern. But in and after 2003, progressives and moderates alike called almost no attention to it (although some progressives made unspecific calls to adhere to the General Plan).

**5. THE NEW "HOUSING NEEDS" MINDSET: PORTRAYING GROWTH AS POSITIVE.** Instead of concern over violating the General Plan, in the early 2000s the attention of the people most influential in Davis civic life began to focus on what was termed "unmet housing needs."

This new housing needs "framing"—this new mindset—represented, I think, a significant shift in conceptualizing increases in Davis population. The previous mindset was one of "growth," and its "control," and of numbers of people, as in the phrase "population control."

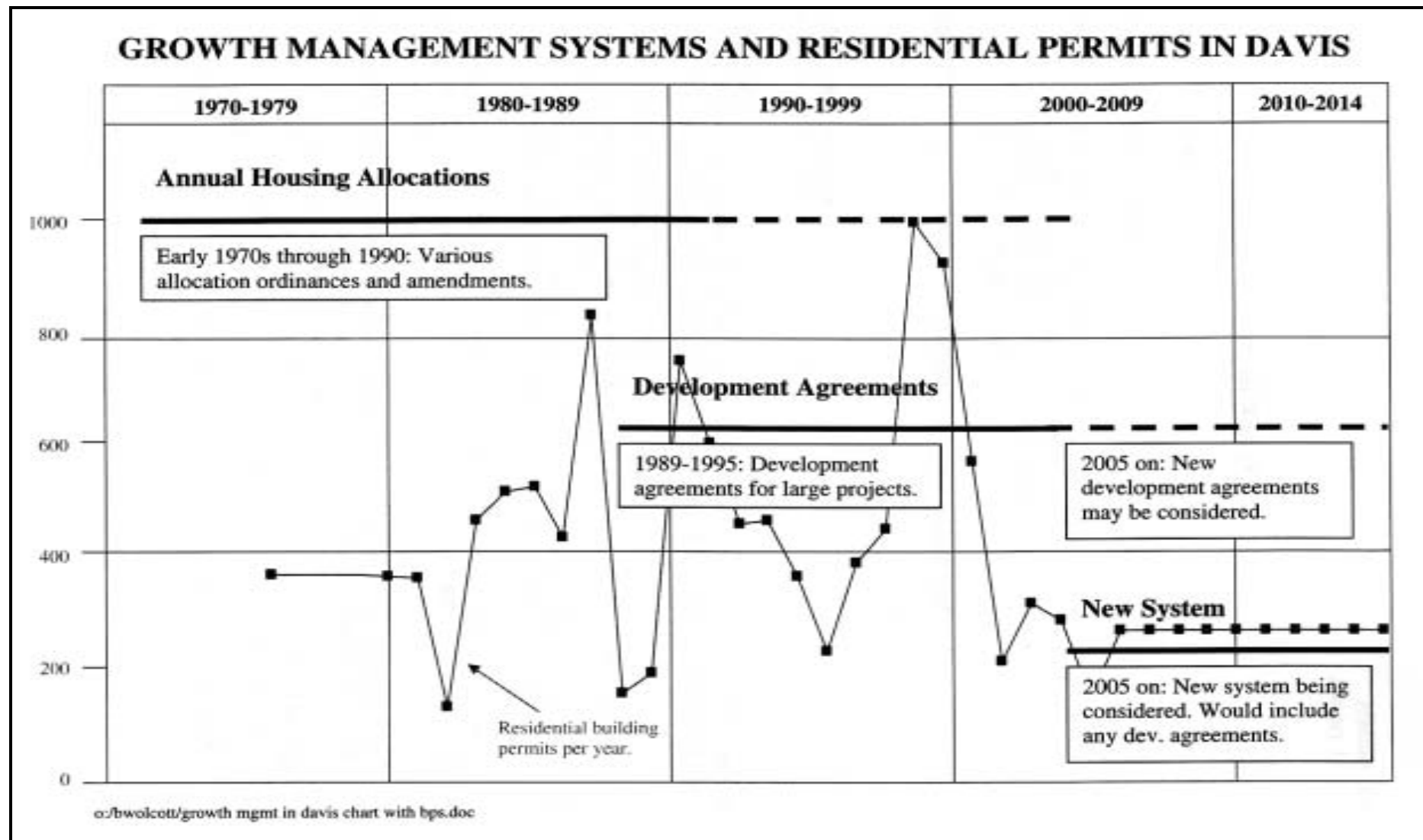
Now, in contrast, the "unit" of increase was not the human being but a physical object: a *housing* unit or "residence." Moreover, one did not conceive such units as something to "control" in the way one controlled population. Instead, housing "units" were something the City "needed," and for which there could be a significant "unmet" need.

By 2005, the housing needs mindset had become central in public discourse and the older "growth control" mindset, while still active, was marginalized. One milestone in this shift was a Bay Area Economics study (2003) contracted by the City Council that performed a complex elaboration of "types" of needs and quantified each of them.

