



# Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan Subcommittee

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## 1 MINUTES

### 2 Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan Subcommittee – Meeting #2 3 Monday, April 12, 2010, from 7 to 10 pm

4 North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, California

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6 **Subcommittee Member Attendance.** Eight (8) City members present: Keith Alward, Teresa  
7 Clarke, Kate Harrison, Meghan Lang, Jim Novosel, Carole Schemmerling, Margo Schueler,  
8 and Ann Smulka. City members absent: Patricia Dacey (without Leave). UC members  
9 present: Emily Marthinsen.

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11 **Staff Attendance.** Matt Taecker (Planning Department & Secretary to Subcommittee), Kara  
12 Vuicich (Transportation Division), and Betsy Reeves (Parks & Recreation).

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14 **Public Attendance.** Approximately 15 members of the public attended.

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16 **Order of the Agenda.** No changes were made.

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18 **Public Comments.** Six (6) comments were made.

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20 Larry Rinder, Executive Director of UC's Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive  
21 (BAM/PFA), expressed interest in working with the Subcommittee on issues of mutual  
22 interest. He said that BAM/PFA still plans to move Downtown to the UC Press site (on  
23 Oxford between Center and Addison), and that Downtown would offer synergies with  
24 cultural venues and other uses. New design work has focused on adaptive reuse for most  
25 of the UC Press buildings. The project should be completed in 2014.

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27 Jamie Rusin, an architect at ELS in Berkeley, noted that the Downtown Berkeley  
28 Association (DBA) has formed a new committee to better engage the SOSIP process. He  
29 said that priority should be given to: improvements on Shattuck (Berkeley's main shopping  
30 street); street trees and lighting; the financing of improvements; and addressing parking  
31 and transportation demand.

32  
33 John Caner, Executive Director of Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) asked that the  
34 DBA play a direct role in programming open space in the Downtown. He noted that  
35 strategies for new replacement parking should address parking spaces that may be lost to  
36 street improvements; and that maintenance should be adequately funded.

37  
38 Jurgen Aust, said that it is important to make Downtown a notable place by creating a  
39 pedestrian plaza as a focal point. In his view, the pedestrian plaza should be placed on  
40 the west side of Shattuck because of the many advantages of this location. He said that  
41 sufficient time should be given for consideration of this idea.

42  
43 Merrilie Mitchell, a member of Parents United for Health, said that many people support  
44 Jurgen Aust's idea, including many merchants.

46 Wendy Alfsen, a member of Walk & Roll Berkeley, said that pedestrian safety should be  
47 the principle focus of the SOSIP. She gave examples of features that should be  
48 incorporated including: pedestrian refuge areas along crosswalks; advanced stop lines to  
49 keep cars back from crosswalks; sufficient and clear paths for pedestrian travel; and light  
50 signal phasing that give pedestrians a head start and encourage motorists to yield.

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52 **Adoption of Minutes.** The draft Minutes of March 8 were adopted, with one revision, by  
53 acclimation.

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55 **Mid-Shattuck Design Concepts for SOSIP Cost Estimating.** The Subcommittee focused  
56 on the "Mid-Shattuck" area and provided input on which alternative should be used to  
57 estimate "ballpark" costs to inform a financing strategy that will be presented in May or June.  
58 Staff presented concepts and cross-sections to facilitate this discussion.

59  
60 **Widen Sidewalks.** Sidewalks in the Mid-Shattuck area should be widened to  
61 approximately 21 feet. This motion passed with 8 ayes, 0 nays, & 0 abstentions.

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63 **Parking Neutral.** On-street parking that is lost because of street and open space  
64 improvements should be replaced with nearby on-street parking. In the long term, garage  
65 parking may also be used to replace parking, if the garage parking is readily available and  
66 conveniently located on lower levels. This motion passed with 8 ayes, 0 nays, & 0  
67 abstentions.

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69 **Bicycle Lanes.** Bicycle lanes should be created on Shattuck Avenue, and should be  
70 grade separated to the extent possible. In developing bicycle lane plans, impacts on  
71 motorized traffic, such as those relating to travel time, should be considered. This motion  
72 passed with 8 ayes, 0 nays, & 0 abstentions.

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74 **BRT Costs.** Cost estimates should not include costs associated with AC Transit's  
75 proposal for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) because AC Transit should cover these costs. This  
76 motion passed with 8 ayes, 0 nays, & 0 abstentions.

77  
78 **Street Trees & Landscaping.** The Subcommittee provided input on draft recommendations  
79 for Downtown street trees and landscaping. Betsy Reeves, an urban forestry expert in the  
80 Parks & Recreation Department, provided information and responded to questions.

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82 No formal motions were made, however there was general agreement that:

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84 the intentions behind the proposed tree palette should be made more transparent;

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86 on-going maintenance is critical; and

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88 the intersection between street trees and "low-impact design" (to filter pollutants and  
89 detain stormwater) be more fully developed.

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91 **SOSIP Outline & Schedule.** The Subcommittee scheduled a meeting for Thursday, April 29,  
92 2010, which would be in addition to its meetings on the second Monday of every month.  
93 Subcommittee members did not comment on the draft SOSIP outline.

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95 **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 10:00pm.

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