

DAVIS CITY PLANNING 1925-2005

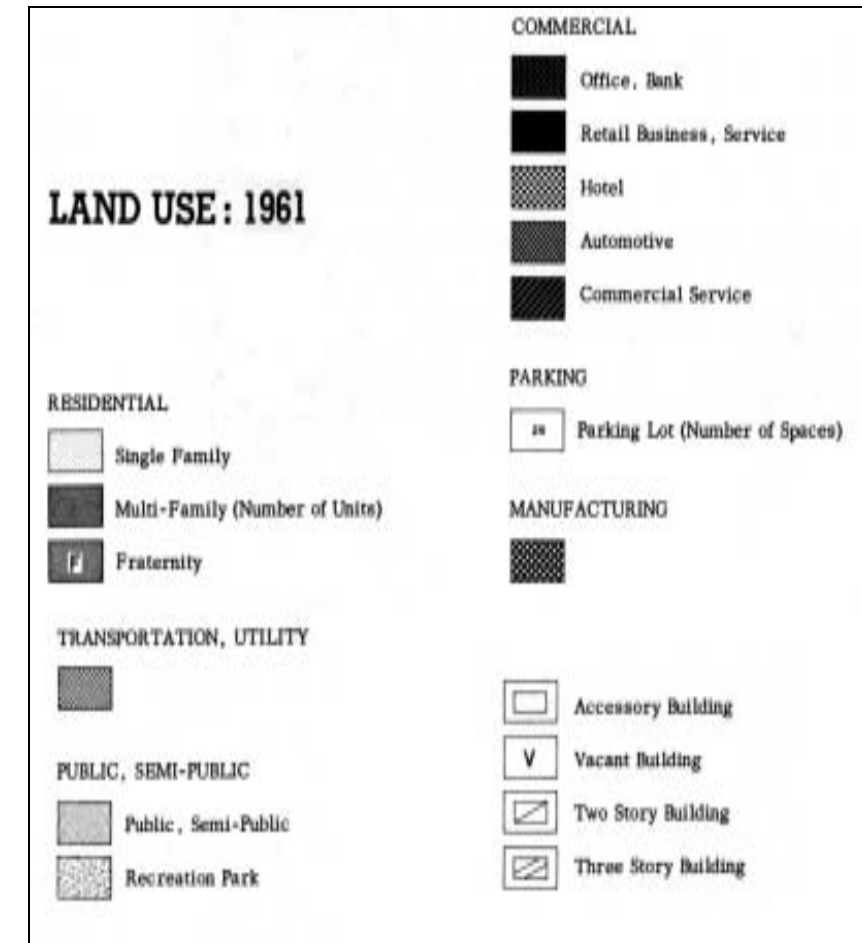
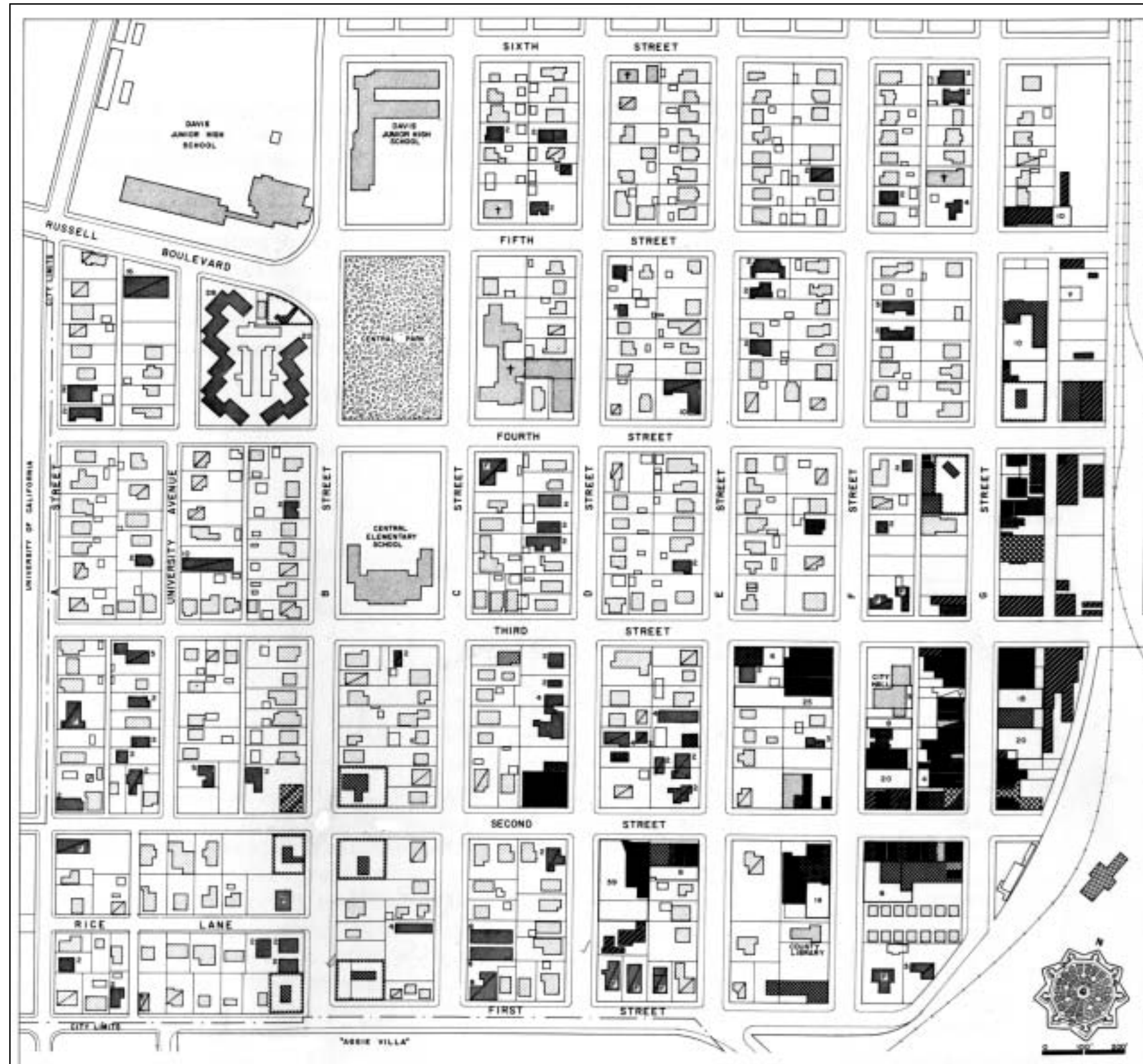
File 2 of 3, Pages 21-39 of 54

John Lofland

Published electronically at 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

09. 1961 Actual Land Use



[Livingston and Balyney, 1961:4.]

2. James Scott has observed that a high modernist city plan "completely supplants its predecessor" city (1998:104). Le Corbusier's plan for a new central Paris, for example, contained almost none of its then-existing buildings, which may help explain why it was never adopted. In high modernist plans, this sweeping away eschews "urban history, traditions, or aesthetic tastes" of the place where the new city is to be built. As an approach broader than urban design, high modernism as a philosophy is a "rejection of the past" and a "desire to make a completely fresh start" (Scott, 1998:115).

3. High modernist cityscape visions are (a) vertical (as in high rise buildings), (b) feature grand and empty open spaces, and (c) seek to convey an order of geometrical simplicity and Cartesian pure form. In these terms, it is instructive to compare the blocks between A and B streets next to the campus as L&B envisioned them for 1985 (Map 08.2) with the actual footprints seen in 1961, as shown in Map 09. The latter is a hodge-podge of a great many and diverse buildings, but the former is an orderly and airy array of a simple set of large structures.

4. Especially in Le Corbusier plans, there are separate zones for workplaces, residences, shopping, and entertainment. In addition, pedestrians and vehicles are strictly segregated in an aim to achieve "the death of the street" (Scott, 1998:109). L&B's plan moved in this direction by proposing residential segregation, a Third Street parade from which cars would be banned, and multi-lane quasi-highways through the downtown.

4. PHASED DEVELOPMENT. L&B also proposed a scheme for phased implementation of the plan. Map 08.2 shows the boundaries for completion by 1965 and 1970, with the entire area (re)constructed by 1985.

Even though planning to rebuild the entire area, they counseled against the immediate rezoning of "stable residential areas" to commercial "until there is a shortage of business sites" (p. 21). To do otherwise would "result in an unhealthy mixture of stores and homes for many years. Future commercial areas now zoned for single-family residences and duplexes should not be rezoned to permit apartments because this would hamper retail and office development later" (p. 22).

Therefore, even though the southern half of Old North Davis was on the chopping block, so to speak, its execution by a zoning change was to be postponed until the land was needed.

Even so, knowing that demolition was on its way could hardly make property owners in the southern half of Old North Davis sanguine about the future of their properties as residences. Instead, the effect could well have been to create a speculative or "hold and wait" mindset.

D. AN ASIDE ON "BLIGHT"

L&B opined that redevelopment was hindered by the city's small lots held by many owners and the consequent difficulty of assembling large parcels on which to construct big buildings. This was made even more of a problem, they said, because "there is no blight as defined by state and federal redevelopment laws" (p. 33). Therefore, outside redevelopment funds were not available and condemnation could not be undertaken. Even though the Davis downtown was "drab" and "uninviting," it was not a slum (unlike the abundant blight construed to exist in the much more affluent Davis of recent years).

E. THE 1965 ZONING ORDINANCE

The L&B *Davis Core Area Plan* provided the backdrop for the revamped and expanded *Zoning Ordinance* of 1965 (and shown in the photograph to the right on this page). Indeed, this 1965 version for the first time reads much like the one still in effect in 2005 and is in this sense Davis' first "modern" zoning document.