Key terms and phrases in the "housing needs" mindset included:

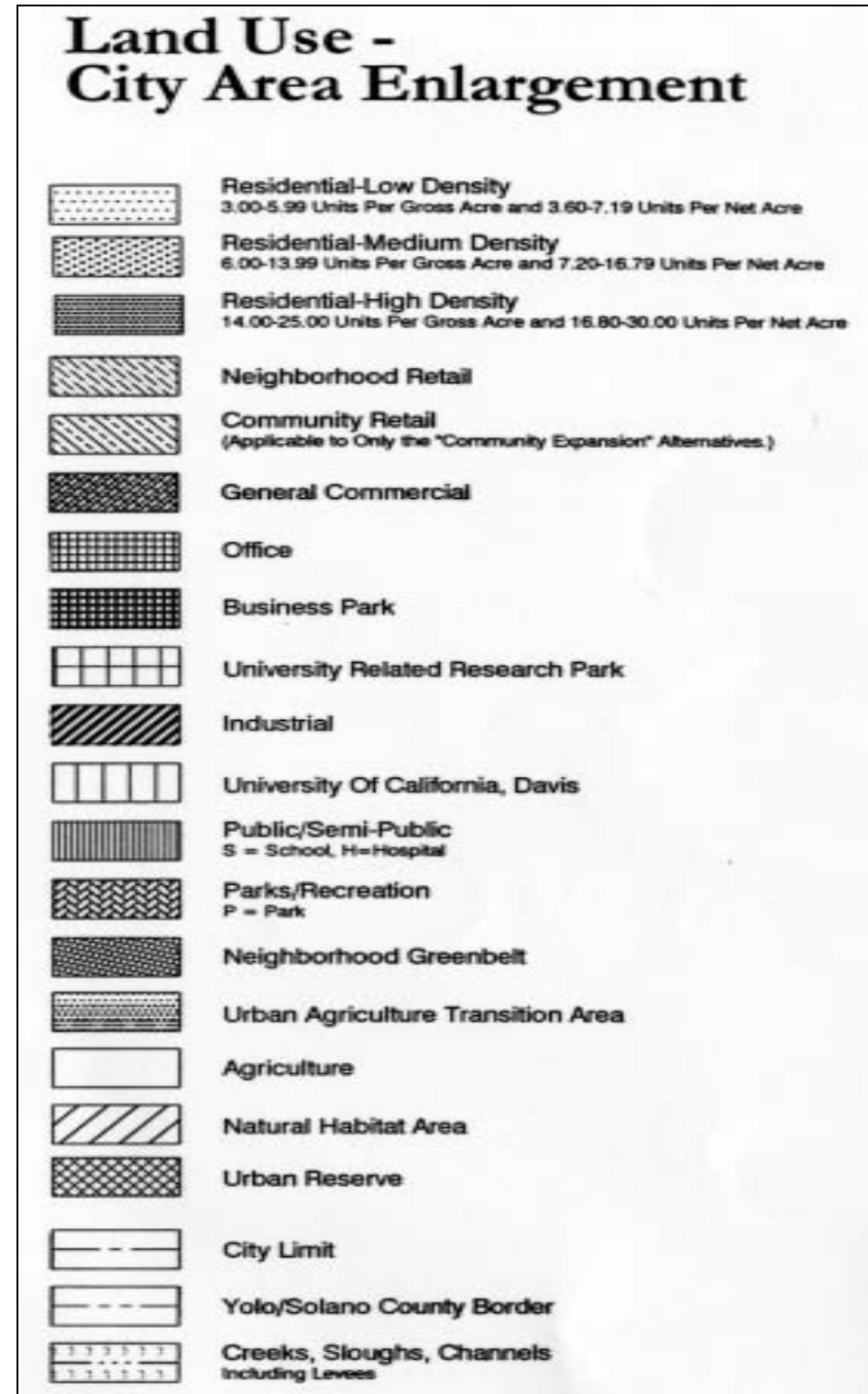
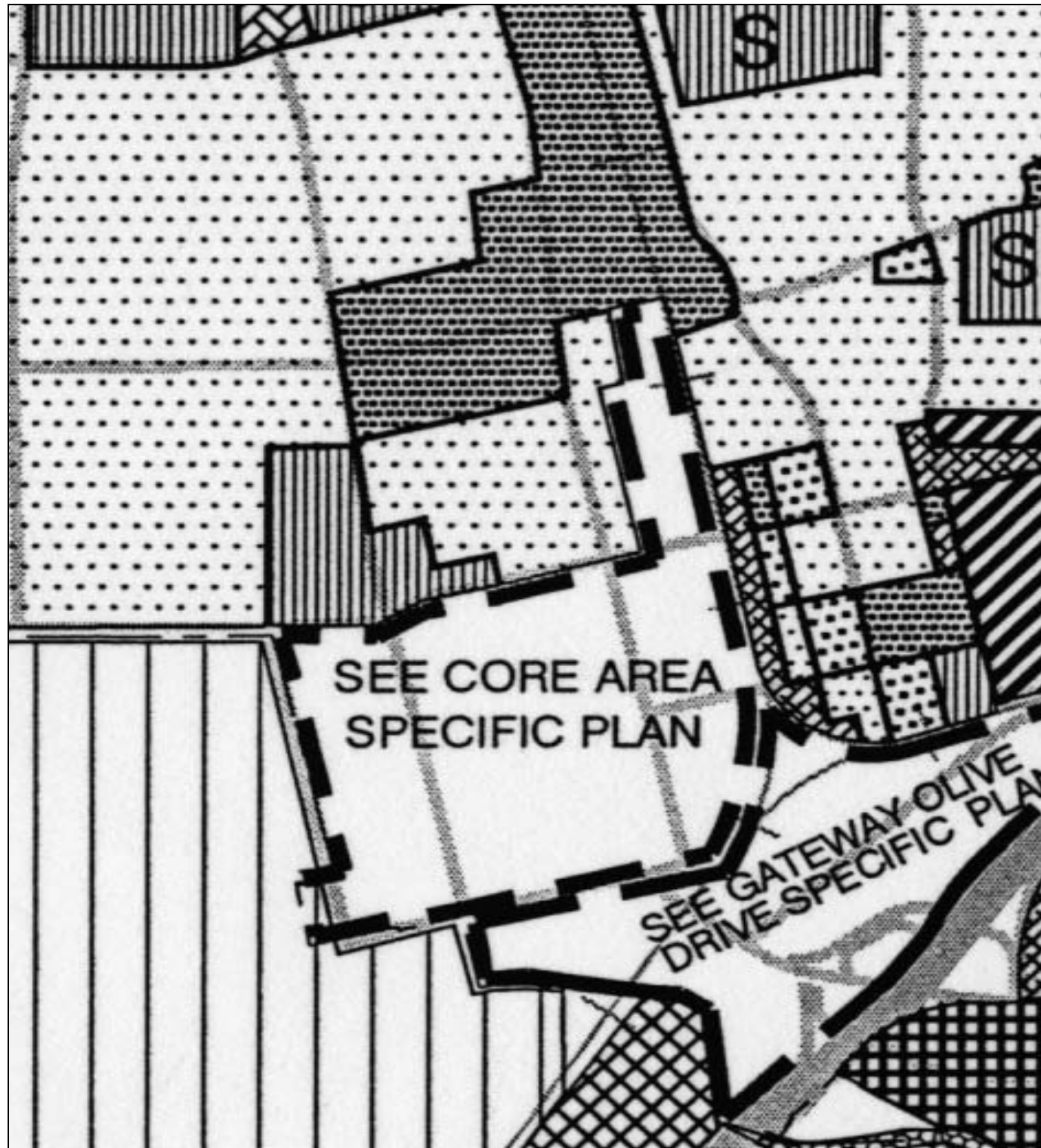
- "overpaying for housing"
- "short fall" [below the level of "need"]
- "unmet housing needs"
- housing unit "growth target"
- "target growth goal" [in numbers of residences]
- [number of approvals] "needed" [to] "achieve" [growth]
- "goals"

