

## **Goals and Strategy Related Criteria for Evaluating Growth Options For City of Davis Council, Staff and Public**

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October 3, 2002

**Background:** On September 25, the City Council voted to pursue an increased growth rate of 250 units a year until new development in the next General Plan takes over between 2010 and 2015. Of the 250 units, fifty are expected to be built on University land as permanently affordable housing. (This does not include student housing on campus.) The 200 units in the city can be infill, new development, apartments, condos, or detached houses. Council asked staff to present criteria and recommend a first cut of which proposed developments should not be considered. Soon afterwards, Council wants to select development proposal(s) to advance through the staff and Planning Commission evaluation process so that they can consider them. If the development scenario they prefer is required to do so by Measure J, the council will present this part of their choice to the citizens for a public vote, possibly as early as November 2003.

Before the Council and public votes on any new development proposals, these projects will have to undergo CEQA review. Because any new development will face opposition from some residents, the CEQA evaluation should be done well and be legally defensible. The core of a good Environmental Impact Report is the evaluation of the "no action" and competing alternatives to the Council's preferred alternative.

I suggest that the City use a Goals and Strategies criteria methodology to evaluate the alternatives, including which development proposals at the beginning of the process are advanced to staff for the planning review process. In my opinion, the CEQA alternatives should include these four basic options the city faces plus a few combinations of them.

**The No Action Alternative.** City grows only within the limits of the existing General Plan. Impacts of this very slow growth should be evaluated on a city and on the region. Note: All scenarios should evaluate regional impacts. .

**The University Takes all the New Growth.** 250 units a year are built on campus land.

**Infill and Densification.** 200 units a year are met within existing city limits without any rezoning of ag land.

**New Development.** After presently zoned growth occurs each year, new development on rezoned ag land builds the remaining 200 units a year.

Different combinations of infill, new development and UC housing levels can be combined and evaluated as well.

Many impacts of growth cross over into multiple goal areas. In a Goals and Strategy Criteria format, impacts are addressed by strategies to address them and turn the traditional negative consequences of growth into positives for the community. For this document to be complete, each strategy criteria should be assessed against impacts to the other goals.

## **Goals and Strategy Criteria - An Initial List**

Note: Please send your comments and suggestions either in writing in the appropriate section below, or to me in a separate message. Please tell me if you do **not** want me to share your comments with others. We hope to soon set up a web forum for the public to share in the debate on growth alternatives. If you are interested in helping with the forum and associated website, contact David Siedband [david@calteg.org](mailto:david@calteg.org).

The goals are idealistic and may not be achievable under any scenario. They are statements of what the community would like to have happen. There are goals that are missing from the list so please add to them. Also send suggestions on how to word them better.

For new strategies, please think about whether your proposal is a main strategy in the section or a sub-strategy to one already listed. Thank you.

### **A. Schools.**

#### **Davis schools better meet the needs of students, teachers and parents.**

1. New housing taxes and fees more than covers the costs of its impacts.
2. New housing has a reduced number of school aged children than has occurred in the past.
3. Land is dedicated to provide a site for a new academy associated with the existing high school and junior highs so that as student populations increase, the density of students at the existing campuses can remain the same.

### **B. Recreation.**

#### **Parks and recreational facilities improve in their ability to meet the needs of residents.**

1. New housing pays for major improvements to the city's existing park needs.
2. New housing pays for its share of future park maintenance costs.
3. New housing has homeowners associations which pay for their own street tree and greenbelt maintenance.
4. New housing has its own pools and recreational facilities.

### **C. Traffic**

#### **Overall traffic improves, resulting in cleaner air and less time needed to travel through and in and out of town.**

1. New housing has good access to buses, bike lanes, schools, and stores.
2. New housing provides housing to people who work in town but don't live here.
3. New housing is located close to where residents will work. (e.g. University).

### **D. Water Supply.**

#### **The City's long term water supply reliability is improved.**

1. New development doesn't tap into the deep aquifer.
2. New development more than offsets whatever it takes from the deep aquifer by reducing deep aquifer demand somewhere else. (e.g. It pays for conservation elsewhere or it pays the costs to remove an existing park from the deep aquifer and replace it with shallow aquifer water.)

### **E. Habitat.**

#### **The quality and quantity of regional habitat for at risk species increases.**

1. Good habitat is preserved. (e.g. Development doesn't destroy good habitat.)

2. Habitat elsewhere in the county is permanently protected. (e.g. Some of the 2-1 land mitigation goes to habitat protection.
3. Habitat elsewhere is improved. (e.g. Some of the fees from new development pays for habitat improvement projects.)

#### **F. Affordable Housing.**

##### **The percentage of permanently affordable housing stock in town increases.**

1. All affordable housing that comes with new development is permanently affordable.
2. New housing contributes greater than the present 25/35% affordable standard.
3. Higher density (up to five stories) housing is allowed and encouraged in certain areas of town.

#### **G. Prime Agricultural Land**

##### **Prime agricultural land is protected.**

1. Any agricultural land lost to development is mitigated with ag land permanently protected within 1 mile of city  
Higher density housing reduces ag land conversion rates in neighboring towns.  
No high quality ag land is developed.  
Ag land loss is mitigated through agricultural production as part of the housing developments design.

#### **H. Downtown**

##### **Economic base attractiveness and community center quality improves as a shopping, entertainment, and cultural area improves**

1. New development doesn't add new retail that competes with downtown
2. Housing in and around downtown increases and business from local residents increases.

#### **I. Economics and Jobs**

##### **City job base economics and tax revenues improve.**

1. Commercial and industrial sites are not lost to future economic development
2. Property values and associated city tax income increases.  
Better housing options improve the willingness of good employees to stay in town and at their business or government job.  
Better housing options attract new business to build on the zone commercial and industrial sites and pay full fees.

#### **J. Community**

##### **Build strong community bonds within housing and within town**

1. Build model developments that create a new vision for how housing can be developed in the Central Valley
2. Create more communities such as Muir Commons, N Street, and Village Homes as examples of cooperatively organized developments

#### **K Safety**

##### **Davis residents and visitors are safe and have excellent police and fire services**

1. The distance from housing to police and fire services does not exceed standards and response time improves for existing residents.
2. New development more than pays for its associated police and fire costs  
Housing design enhances community and neighborhood safety.  
Excellent schools, parks, and other services reduce youth misbehavior and crime.

## **L Air Quality**

### **Regional and local air quality improves.**

1. See strategies in the Traffic goal.
2. Reduce air pollution from mowers, blowers and other tools by changing the landscaping and its maintenance practices.
3. Ban chimneys in new housing.

Design new housing to be so satisfying that the residents say in town for the weekend.

Make the downtown and Davis' cultural and entertainment assets so attractive that people don't drive out of town as often.

### **Taxes and Utility Fees.**

#### **The value residents receive for the taxes and fees they spend increases.**

Growth does not cause city taxes to increase.

New housing does not cause any utility fees to increase.

New development pays for infrastructure improvements that would otherwise have been paid for by existing residents.

Energy

Good Process Goal