One interesting comparative feature of these various zoning iterations is the section in which terms are defined. Aside from changes in nomenclature, there is the matter of the sheer number of terms the authors think need definition.

The first zoning ordinance, of 1926, defined 40 terms.

The one for 1953 defined 57 terms.

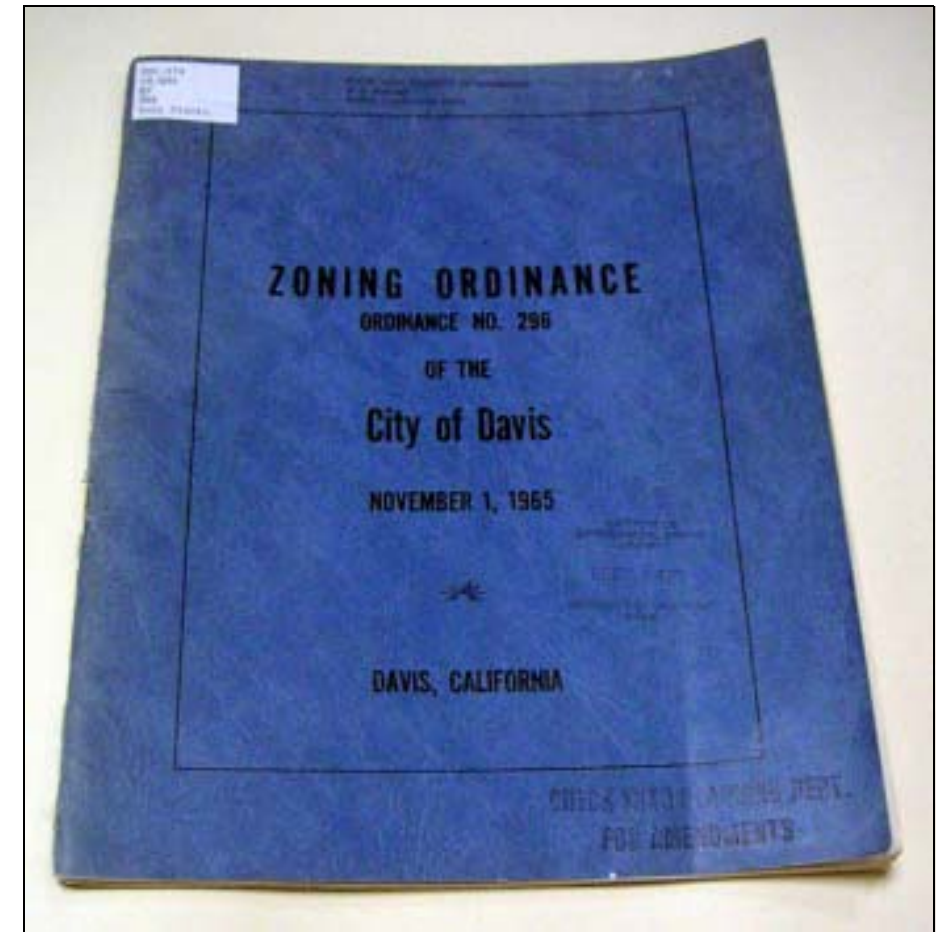
In 1965, 122 terms were defined.

The codified zone of 2000 defined 172 terms, suggesting growth and increased complexity, but also a certain leveling out.

Map 10 with its legend on facing page 26 shows that there were now 18 zoning categories, a considerable elaboration from the 11 of 1953.

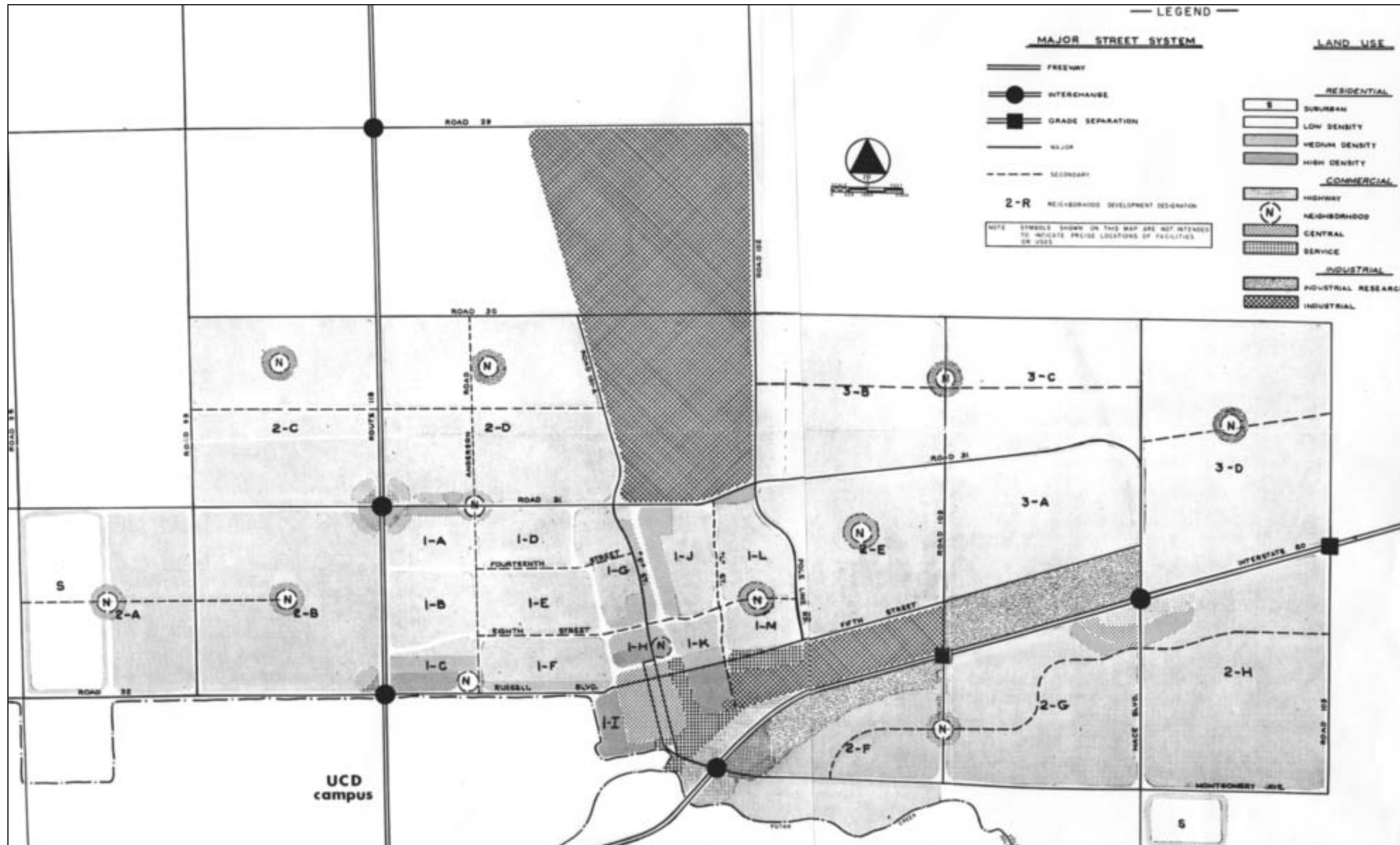
Reflecting the influence of L&B, portions of the Original City have been zoned for higher density, especially in the University/Rice and Old East areas. Old North Davis has become "residential one and two family," which is a presumably a "way-station" zoning on the road to later rezoning for the purpose of demolition.

It is noteworthy that the north side of Russell between Miller and Campus Way escaped the higher density zoning envisioned in several earlier land use plans.



1965 Davis Zoning Ordinance; letter size paper printed triple column; 36 pages plus six pages of 1966 amendments; bright blue cover.

11. 1971 Land Use Map



F. THE 1969 GENERAL PLAN

Recall that the 1958 General Plan projected a relatively modest population of between 30 to 35 thousand people by 1980. L&B's vision in the *Davis Core Area Plan* and new UC Davis growth projections prompted radical upward revisions in the later 1960s.

The General Plan revision of 1969 opened with the declaration that a population of 75,000 was expected in 1985 and of 90,000 by 1990.

Moreover, a longer-term "holding capacity" of 110,000 was envisioned. This was no idle or casual number. "Plate 3 A Holding Capacity" in the 1969 plan (seen to the right on this page) showed Davis divided into thirteen planning areas with target populations assigned to each. The 13 numbers given on Plate 3A total to 105,995.

The plan itself provided detailed information on projected land uses, densities, number of families, schools, shopping centers, and the like in each of these areas.

Map 11 on page 28 provides a more refined and zoning-like specification of current and projected land use. It is of note that the scheme of areas designations—a number followed by a letter—that continued in use was the one Yolo County introduced in 1958 (**Map 07**, p. 16).

The area coded "1-H" on **Map 11** is of key interest.