This mindset was especially attractive, I think, because it replaced a *negative* with a *positive* image. In the growth control mindset/frame, growth was exactly that, something one had to "control" with "allocations" and "caps." The image was rather that of a stallion chafing at the bit and that might break loose and run away. At the extreme, one even had to bring growth to an end, that is, symbolically, to kill it in the "completion" of Davis.



[Puntillo, Sousa, Emlen and Wolcott, 2005a.]

21. 2001- — Land Use Plan (Excerpt)



[Davis, 2001a:69 (Figure 11b).]

In contrast, the housing needs mindset was resolute, nurturing and expansive. It's sympathetic victims were innocent and beleaguered home seekers who needed shelter. It was heartless not to be compassionate and to bend every effort to fill that "need" and to remedy "overpaying." In such terms, growth was upbeat, a positive call to establish "targets" and to "achieve goals." Who can be against targets, goals and achievement? These are key features of the idea of a proactive, dynamic America.

Growth control, on the other hand, was constricting and bashful and not "with it" in the American quest for improvement through positive social change.

**6. LOOMING-GROWTH.** When I concluded these notes early 2006, the *combined* rate and effects of *all* likely sources of local growth (and proximate pressures for growth) appeared likely to dwarf the per decade increases in each of previous four decades. Thus:

- UC Davis' "West Village," scheduled to break ground in 2006, projected a buildout population of 4,350 residents (and it had abundant proximate land on which further to grow, with few political or other barriers to doing so).
- Woodland's "Spring Lake," just a few miles north of Davis and underway planned to have 17 to 18,000 residents at buildout.
- A few miles to the southwest, Dixon was about to approve a major horse race track named "Dixon Downs" that would employ about 3,400 people. A commercial development with a hotel and shopping complex on the scale of a major mall was next to it (*Sacramento Bee*, A20, 3-18-05).
- Using what Davis city planners called "aggressive" assumptions, Davis could grow, by 2010, 10,300 residents by "infill" (Emlen and Wolcott, 2000).
- Many large tracts of land surrounding Davis were, in 2005, "greenfields" ripe for development. The Measure J process was the major barrier, but it was set to expire in 2010 unless renewed by a citizen vote.

Davis grew by 15, 13, 10 and 14 thousand persons in the respective four decades of the 1960s, 70s, 80s, and 90s (Folder 1, <http://www.davishistorialsociety.org>). This new context of looming growth might make these increases look like a warm up.

On the other hand, the defeat of Covell Village proposal in a 2005 Measure J vote may have signaled a new "stand pat" mood in the electorate.

## B. HISTORICAL RESOURCES ZONING

The mega-scale explosive growth of the 1950s and 1960s accompanied by extensive demolition was not unique to Davis. Although the exact forms differed from place to place, there was something of a national orgy of "scrape off" in the name of "renewal" in the decades following WWII.

The extensive loss of what some regarded as a precious historical heritage prompted lobbying for government action to stem this tide. One upshot was the 1966 landmark National Historic Preservation Act. This law was structured to encourage state-level government action, which was itself structured to in turn provide grant and other historic preservation incentives to local jurisdictions. Davis was a successful applicant for several of these grants that were used to perform key studies of local historical resources. Independent of federal or state help local residents also carried on local history and historical preservation work (Lofland, 2003).