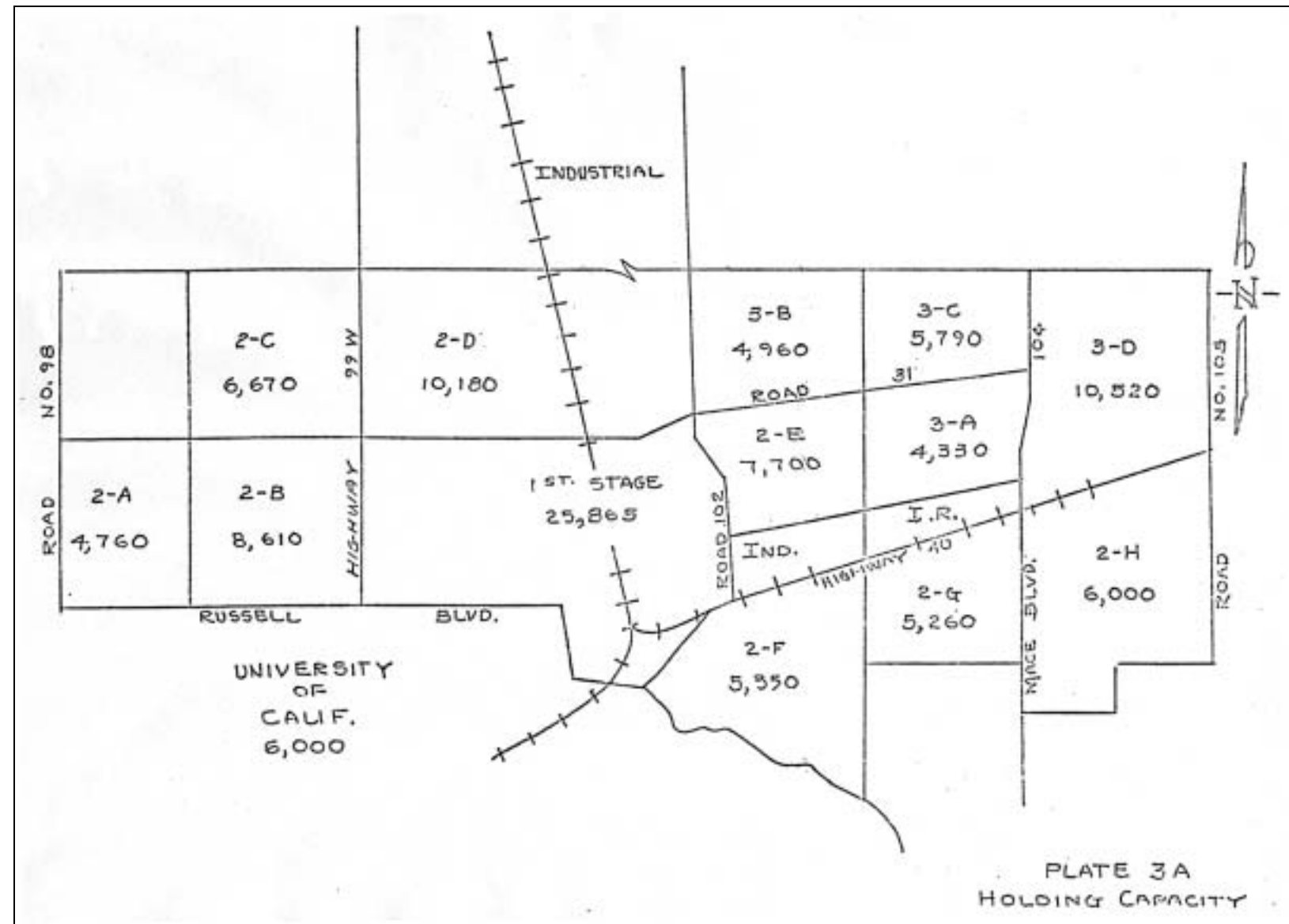
The land uses shown for 1-H rips apart the area making up Old North Davis. Old North Davis **south** of Sixth Street is consolidated with the "Central Business District" and designated "Central Commercial."

The part of Old North Davis **north** of Sixth Street is designated High Density between Sixth and Seventh. (Ironically, the area between Seventh and Eighth is zoned less dense—medium [as seen on **Map 11** on p. 28]). Currently, of course, that area is zoned high density.)

In the Housing Element section of this General Plan, we are told that in area 1-H "there will continue to be replacement of older single family homes . . ." (p. 3). And in area 1-I, "apartments and commercial buildings will continue to replace single family structures" (p. 3).

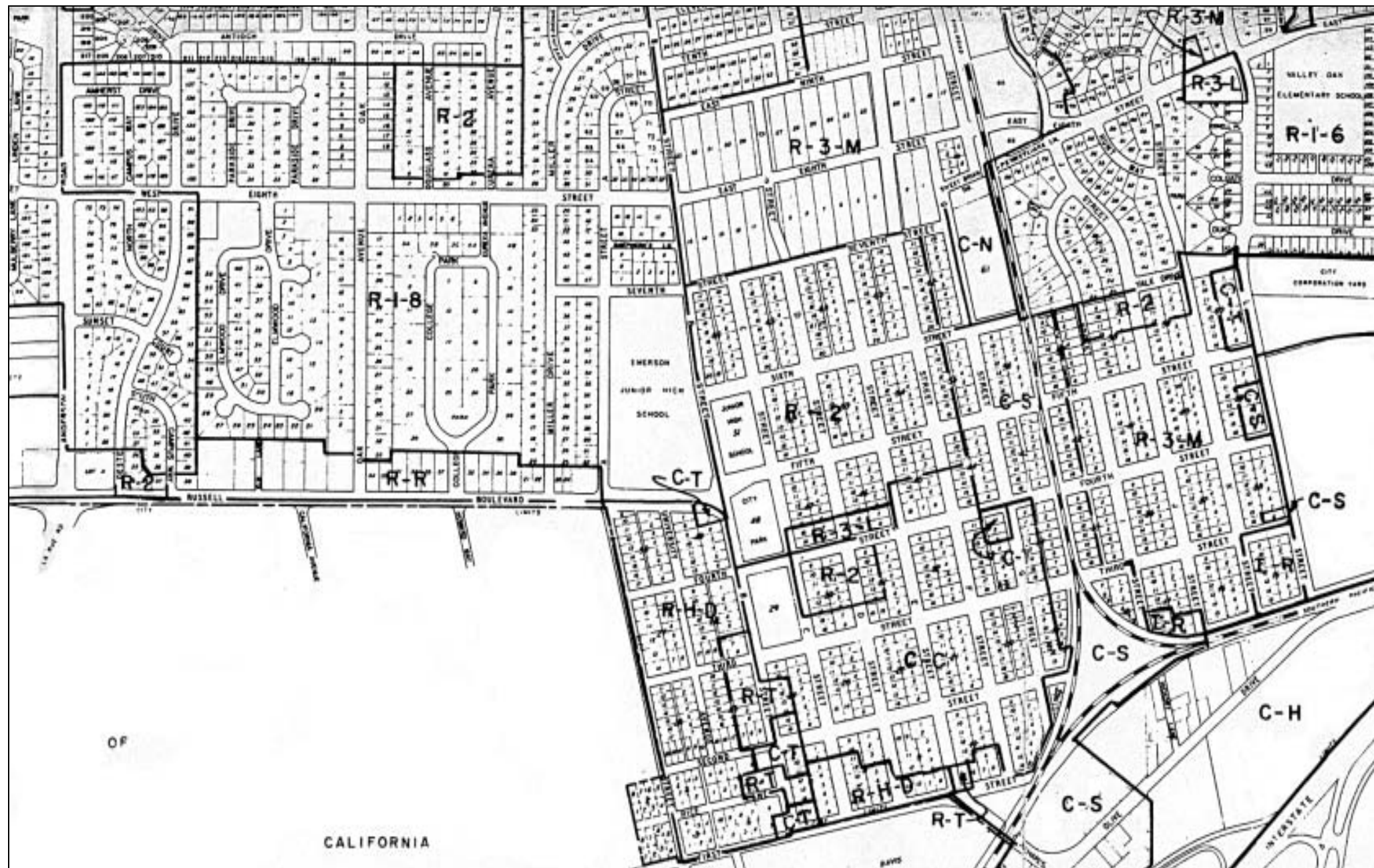
Standing back and looking at the 1969 plan more broadly, this was an ambitious effort to build a quite dense Davis that placed large numbers of students and others in "apartment districts to the west and north" of the Core Area. (Notice that the north side Russell has returned to higher densities.)

Ironically, this plan envisioned much higher population densities than those in recent conceptions of Davis "infill" and densification.



1969 Davis General Plan, "Plate 3 A. Holding Capacity" (Davis, 1969:13)

12. 1971 Zoning Map (Excerpt)



- LEGEND -

A	AGRICULTURAL
R-E	RESIDENTIAL ESTATE
R-1-6	RESIDENTIAL ONE FAMILY (6,000 SQ. FT. LOT)
R-1-8	RESIDENTIAL ONE FAMILY (8,400 SQ. FT. LOT)
R-1-15	RESIDENTIAL ONE FAMILY (15,000 SQ. FT. LOT)
R-2	RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY
R-3-L	RESIDENTIAL GARDEN APARTMENTS
R-3-M	RESIDENTIAL GARDEN APARTMENTS
R-3-MH	RESIDENTIAL HIGH DENSITY APARTMENTS
R-T	RESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONAL
P-A	PROFESSIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
C-N	COMMERCIAL NEIGHBORHOOD
C-C	CENTRAL COMMERCIAL
C-T	COMMERCIAL THOROUGHFARE
C-S	COMMERCIAL SERVICE
C-H	COMMERCIAL HIGHWAY
I-R	INDUSTRIAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESEARCH
I	INDUSTRIAL
S	INTERIM STUDY
P-D	PLANNED DEVELOPMENT
R-2-MH	RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY AND MOBILE HOME
R-R	RESIDENTIAL RESTRICTED

G. 1971 ZONING

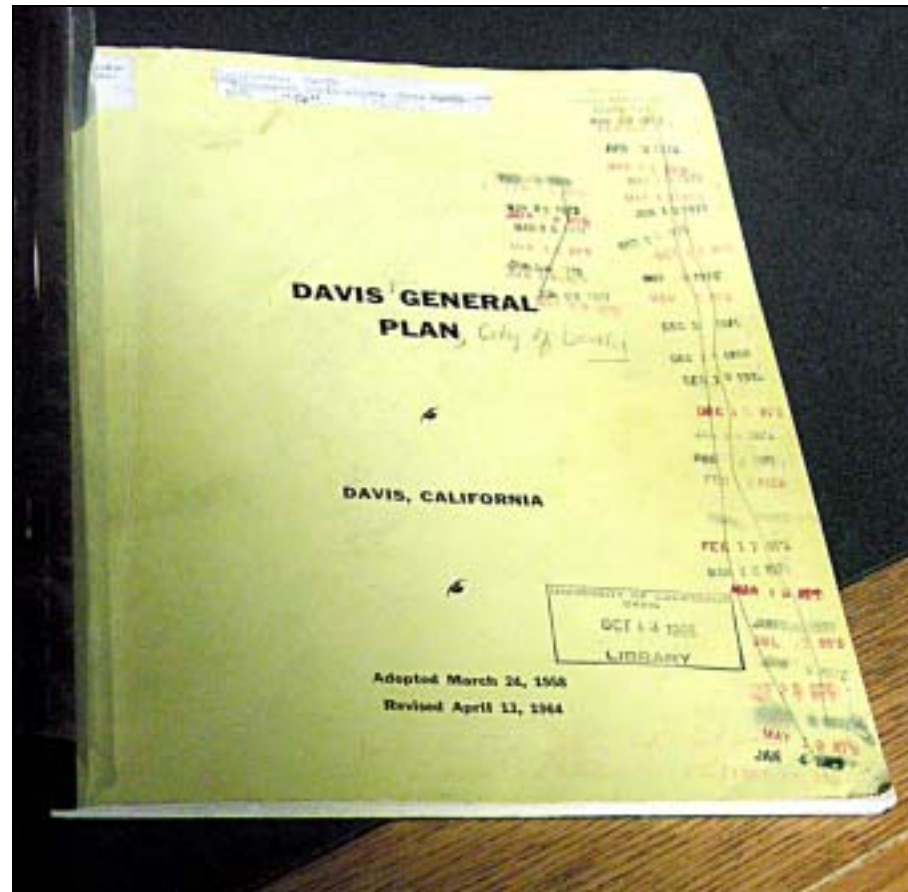
Map 11 on page 25 provides the turn-of-the decade **land use** vision of Davis' future.

In contrast, **Map 12** on page 27 provides "on the ground" **zoning**, and realistic expectations about what can and should happen at that time.

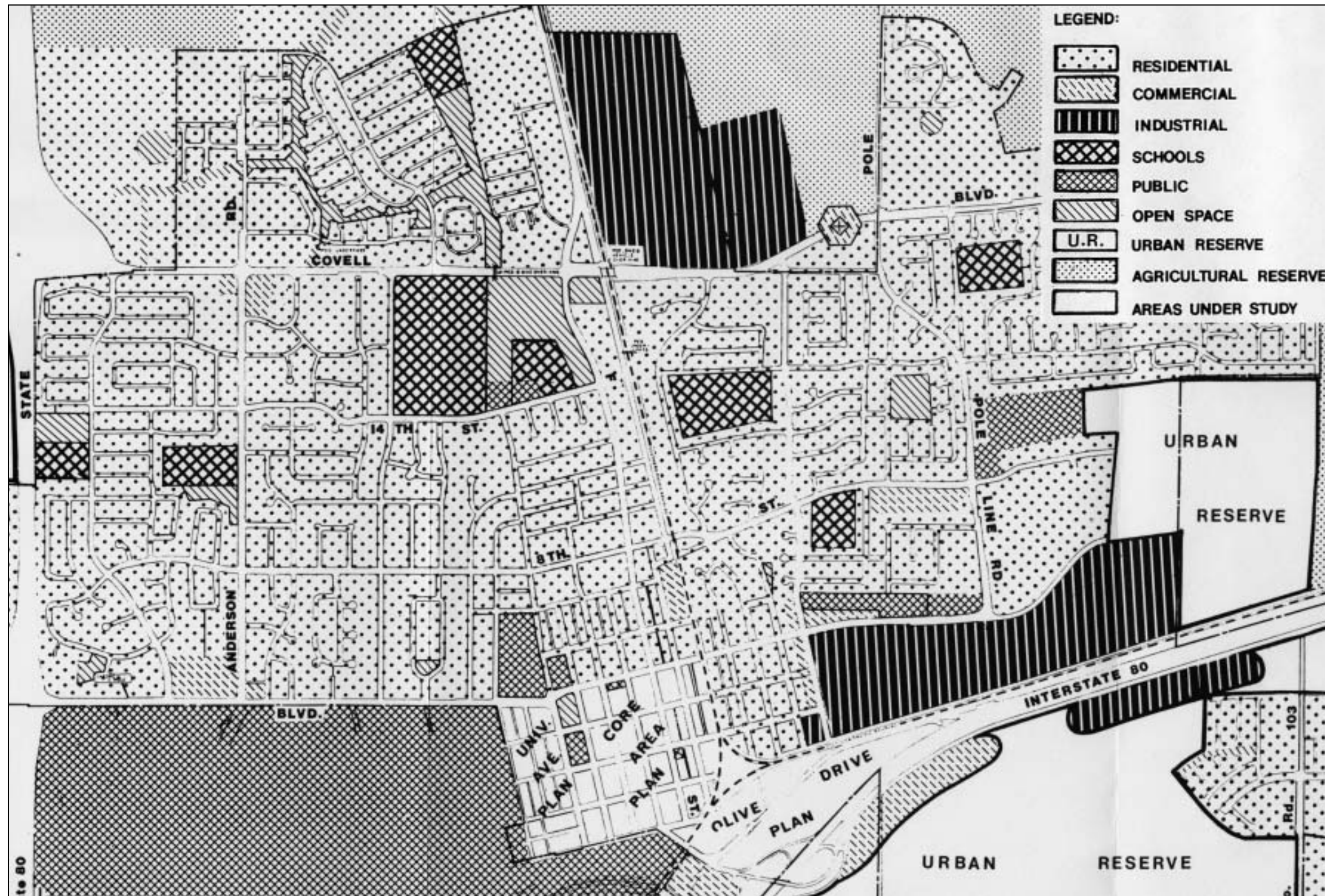
This contrast between vision and immediate action is especially sharp for Old North Davis. The vision in **Map 11** is demolition and replacement.

But, *at the same time* and in **Map 12**, most of the area is zoned "Residential one and two family."

Such fundamentally contradictory messages could hardly make an Old North Davis property owner sanguine.



13. 1973 Land Use Map (Excerpt)



[Map accompanying Davis, 1975, in a envelop glued to the inside of the back cover.]

III. HUMAN-SCALE CONTROLLED GROWTH, 1970s-80s

The vision of and plan for the growth and density I have just reported had, by the late 1960s, begun to make even the most growth-oriented nervous about the magnitude and consequences of the course on which Davis had embarked.

The response was to begin to rethink and scale down the rate of growth. This happened in two phases: A) early 1970s restarting and B) later 1980s retrenchment.

A. EARLY 1970s RESTART

In the Fall of 1971, the moderate council of Mayor Vigus Asmundson initiated a rethinking and revision of the general plan. A 110 member Citizen's Review Committee divided into ten subcommittees was appointed "to research the various topics to be covered in the Plan" (Davis, 1975:3). Making a final report in December, 1972, "successive drafts" of the plan were crafted in public hearings and reviews by the Planning Commission and the City Council. In December, 1973—some 30 months later—the Council adopted a new General Plan.

Early in this process, misgivings about growth as well as other matters had expressed themselves in the Davis City Council election of April 11, 1972. The "old boy" political moderates of the Vigus Asmundson sort were, for the first time, supplanted by more left-leaning political "progressives." These newcomers did not begin a turn against "rampant" growth, but they came to be a council majority at this critical time of general plan revision. They therefore had much influence on the outcome. (This change is otherwise called the "revolution of '72" in Davis histories. For accounts, see Fitch 1998; Lofland, 2003; 2004:ch. 8).

So what did the new plan do?

1. Most strikingly, it cut the 1990 population projection almost in half: 45,000 to 50,000 in 1990. Indeed, in the later 1970s, this projection was revised as "50,000 in 2000," which became something of a rallying cry slogan of the time.

2. The idea of "growth control" stepped onto center stage. The 1973 General Plan called for "plans and methods to control the amount and nature of growth" (Davis, 1975:10). A great deal of the Council's time over the next decade would be spent on elaborating and evaluating just such efforts.

3. A range of other new concepts became part of planning talk. For example, in the definitions section we now encounter such terms as "economic mix," "ecosystem," "greenbelts," and "sprawl."

4. Accessible and mixed housing received special emphasis, as in a policy calling for "dispersal of low, moderate and high cost housing throughout each planning area" (Davis, 1975:29).

5. Categories of land use were simplified. **Map 11** on page 25 was the last land use map of the "old order" of planning and shows a zone-like torturing of the landscape. (Looking, for example, at the number "1" planning areas, we see many and complex sub-designations of land use.)

Now look at **Map 13** on page 29, which is an excerpt from the land use map of the 1973 General Plan. It includes the same "1" planning areas but these are now, for most part, in a single category of "residential."