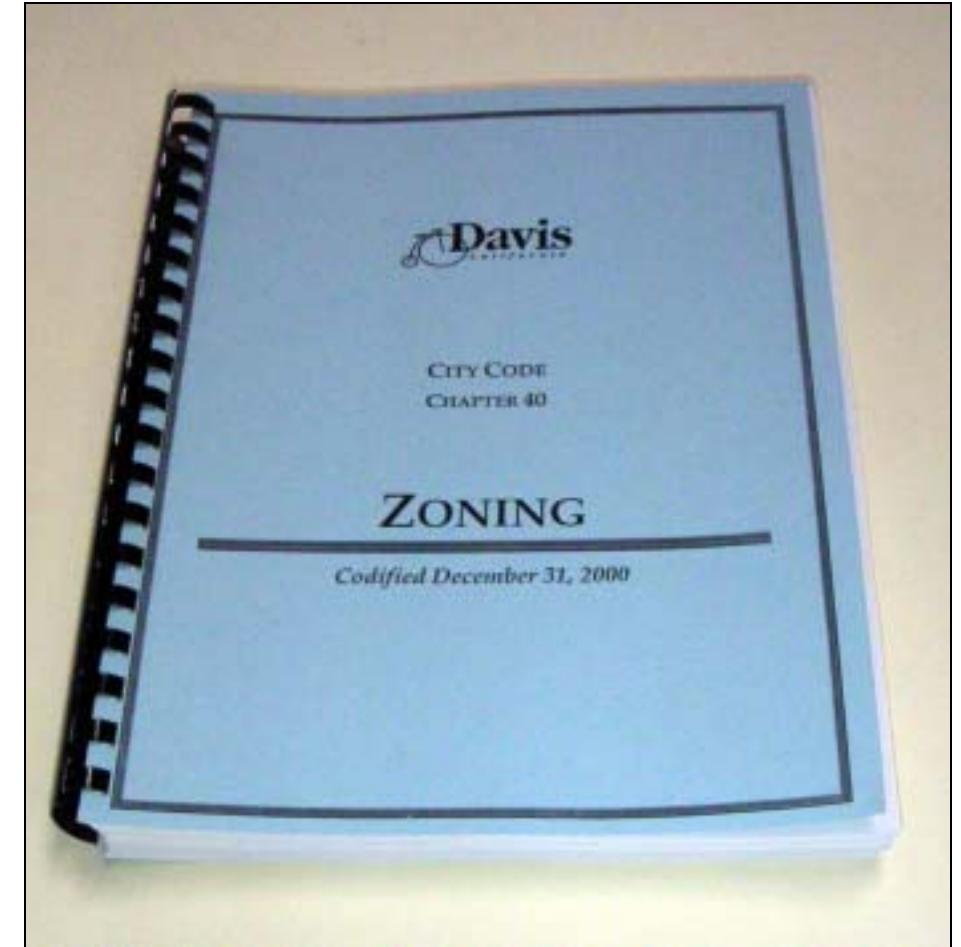
**1. HISTORICAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, 1984.** These efforts came together in Chapter 40, "Zoning," of the Davis Municipal Code. Article 23, titled "Historical Resources Management." Adopted in 1984, it consolidated a previous patchwork of historical preservation ordinances and created a Historical Resources Management Commission (HRMC), among other changes.

Key purposes of historical resources management stated in Article 23 include:

- to enhance the visual character of the city by encouraging new design and construction that complement the city's historical buildings . . .
- to increase the economic benefits of historic preservation to the city . . .
- to identify . . . and resolve conflicts between preservation of historical resources/districts and alternative land uses . . . (Davis, 2004, 40.23.010).

**2. DOWNTOWN AND TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD OVERLAY DISTRICT, 2001.** The Historical Resources Management ordinance had the limitation that it focused only on individual buildings and structures. This created the blindness sometimes phrased as "not seeing the forest because of the trees." The remedy for this blindness—and one widely adopted in cities across America and in Europe—was to create protective zones called "historic" or "conservation" districts.

Davis residents and city staff were slow off the dime on this as compared to other cities, but a lumbering process to create the weak form of protective district—a "conservation district"—did commence in 2000. What was called "the original" or "the 1917" city was put forth as such a district by the HRMC. This area is shown on **Map 22** (page 48), where the cross-hatched area signifies the "overlay district." (Differently drawn, it is also shown in **Map 23** on p. 49.)




*Zoning*; City Code Chapter 40 plus 20 amendments dated 1-17-2000 to 6-1-2004. Number 14, adopted 1-13-2004, is Ordinance 2147, which "Establishes a Residential One and Two Family District (R-2 CD)."



## 22. 2004 Zoning Districts (Excerpt)



PD	=PLANNED DEVELOPMENT – CONTACT PLANNING DEPT. FOR SPECIFICS	R-T	=RESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONAL
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R-3	=RESIDENTIAL GARDEN APARTMENTS	C-S	=COMMERCIAL SERVICE
R-HD	=RESIDENTIAL HIGH DENSITY APARTMENTS	I	=INDUSTRIAL
		C-M-U	=COMMERCIAL MIXED USE
			=OVERLAY DISTRICT – DOWNTOWN AND TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS DESIGN GUIDELINES



This area became the "Downtown and Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District"— Article 13A of the zoning code—by City Council action on August 1, 2001. These were among the purposes of the district, and its accompanying "Design Guidelines:"

- [to] conserve the traditional neighborhood character, fabric and setting while guiding future development, reuse, and reinvestment . . . .
- [to] plan for new commercial and residential and infill construction that is compatible and complementary to the character of existing neighborhoods within the district . . . .
- [to] foster reinvestment and economic development in the core that is consistent with historic conservation . . . . (Davis, 2004, 40.13A.010).

This zone was unlike some others in that it was accompanied by a book of "guidelines" intended to "clarify the community's expectations for the type and quality of development within the district." The phrase just quoted is from the purposes section Article 13A (40.13A.010). This made the book of guidelines itself a form of law.

The Guidelines book is pictured immediately to the right on this page. One hundred and thirty-three pages long with many drawings, photographs and other illustrations, it was developed in a series of resident workshops conducted by planning consultant Bruce Race over the year 2000 (Lofland, 2003:108-09).

**3. R-2 CD ZONING DISTRICT, 2004.** As we have seen, planners routinely distinguish between "land use" and "zoning" maps and their respective descriptions. Although the term "land use" is not used, we see that same distinction in the difference between the "overlay district" just described and a subsequent rezoning of much of that district.

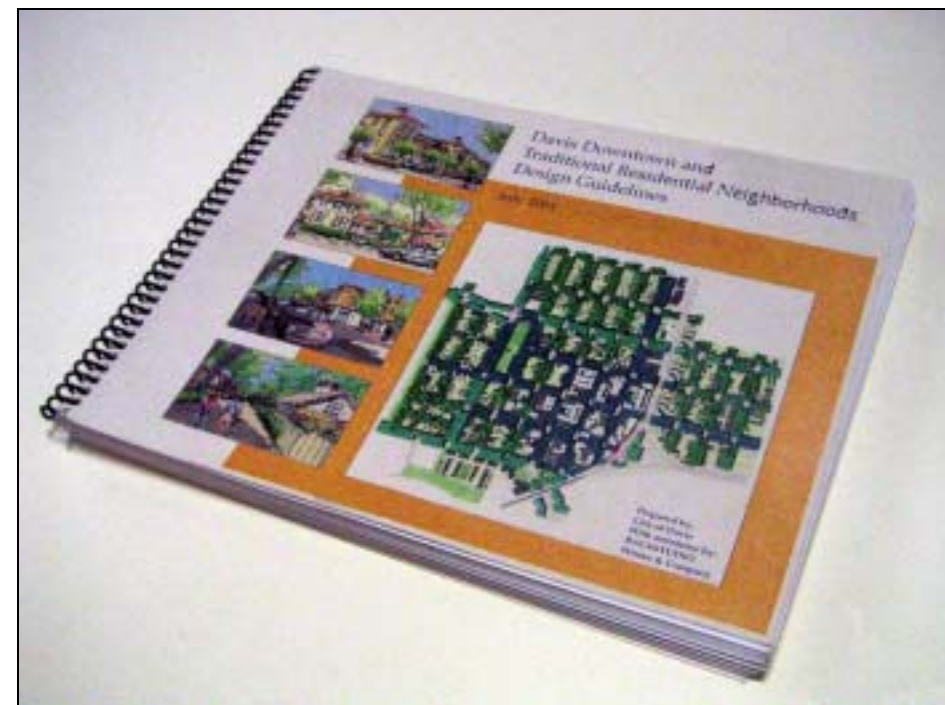
Rezoning became necessary because the Overlay District created land use and construction guidelines that were incompatible with the then existing zoning. Among other things, the Overlay District now allowed setbacks and other features that contradicted the old zoning. Because the law requires that land use and zoning be consistent, the zoning had to be changed. This was undertaken as the "Residential One and Two Family Conservation (R2-CD) District" (Article 40.04A of Chapter 40).

Overarching this technical necessity, the purpose section of this new zoning tells us that the intent is:

to stabilize and protect the historic residential characteristics of the Old North Davis and the Old East Davis residential neighborhoods within the city's adopted Conservation Overlay Zoning district, and to promote and encourage a suitable environment for residential living. The R-2 CD district is intended for residences and community services appurtenant thereto (Davis, 2004:40.04A.010).

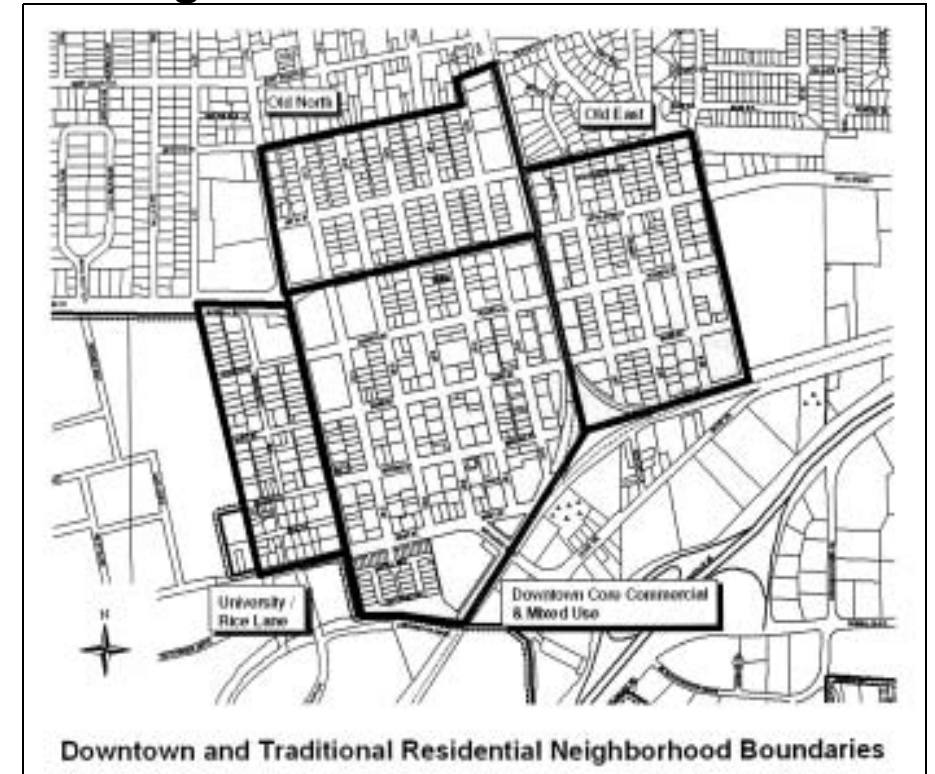
A map accompanying this Article 13A, reproduced to the right on this page as **Map 23**, shows that the R-2 CD Zoning District applies to only two of the four named areas within the "original/1917" area of Davis. The areas called University/Rice and the Downtown have had other and very complex and conflict-filled histories of land use designations and zoning. Apparently for such reasons, both were left out of this R-2 CD action.