6. Continuing with our tracking of **Old North Davis**, two major things happened.

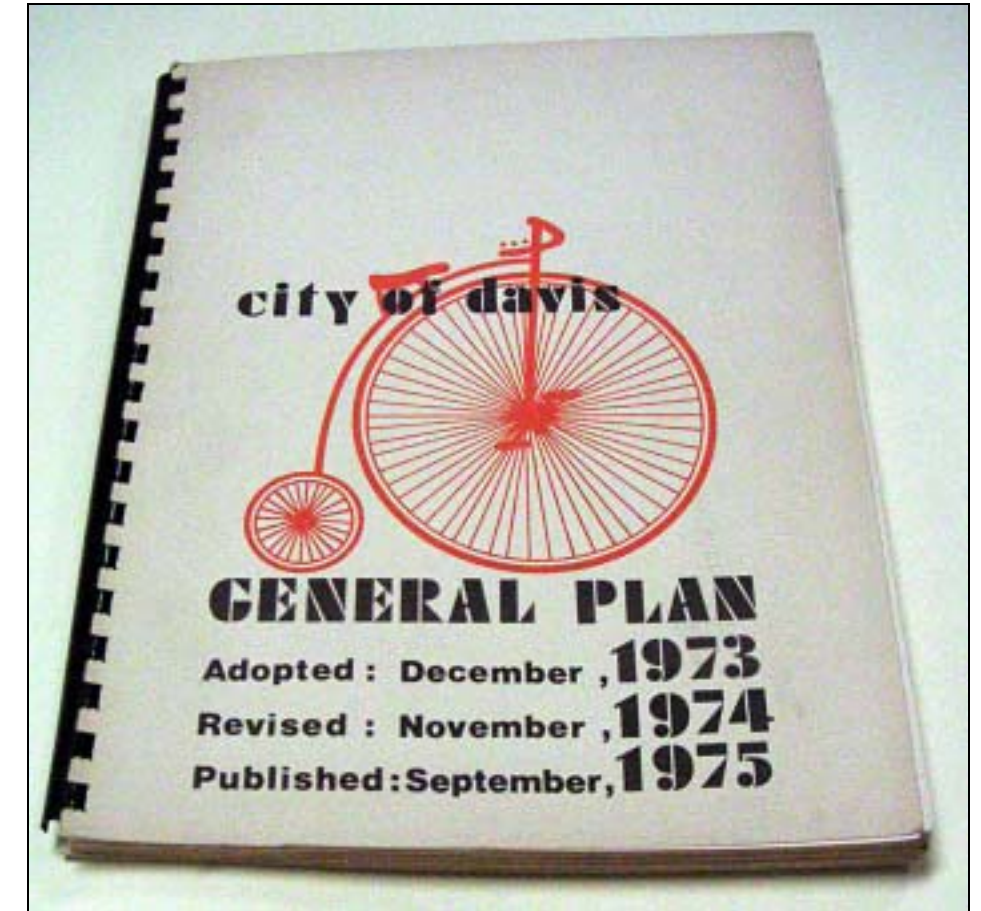
a. That district was no longer broken into two land use areas, one above and one below Sixth Street.

b. It was no longer singled out for special treatment with regard to density.

(In addition, Valerie Vann has pointed out that "the eastern most blocks . . . were a different zone in very plan from 1931 to the present except for 1973-75 plans.")

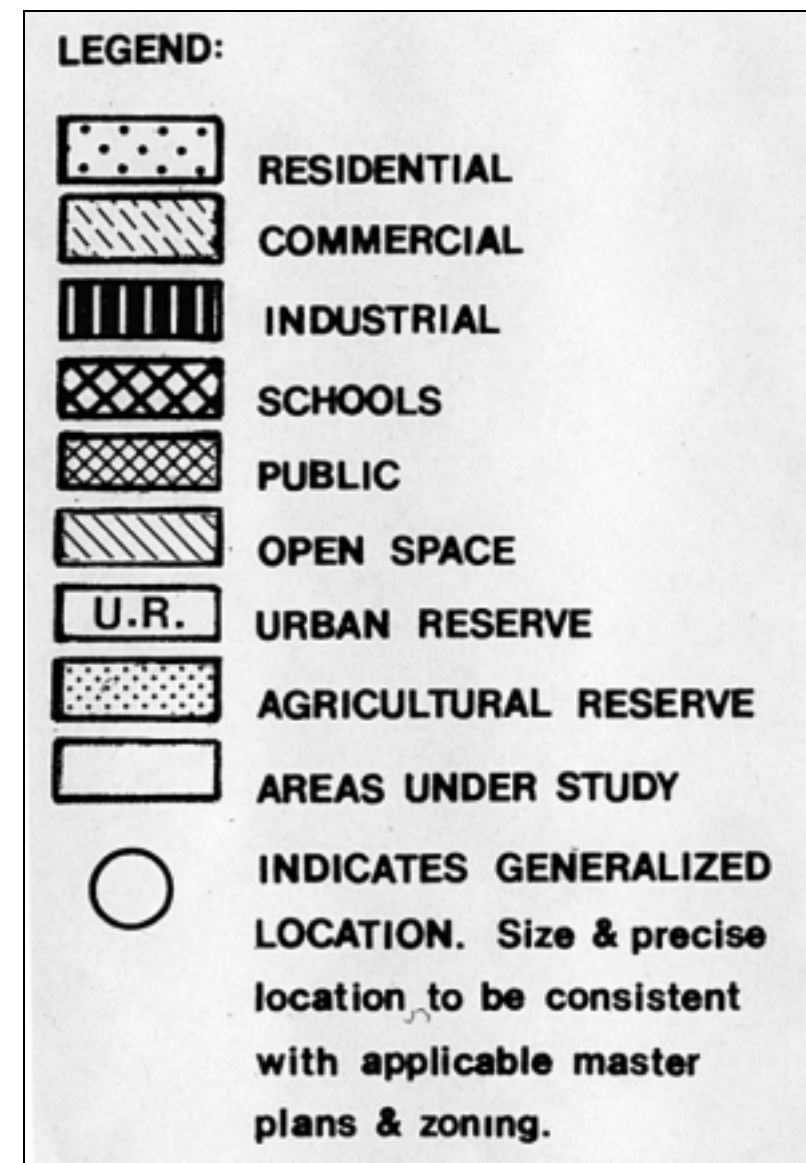
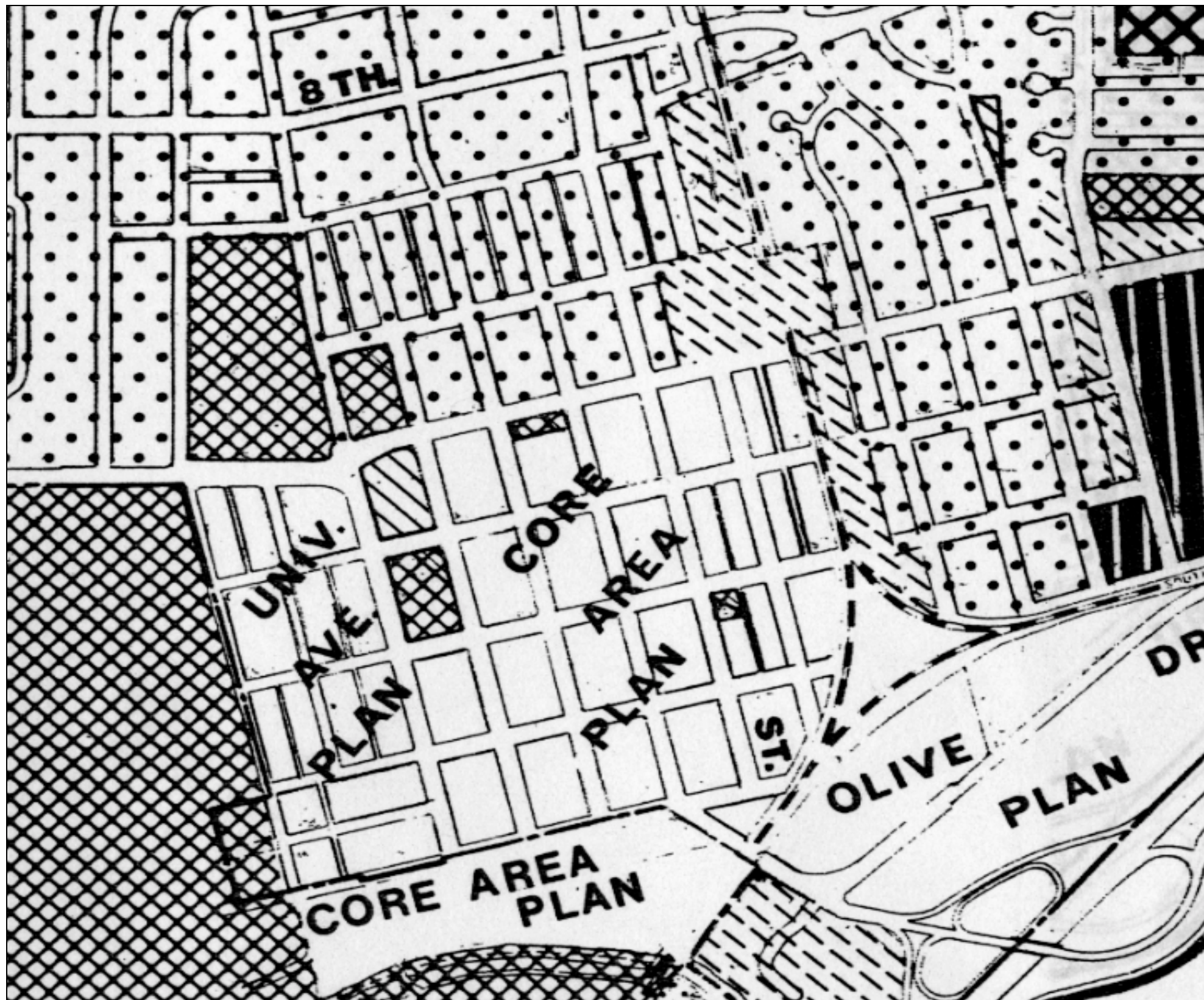
7. On a more general matter, the 1973 General Plan document had, for the first time, a professional appearance. Looking at photographs of the 1958, 1964 and 1969 General Plans (pages 19 and 28) you can see that they are typed (not printed) on cheap paper and bound by staples or velo strips.

The 1973 plan, shown to the right on this page, strides a more sophisticated graphic and presentational road. The stock is heavy, the text is printed and graphically more complex, and there are fold-out maps (nine of them).