At the time the Council adopted this new zoning, some Old North and Old East Davis residents desired that the zoning also be changed from R-2 to R-1. Rather than delay an already drawn out process, R-2 was retained. However, the Council also voted to direct staff to work with Old North and Old East Davis residents on the text of a possible rezone to R-1 CD. At the time of publication, this process had not yet begun.



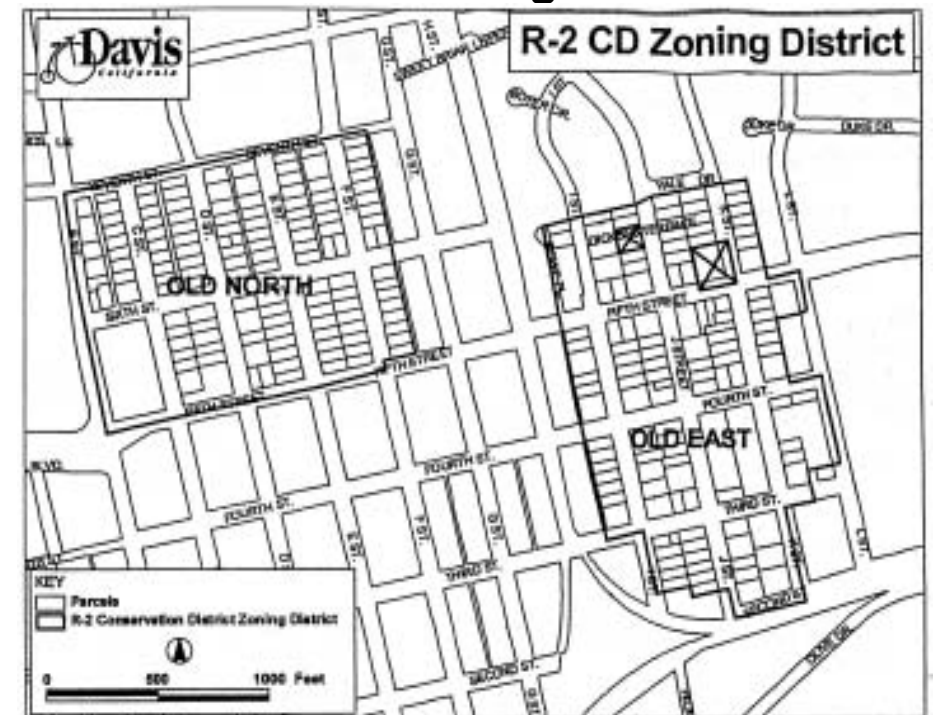
Davis Downtown and Traditional Neighborhoods Design Guidelines, 2001, letter-size pages printed landscape, 133 pages.

## 23. Downtown and Traditional Neighborhood Boundaries



Davis, 2000b:4]

## 24. 2004 R-2 CD Zoning District



[Davis, 2000. Ordinance 2147, page 8.]



**Proposed & Adopted  
Land Use and Zoning  
Designations  
for All or Part of  
Old North Davis,  
1925-2005**

Number	Year	Land Use Designation or Zoning Proposal or Action (of the entire area or most of it if not indicated otherwise)	Page/s were Reported in These Notes
1	1925	"CLASS I --SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS ONLY"	4, 6
2	1927	[1925 zoning continues with four lots changed to:] "CLASS II ALL KINDS OF DWELLINGS, FLATS, APARTMENTS AND HOTELS"	8, 9
3	1938	"ONE FAMILY DWELLINGS" [plus one lot zoned] "RESIDENCE ON REAR"	10
4	1939	"ONE & TWO FAMILY RESIDENCE ZONE"	12
5	1953	"R-3 TWO FAMILY RESIDENCE DISTRICT ZONE"	14
6	1961	[Area north of Sixth Street:] "High Density Residential" [Area south of Sixth Street:] "Central Business District"	18
7	1964	[Area north of Sixth Street:] "Residential High [density]" [Area south of Sixth Street:] "Commercial Central"	18
8	1965	"R-2 RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY"	23
9	1971	[North of Sixth:] "Residential High Density" [South of Sixth:] "Central Commercial"	25
10		[Most northern portions:] "Residential one and two family" [Southern portion:] "Residential Garden Apartment"	27
11	1973	"Residential"	29
12	1976	"R-1-5 RESIDENTIAL ONE FAMILY (5,000 SQ. FT. LOT)"	33
13	1976	"Core Residential Infill District"	35
14	1984	"R 2 RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY"	37
15	1987	"RESIDENTIAL -- SINGLE FAMILY <i>Detached/Attached: 4.2 Units per Gross Acre</i> "	39-42
16	1998	"R-2 [=] RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY"	43
17	2001	"Residential-Low Density 3.00-5.99 Units Per Gross Acre and 3.60-7.19 Units Per Net Acre"	46
18	2004	"R-2 [=] RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY"	48
19	2004	"R2 CD RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY CONSERVATION DISTRICT"	49

## CONCLUSIONS

Let me conclude with generalizations we might make about the foregoing story and lessons we might learn from it.

1. Mike Fitch titles his history of Davis *Growing Pains*. He was on the mark and he does not tell the half of it. The explosive growth of Davis has been traumatic and wrenching.

The major forms of these traumatic wrenchings have been the changes of policy direction described in the four main sections of these notes: human-scale slow growth, mega-scale explosive growth, human-scale controlled growth, contested-scale herky-jerky growth.

Moreover, there is some suggestion that the greatest growth and traumatic wrenchings are yet to come.

2. For the most part, I have treated this story of lurching from mindset to mindset as the context of the main conclusion with which I began these notes (and that I restate just below). Someday, though, someone might usefully tell this contextual story in blow-by-blow detail. For, it is a truly wondrous epic of locals coping with overwhelming forces, of power-at-play, and of failed visions. Even more remarkable, many of the participants seemed not to have realized the grand struggles in which they were engaged.

3. My opening page conclusion was, of course, the declaration that for some and perhaps many places in Davis the land use and zoning read on a map at a given time is unlikely to be the same one found there at a later time.

I have tried to document this story regarding Old North Davis. A few other areas have also been mentioned, including the north side of Russell Boulevard, University/Rice, and Old East Davis (not to mention the Downtown itself).

Focusing more closely on Old North Davis, I have gone over the maps reproduced in these notes and assembled that area's land use and zoning designations. By my count, there have been a dozen and half or so of them.

These are brought together in the chart on page 50. Looking down that list, we find long periods where the area was considered "single family" or its equivalent "R-1." There were also periods where complete demolition was on the agenda.

We might say, then, that any zoning change we might consider now or in the future is difficult to call "up zoning" or "down zoning," or whatever. The area has been, as the phrase goes, "all over the map."

In and after 2004, the zoning was "R-2 CD." Any change from that to, say, "R-1 CD" would perhaps most accurately be termed "restored zoning."

4. In looking at the chart on p. 50 and knowing a little history of Old North Davis, I am surprised that the area survived at all, and especially as intact as we found it in the early years of the twenty-first century. Among other things, I think its survival is a testament to the tenacity and commitment of many area residents--*past and present*--who refused and still refuse to give up. Indeed, their ranks are growing.

5. Last, I want to enter a tentative conclusion or so about city planners and city plans. Planners come in two forms, consultant "guns for hire" (who have had a heavy hand in planning Davis) and city employees. You will recall the names of the more prominent hired guns--Charles H. Cheney, Lawrence Livingston, and John Blayney. Although I have not named them, those employed by the City are no less important.

The conclusions I entertain about planners and planning are taken from Lawrence Livingston. You will recall we met him in section II as the architect of "mega-scale explosive growth" and a Le Corbusier high-rise downtown, a vision that, fortunately, was, for the most part, not executed because of the "revolution of 1972."

Before writing this book, I thought of Mr. Livingston as the quintessential "bad guy" planner for what he foisted on Davis in his 1961 plan. But I recently "googled" him and discovered an essay he published in 1980 titled "Confessions of a Planner." His startling reflections have made me revise my view of him.

In 1980, Livingston was in his early sixties and was reflecting on several decades of planning experience. Among a great many other projects, he had important roles in designing BART, in reconstructing San Francisco's Market Street, and in planning the Yerba Buena Center. In the 1970s, he became famous in planner/growth circles for calculating "Palo Alto open-space preservation was financially, as well as environmentally, advantageous" (Livingston, 1980:2).

His essay takes the form of reviewing his role in the projects just listed and others, detailing the serious mistakes he thought he had made and the harm he had done in each of them. It is a remarkable display of second-thoughts, candor, and disillusionment (a word he uses several times).

One main element of his disillusionment involves the unavoidable fact, in his view, that every plan creates both winners and losers, that there are always "a substantial number of innocent victims." There are no "win-win" plans.

In itself, though, this fact is not for him a problem. Yes, there are always innocent victims when city plans are carried out. Instead, the problem is that planners are not very good at assessing who exactly will benefit or be hurt and the amount and degree of help and harm.

*More important*, even if these two matters can be assessed, how can we tell if the help and harm inflicted are *worth* it? For example, one might be able to foretell that a redevelopment project will revitalize an area. "But deciding whether the results are warranted in the light of the human suffering and the financial cost involved is far more difficult."

He concludes that

30 years of seeing human values ignored, individuals treated unfairly, and public funds misspent have convinced me that planners must be held accountable for the consequences of their proposals. Planners must seek and find an accurate way to gauge the gains and losses that will stem from their proposals and identify unmistakably who will reap the gains and who will suffer the losses (Livingston, 1980:3).

He ends his essay with a declaration on how we should regard city plans and city planners. It is a declaration that is also apt in expressing a moral lesson I think we should learn about planning in Davis:

A voter or an elected official who is presented with such an accounting [of gains and losses, described in the quote above] then can accept or reject the planner's proposal with confidence. Until such an analytic system becomes available, plans made by planners should be treated with skepticism, ranging, as is appropriate in each case, from caution to distrust.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I obtained the great bulk of the original materials drawn on here in the Government Documents section, the Map Collection, or the Special Collections of the UC Davis Shields Library. Davis is, indeed, fortunate to have such repositories for its history. I am indebted to the special assistance of Linda Kennedy on government documents, Kathleen Stroud on maps, and John Skarstad on Davis history documents of diverse sorts.