The 1973 Davis General Plan: letter-size, comb binding; heavy, cream-colored stock with six fold-out maps measuring 11 by 14 inches and three measuring 13 by 32 inches. No consultant outside planners or planning firms are credited.

14. 1975 General Plan Land Use Map (Excerpt)



1. **1973-75 HERKY-JERKY ZONING IN OLD NORTH DAVIS.** Please look back at the 1973 General Plan land use map, which is **Map 13** on page 29.

That map shows the west side of G Street in Old North Davis zoned residential, as is the entire block bounded by Fifth and Sixth and G and the tracks.

Now look at **Map 14** on page 31, which is the same map only revised two years later.

The entire block bounded by Fifth and Sixth and G and the tracks has been made commercial, as has the west side of G between Fifth and Sixth.

(And further: The east side of the tracks, in Old East Davis, has gone from residential to commercial.)

Once again: A herky-jerky quality that cannot but unsettle the affected landowners.

**THE OLD NORTH DAVIS UGLY/COWBOY ERA
DAMAGE INFLICTED ON THE OLD NORTH IN THE MEGA-SCALE
EXPLOSIVE GROWTH PERIOD OF THE 1950s-60s**

Old North Davis is a good example of a still-existing traditional American neighborhood, the kind of residential area dominant in the country before WWII and that was supplanted by postwar suburban design.

Home construction began in the Old North at the turn of the century and the area was "built out" as the rate of about 40 homes a decade (on average) over the 1910s, 20s, 30s, and 40s (Lofland, 1999).

Much of the architecture of these homes divides into a 1910s-20s era of **bungalows** and a 1930s-40s era of revival styles of **cottages**. (www.oldnorthdavishistory.org, Folder 1).

But, sadly, these two eras were followed by a **third**, 1950s-60s era of demolition and "infill" with cheap and ugly duplexes and apartment houses.

If you have read section II of these notes, on "mega-scale explosive growth," you can understand how this ugly era easily came about. The powers-that-were declared, essentially, that "old" and existing Davis **in general** was "drab" and "uninviting" (two recurring terms of the time). Therefore, that Davis had to "go away."

And, indeed, a large majority of the Downtown (B to the tracks, First to Fifth) was literally demolished or otherwise removed. Sixty-three percent of the 233 buildings in the Downtown in 1945 were no longer there in the year 2000—and most of the demolitions were done before 1970 (Lofland, 2000: 7).

It is therefore no surprise that demolition went on in Old North Davis. The surprise, instead, is the degree to which it was less than the downtown.

Of the 159 buildings in the Old North Davis in 1945, 18% were not there in 2000, a very fortunate circumstance for the neighborhood. It nonetheless meant a loss of 28 buildings (Lofland, 2000:7).

In writing about Davis in other places I have characterized the decades after WWII as the "cowboy" era in Davis life, using that word in the sense of undertaking a sensitive task heedlessly (Lofland, 2001b:2).

I would count the buildings at the following addresses as among the more egregious and ugly assaults on Old North Davis borne of the cowboy era:

- 521-523 D
- 525 D
- 608-610-610 1/2 D
- 623-625 D
- 627-629 D
- 612-614 E
- 625-627 E
- 523-525 F
- 537 F
- 624-626 F
- 623-625 G

The instances of every pattern we discern in nature always, of course, vary among themselves in the exact degree to which they exhibit that pattern. Some instances of the pattern are much better developed exemplars than are others.

In the case of "ugly/cowboy era" structures in Old North Davis, my personal candidate for the "best example" is the "snout house" duplex at 523-525 F Street. For reference, here is a photograph of it I took in the late 1990s.



This building is exceptional in the degree to which it is "street hostile" or "street barricaded." Only two garage doors face the street. The doors to the two apartments are along the north wall under a substantial overhang that keeps out sunlight.

2. STUDY ZONES AND R-1-5. The sweeping reconsideration of land use embodied in the 1973 General Plan required, of course, also rethinking 1) categories of zones, and 2) the specific areas to which those categories should apply.

The mechanism for these re-considerations was the short-term declaration of "study zones," areas in which development was temporarily suspended.

Map 15 (p. 33) is a snap-shot in this complex and changing process of freezing and unfreezing and considering different zone concepts.

Map 15 shows the Original City and some surrounding area and highlights the extensive degree L&B's extreme density vision was now being questioned.

In particular, Old North Davis was proposed to return to "single family" status, here called "residential one family (5000 Sq. Ft. lot)." This new category extended downward the lot size scale running R-1-15, R-1-8, and R-1-6. (These are shown as categories three through five at the bottom of the Legend list for **Map 15**.)

Consideration of an R-1-5 designation was, indeed, extraordinary because Old North Davis' then existing R-2 classification was retained in nearby areas. For whatever reasons, though, R-1-5 did not, as far as I can find, get beyond a study zone proposal at this time.

3. THE PRESERVATION-DEVELOPMENT DILEMMA. In this same early 1970s period, what some termed the "preservation versus development dilemma" emerged as a key issue in planning discussion. As more and more new construction projects came forth and more and more buildings were demolished, there came to be a question of "preservation of character and housing resources versus the need for commercial growth" (Davis, 1977:iv). Such concern was of course prompted by the widespread demolition and removal that had taken place since WWII. Of 583 buildings in the Original City of Davis in 1945, 253 were gone in the year 2000—43%—and almost all were already gone by 1970 (Lofland, 2000:7).

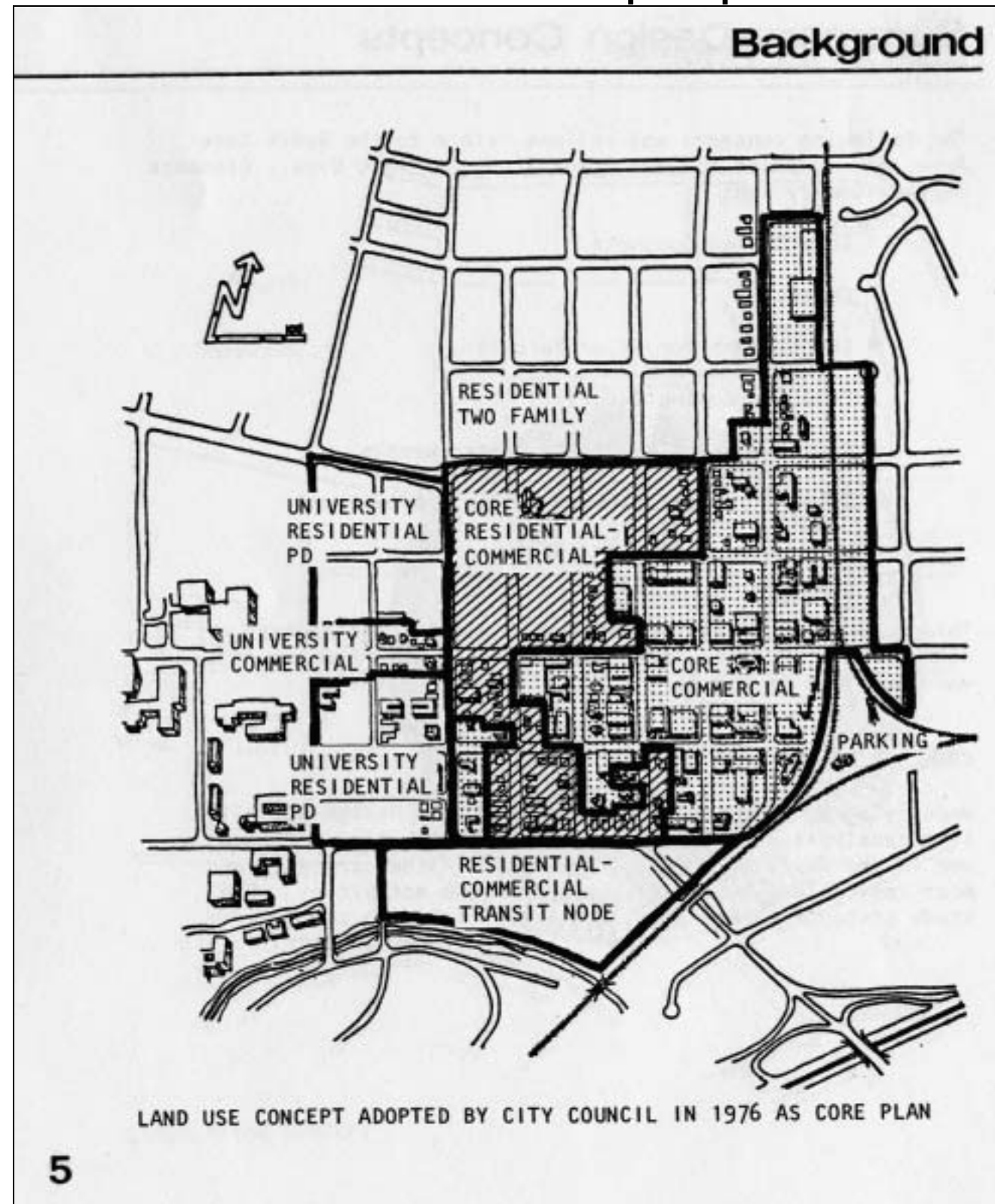
In November, 1976, the Council adopted what it viewed as only a short-term and stop-gap means of dealing with this dilemma. It was a special zoning district called the

Interim Residential Conversion (R/C) District and [the Council] subsequently applied this district to much of the area surrounding the intensively commercial portion of the Core. This district permitted conversion of homes to offices or retail businesses, under reduced or minimal parking requirements. Under a conversion, residents would be displaced. This was more of a holding action, than one which is positive in shaping and guiding the form of the Core (Davis, 1977:iv).