A number of important maps are housed in the Davis Department of Public Works, where Gary Francisco, Steve Knopf and Heidi Mikelic were very helpful in locating and copying items..

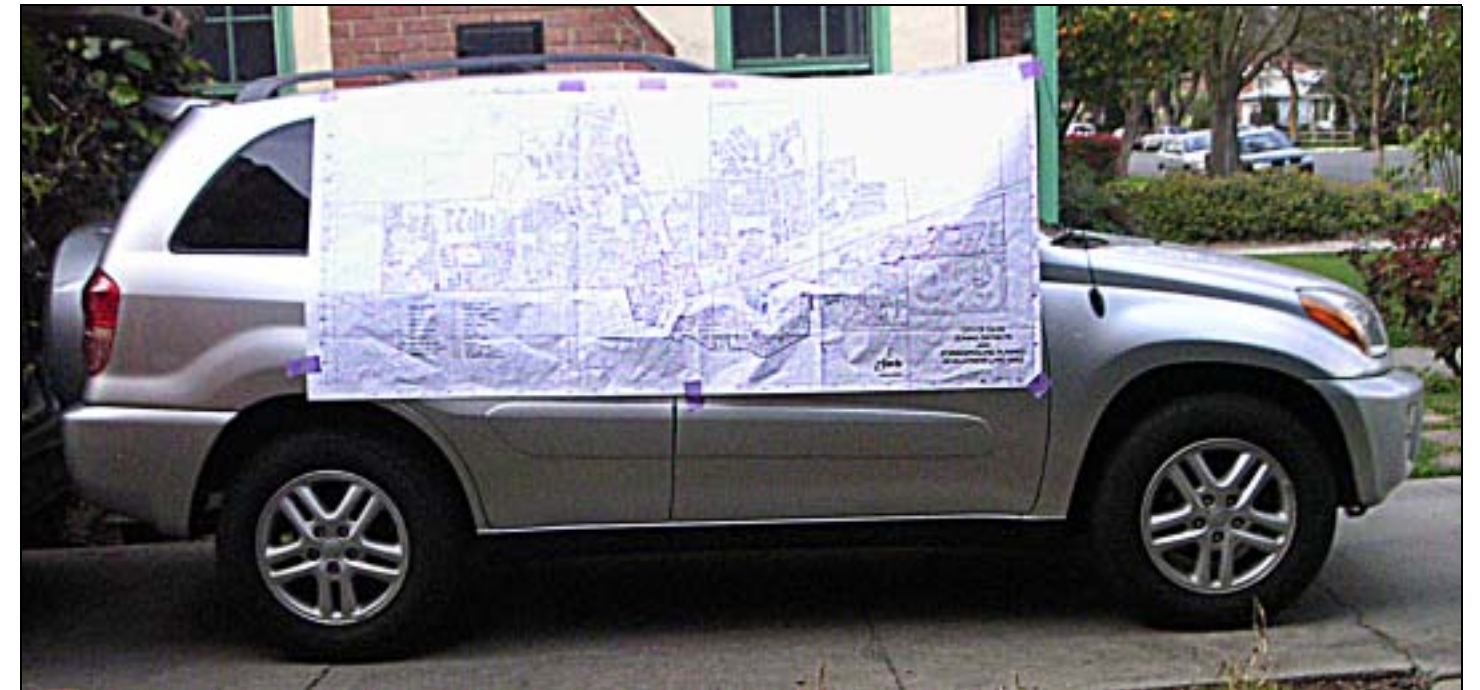
I am uncomfortably aware that an account of eighty-years of land use and zoning is among the duller stories that a human can craft. Therefore, I am more than ordinarily appreciative that a number of people did actually read this document in draft and made suggestions that have improved it a good deal.

Bruce Race wrote me a memo that helped me better understand the planning history context into which to place many of the Davis events. I am sorry that my patience and resources have not allowed to expand this account to include more of that context.

Jim Becket, Blake Gumprecht, Jon Li, Lyn Lofland, and Valerie Vann made many detailed suggestions I have adopted. Many, many thanks.

In March of 2005, I asked the City of Davis Community Development Department (aka city planning) to review a draft for its historical, technical and interpretative accuracy. It agreed to do so. But I have heard nothing further. On the theory that "silence is consent" I hope this means that the Community Development Department agrees with the account I give.

**JL**  
Old North Davis  
Davis, California  
September, 2006



**Almost the size of a small SUV.** In August, 2004, I asked the City of Davis Department of Public Works for a copy of the then current Davis zoning map. What they printed for me was more than six feet wide and some three feet tall. To help provide a sense of its size, I mounted it on the side of a small SUV and photographed the ensemble.

Map 22 on page 48 is an excerpt from the above map.

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**Planning Commission - Agendas and Minutes**

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**Function/Purpose:** The Planning Commission was established in the early 1960s\* in accordance with City Code. The commission is the city planning agency authorized by state statutes. As such, the commission reviews and makes recommendations relative to all land use decisions including but not limited to the General Plan and Specific Plan amendments, variances, conditional use permits, planned developments, tentative maps, rezoning and annexations. Some Planning Commission determinations are advisory to the City Council, while others are binding unless appealed.

Excerpt from the City of Davis web site page describing its Planning Commission (September, 2006). Although a planning commission may have been "established in the early 1960s," the first Davis Planning Commission was created on February 16, 1925 (p. 5, above).