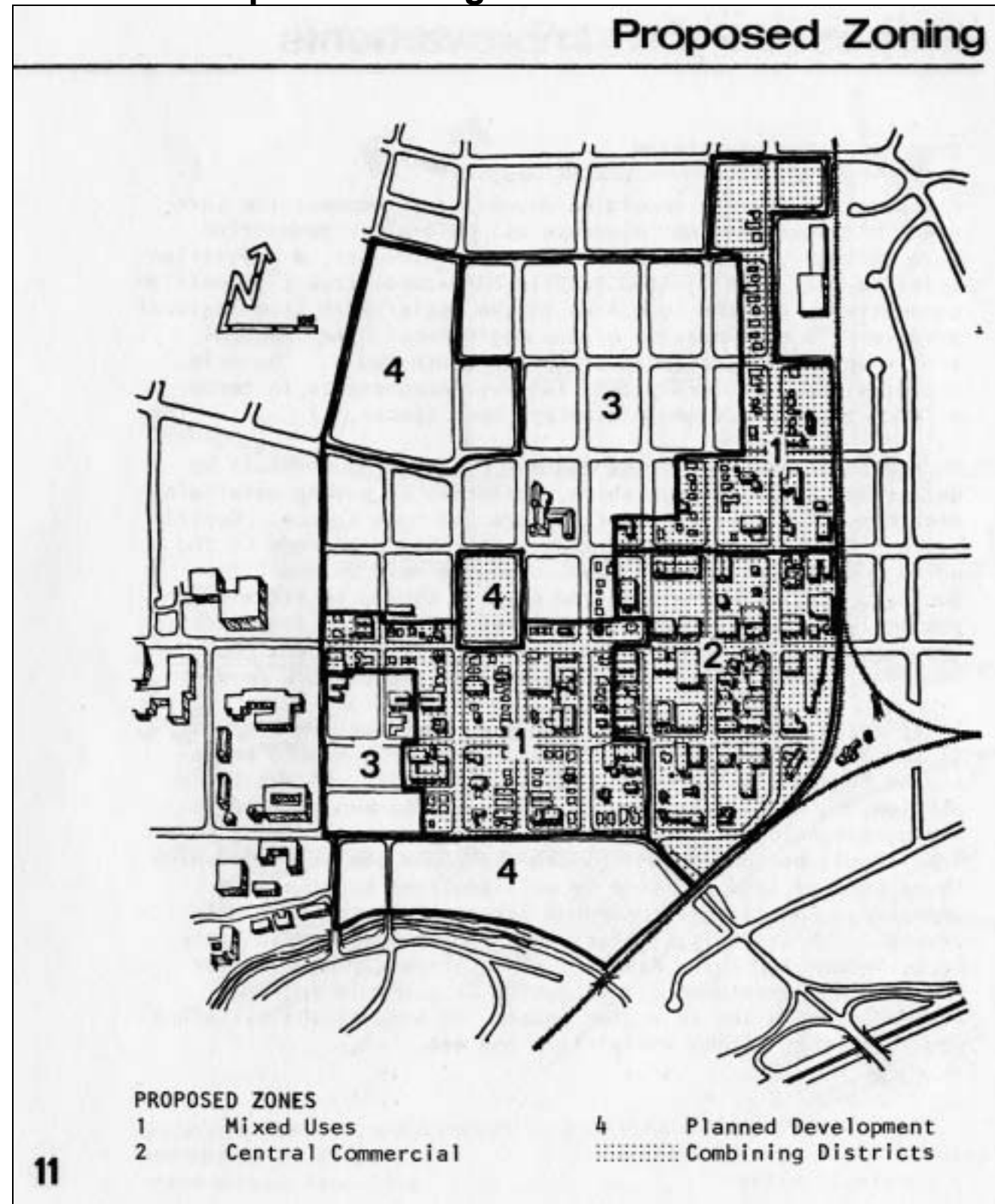
1977 *Mixed Uses: Design and Zoning Proposal for Davis, California*; 18 by 14 inches stock printed landscape, staple bound, typescript, 14 pages.

16. 1976 Core Plan Land Use Concept Map



[Davis, 1977:4.]

16.I. 1976 Proposed Zoning



[Davis, 1977:11.]

4. THE ADVENT OF "MIXED USE." Having bought some time, the next step was to develop replacements for the "R/C" approach. One step in this direction was a grant application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development under "Section 701," a program funding planning studies. A grant was awarded and a "Mixed-Use 701 Grant Team" consisting of three UC Berkeley and two UC Davis planning-involved professors went to work. The fourteen-plus page booklet they produced (pictured on p. 34) was titled *Mixed Uses: A Design and Zoning Proposal for Davis, California* (1977).

If L&B's *Core Area Plan* was a child of Le Corbusier, the 701 team's *Mixed Uses* was an offspring of Jane Jacobs (1998, op 1961).

The contrast between the two documents begins in the very title "mixed uses," by which was meant "development [that] contains a variety of uses rather than a single type of use. The uses should be complementary to one another, not conflicting or isolated" (p. 1). Straight out of Jane Jacobs (although she is not named), mixed use is said once to have been common, "when shopkeepers lived above their shops" and in other circumstances. But, "auto-oriented single use zoning of the Post War Era" pushed it to the side, but it was then in revival.

Lest someone think this is not a sharp contrast in land use mindsets, let me quote from page 8 of the 1958 General Plan, the document in force through the late 1960s:

A fundamental principle of good land planning is that there should be separation of living areas and non-living areas. The living areas consist of homes and apartments and their public uses (schools, parks), semi-public buildings (churches) and neighborhood shopping centers. The non-living areas are the industrial districts, the research facilities and the Central Business District. These are the two main functional divisions of the City, [and] although dependent on one another, each contains activities which exert an undesirable influence on the other if mixed indiscriminately. . . . [The] intrusion of residence[s] into . . . commercial districts tends to interfere with their efficient use and full development (Davis, 1969:8).

The *Mixed Uses* report elaborated "MU types" ("MU" meaning mixed use) that brought new and enduring concepts to discussions of Davis land use. One of these types was "conversion" or the "preservation of structure" in which an older building is kept but its function changes (more recently called "adaptive reuse"). In another type, "the original use is maintained and another added."

A third new type that would, indeed, become extremely prominent in later years was "infill," meaning, in the report, the preservation of structure plus new development" (p. 2). (Notice that in Davis of

the 2000s, the meaning of the term "infill" changed dramatically. The preservation and protection meanings were muted and the demolition and "redevelopment" meanings were stressed.)

The concept of mixed use may seem obvious because became (sort of) Davis doctrine in the 2000s. But, in 1976 and thereabouts, this was a radical idea, but an idea embraced by newly progressive Davis City Councils.

The concepts of "mixed use" opened the way to intermingling residences and businesses. Once that possibility was conceived at this micro-level, it could then be moved up in scope and scale.

This is what we see in **Map 16** (page 35), which is the land use map the Council adopted in June of 1976 to replace **Map 8.2**. (page 20) and others like it of the 1960s.

On **Map 16**, the phrase "residential-commercial" shows us the areas where there is a new effort to develop a mixed use downtown. It is of note that the area so designated is almost half of the downtown (defined as between B and the tracks and First and Fifth).

The Core Plan of 1976 states that this mix of "core commercial" and adjacent residential commercial is intended to

provide for a wide range of shopping and social experiences; a concentration of governmental and financial services; an opportunity for partial retention and preservation of existing residential areas; and *combination of residences with other activities* (quoted in Davis, 1977:5, italics in the original).

Map 16.1 shows these ideas translated into rough zoning categories and language.

The area labeled "1" on **Map 16.1** is "mixed use:"

Residentially-oriented mixed use and medium density residential use are the preferred types of development . . . Permitted uses . . . will differ according to whether a structure is new, an "infill" or a conversion. Mixture of use is mandated in new structures.

Fundamental to the Mixed Use District is a respect for the existing built environment and its character. Provisions within the district's requirements include: . . . Limitation of building size and height to that which is approximately the scale of existing buildings within the Core . . . (Davis, 1977:10).

The area labeled "3" on **map 16.1** is named the "Core Residential Infill District." Notice that it encompasses virtually all of Old North Davis. This district

is intended to protect the existing residential character and scale of the Core, while allowing for moderate increase in the residential density through the infilling of residential units into the site, but not allowing for the construction of new garden apartments or apartment buildings (Davis, 1977:x).

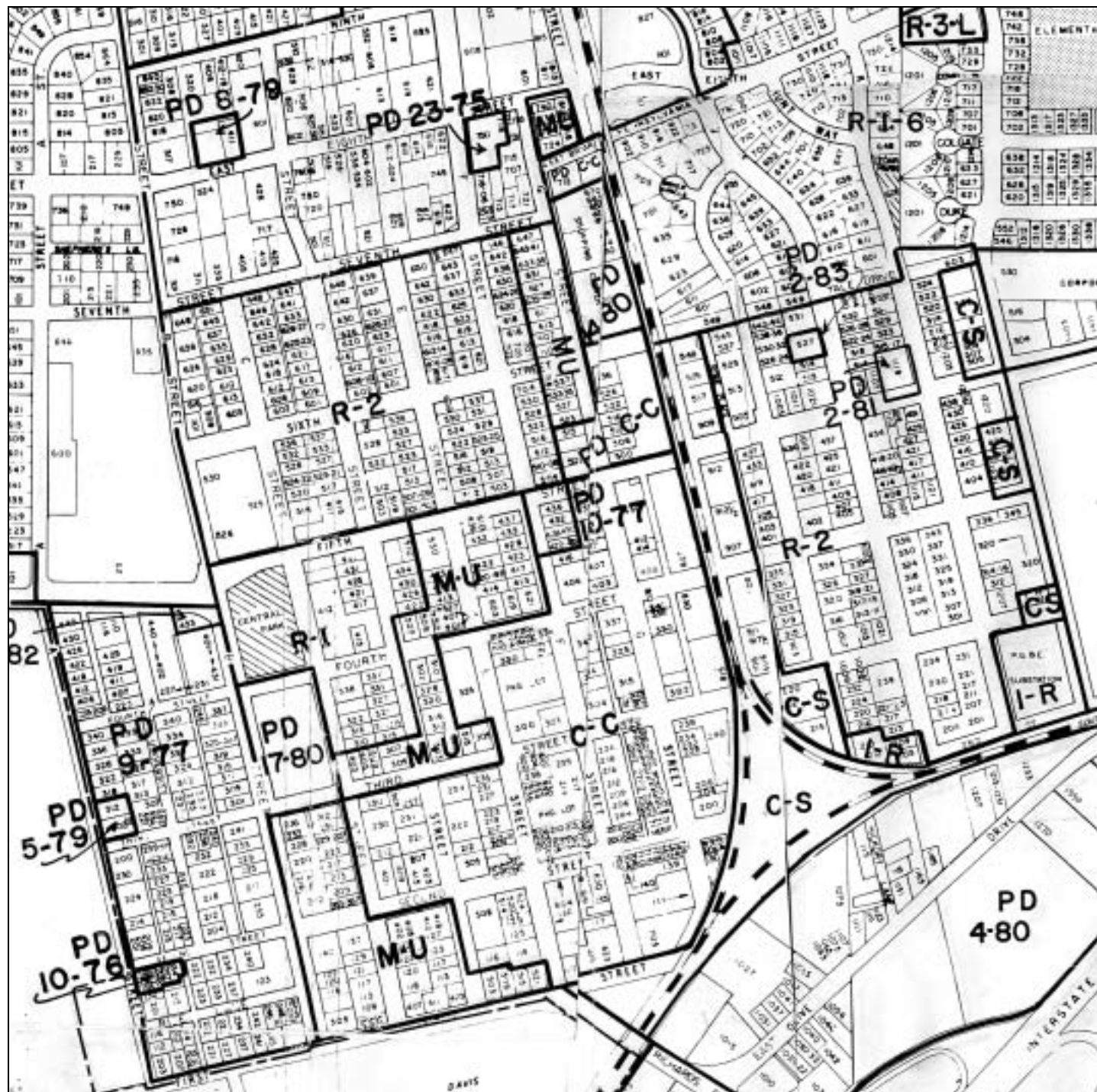
Forms of allowable infill units include ". . . construction of a residential cottage in the rear yard of the site; . . construction of additions to the house ; conversion of a garage into a residential unit" (p. 11).

This new concept of a district is said to be

similar to the existing "Residential One and Two Family Zone" (R-2), which was formerly applied to the majority of the area of the proposed district. However, the emphasis of the new District is on strengthening what exists instead of demolishing in order to build new units. The new district is specifically designed to the needs and lifestyles of those who most need housing in the Core: primary individuals living alone or with persons not related to them in a common household, rather than families (Davis, 1977:11).

Notice that on **Map 16, Old North Davis** is, in this scheme, "residential two family."

17. 1984 Zoning Map (Excerpt)



— LEGEND —

A	AGRICULTURE
C-C	CORE COMMERCIAL
C-H	COMMERCIAL HIGHWAY
C-N	COMMERCIAL NEIGHBORHOOD
I	INDUSTRIAL
I-R	INDUSTRIAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESEARCH
M-U	MIXED USE
P-D	PLANNED DEVELOPMENT
R-I	RESIDENTIAL INFILL
R-R	RESIDENTIAL RESTRICTED
R-T	RESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONAL
R-1-6	RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY (6,000 SQ. FT.)
R-1-8	RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY (8,400 SQ. FT.)
R-1-15	RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY (15,000 SQ. FT.)
R-2	RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY
R-2-MH	RESIDENTIAL ONE AND TWO FAMILY AND MOBILE HOME
R-3-L	RESIDENTIAL GARDEN APARTMENTS (LOW DENSITY)
R-3-M	RESIDENTIAL GARDEN APARTMENTS (MED. DENSITY)
R-H-D	RESIDENTIAL GARDEN APARTMENTS (HIGH DENSITY)
S	STUDY ZONE

[UC Davis Shields Library Map Collection G436 D3G4 1984.]

Land use vision is one thing, zoning is another. By 1984, the idea of mixed use had made it into the zoning lexicon as the "MU" designations seen to the right on **Map 17** (p. 37).

Notice also the complexity of a special "R-1"—residential infill— district bounded by Fourth, Fifth, C and D streets.

Old North Davis has settled back into "residential one and two family," amidst a proliferation of "R" type districts—11 of them in 1984!

B. LATER 1980s RETRENCHMENT

In the mid and later 1970s, Davis planning was optimistic and idealistic. Growth could be controlled and Davis could be urban and human-scale *a la* the visions of Jane Jacobs. But this sunny time did not last long. In addition to the well-known body-blow landed on all California municipalities by Proposition 13 in 1978, two other slams staggered Davis planning, leading to the new General Plan of 1987.

1. TWO BODY BLOWS: ALLOCATION FAILURE, MRI ASSAULT. The first body blow was Council self-inflicted. Bowing to developer and other pressures, apartments and some other kinds of units were excepted from what was grandly dubbed "The Allocation System." The apartment exemption alone was a major source of "uncontrolled" growth. In addition, planning staff calculated the number of "needed" new single family dwellings for each allocation. But the Council regularly exceeded that number (CDDCCD, 1985).

The upshot was that the Davis population was pushing 50,000 in 1985, some 15 years ahead of schedule. In August, 1985, a planning staff analysis estimated that when all the units approved at that time were finished in 1986, they would house 49,894 people. Therefore, to stay within the 50,000 by 2000 cap, housing for only 106 people could be approved over the next 14 years (which would be about 42 units total or three in each year) (CDDCCD, 1985:9).

This was in itself a strange self-inflicted wound, but it paled in comparison to a second whack. In the early 1980s, a developer group calling itself Mace Ranch Investors (MRI) assembled some 500 acres of land on Davis' eastern border. The group inquired about possible annexation and development and was, of course, told "50,000 by 2000," please go away.

In a developer-textbook flanking action, MRI presented its proposal to the Yolo County Board of Supervisors. Anti-Davis sentiments on that Board made it clear that a majority of the five members might well approve development in the county even over Davis' objections.

Such was the way in which the sunny and bold growth control era ended. Under the threat of essentially starting an independent city next to Davis, what was called "Mace Ranch" was subsequently annexed. In one stroke, Davis' area went from 7.5 to 8.5 square miles (600 acres) in 1989.

One element of the deal the City worked out with the County required that the City draw up and adopt a new general plan by the end of 1987. As compared to previous Davis general plans and such plans in general, a relatively short period of time was available for doing this. In order to make the deadline, the planning firm of Blayney-Dyett was hired to do the analyses, write reports, and draft the plan. From the outset, the schedule of events showed that the Council would make a final vote to adopt the General Plan on December 23, 1987 (actually, after the midnight of December 23rd). And this it did.

The contrast between the General Plan of December, 1973 and that of December, 1987 is, to me, striking and sad. In the period of a little more than a decade, Davis leaders went from bold assertiveness in charting a progressive, human-scale, growth controlled community to a county-chastised, developer-whipped, and meek adopter of a forced-on-it watered-down plan.

2. KEEPING THE FAITH. The 1987 General Plan was less sunny than the 1973 one, but not all the faith had faded. Among several scenarios for growth to the year 2010 (the new time horizon), 50,000 by 2000 was given up and, on the other side, growth to 100,000 was set aside. Instead, a middle course of 64,000 in the city and 73-75,000 in the planning area was selected.

Further, the ideas that some day Davis would be "complete" and reach a steady state with a particular "holding capacity" were retained. Here is Plan language expressing these ideas as official policy:

The General Plan Map [is regarded] as a representation of the desired ultimate geographic and population size of the city . . . (p. 2-2)

It is logical to say that just as a work of art is "complete" at some stage, a city reaches a point where it is big enough and growth should occur elsewhere (p. 2-2, italics in the original).

Specific reasons for establishing an ultimate size for Davis include: . . . Small size is essential if Davis is to remain a bicycle town with the resulting contributions to air quality and personal health (p. 2-2, italics in the original).

[The first Guiding policy is to] plan for completion of Davis as a city surrounded by agriculture . . . (p. 2-7). (All quotes are from Davis, 1987, volume 1).

In other places in this Plan we encounter such phrases as ". . . geared to an ultimate geographical size . . . (p. 1-2); ". . . plan for the completion of Davis . . ." (p. 2-7) and ". . . designated ultimate size . . ." (p. 2-8).

The consulting firm retained to organize the new general plan process provided April and July 1987 volumes of "working papers" in which they laid out options and provided a comparative perspective on Davis planning. Their characterization of Davis planning in the July volume provides a context for understanding the course on which Davis had been embarked:

Most General Plans assume perpetual growth and plan for the amount of growth anticipated within a 20 year planning period. Most plans are revised every five to 10 years to accommodate a larger population as long as expansion area remains.

[But] . . . the central idea in Davis physical-development policy during the last 15 years has been to maintain a small, University-dominated freestanding city. If this concept has support in 1987, Davis must address the ultimate size issue. The General Plan must be designed not to be expandable and means of defining edges must be included. Policies must work toward a wind-down of development as ultimate size nears, and the actions that made the "50,000 in 2000" limit impractical must be avoided. If the ultimate-size idea does not have support, the plan should be designed for expansion after 2010 (B-D, 1987b:14).

My reading of the 1987 Plan is that the issues of ultimate size, wind-down, and defined edges were finessed. The idea of an ultimate size was extolled (text quoted above), but serious plans for wind-down and defined edges were not articulated and included in the plan.

18. October, 1987 Draft Land Use Map (Excerpt)



[Separate map accompanying Davis, 1987.]

