

Reflective Essay

I began my transect project by plotting a course with stops evenly spaced out but located on sites which appeared to contain promising potential leads. I walked from the east end of Davis to the west over the course of two days, taking careful notes throughout. At my pre-designated stops I took numerous photographs, sketches, observations, and questions alike. At my first stop at the police station I assumed the building was constructed in the 1970's – a presumption I quickly discovered was made in error. At my second stop I wondered what was happening on the inside of 434 G Street. And at my third stop I was curious about the relationship between UC Davis and the city and what the intersection would have looked like in the past.

Stop 1: the Davis Police Station

The first place I went to for answers to my questions was, of course, the Internet. cursory web searches revealed surface level information about my stop's contemporary presence. But I quickly reached a roadblock. While I was able to find basic information about the history of Davis's police department from the city's website and digitized annual reports, I was unable to pin down precisely when the building on 5th Street was constructed. From my later class visit to the map room in the basement of Shields Library I found maps of Davis from 1870, 1960, 1975, and 1984 all of which did not show the contemporary police station, or even development in its general area. What I wanted most to find was a photo of station when it was newly constructed. I realized that I had to dive further.

When my search through the online archives of the Aggie and Davis Enterprise proved fruitless, I decided to begin looking through the library's storage of historic microfiche. I had never used microfiche before (I had never even handled film before) but found the process to be quietly mesmerizing. I knew that the station was constructed in the early 2000's, and from that I extrapolated that I would need to look a couple years prior to that for articles about citizens contesting its location or for announcements over building delays. Because of this I began looking at microfiche from May of 1998. For fun I also examined some of the library's earliest Davis Enterprise microfiche: scans from 1900 (when it was still known as the Davisville Enterprise). Then in Diemer's "Davis From the Inside Out" I read that on December 31st, the Davis Enterprise publishes a list of the year's most important local news developments – including new buildings. This narrowed my search field significantly. Because Diemer's book was published in 2000 and made no mention of a new police station I began looking at Davis Enterprise year end rankings from 2001 onwards. Sadly this proved fruitless. Though I did not find precisely what I was looking for through my examination of historic microfiche, I found it nonetheless powerful to see a fuller picture of what Davis was like decades ago. Headlines about 9/11, which occurred only a month prior, dominated much of the scans from 2001. Articles about war in the Middle East appeared juxtaposed throughout gripes over rising home prices, complaints over water (classic California), and fears over an acceleration in development. Though I was unable to incorporate this research into my final paper I found it rewarding nonetheless. Highly opinionated opinion columns over the dangers of city expansion may not stand as a credible academic source in city planning, but it does flesh out a picture of concerned Davis citizens who care greatly about their town and its future.

HOMEWORK
 John Munn, left, and his wife, Shelley, right, held their daughter Jessica's study session on Spanish. Tonight is Munn's final meeting as a trustee of the Davis Board of Education. He is turning to study Assembly.

Munn pleased with term

Retiring trustee cites progress

November of that year but in the same election Davis voters failed to approve a \$20-million bond school district bond.

Known as Measure H, the bond needed a two-thirds majority to pass, but came up about 4 percentage points short of the two-thirds majority. The news was like a thunderbolt to Munn.

Munn said he had always approved school financing in the past. "I had anticipated that Measure H would pass," Munn said, looking back on his 1997 campaign. "One of my reasons for running was a concern about

On the spot



Assembly candidates answer questions Wednesday at UC Davis. From right are Lois Walk, Steve Hardy, Christopher Caberton and John Munn.

Taliban agrees to surrender Kandahar

Questions remain about arrest of supreme leader

By Robert H. Nash
 The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — The Taliban agreed today to surrender their last major Kandahar stronghold under a deal guaranteeing the safety of their supreme leader, Malah Mohammed Omar, officials of both sides said.

The fate of Omar remained a major question, with the news that he would have to distance himself from terrorism but leaving unclear if he would be arrested, as the United States has demanded.

Candidates reach out to students

Assembly candidates answer questions Wednesday at UC Davis. From right are Lois Walk, Steve Hardy, Christopher Caberton and John Munn.

The candidates — listed by the Associated Students of UC Davis State and National Affairs Office, the ASUCD Entertainment Council, the UCD branch of the California Public Interest Research Group — discussed candidates' views at the forum, which was held in a Young Hall classroom.

The three Democratic candidates and one Republican voiced interest in increasing political participation among 18- to 24-year-olds.

Suspect in clinic anthrax hoaxes nabbed

By John Wagner
 The Associated Press

CINCINNATI — An abortion foe who escaped from jail and spent months circumventing the nation has been arrested for allegedly mailing hundreds of anthrax hoax letters to abortion clinics, ending a months-long FBI's Most Wanted fugitive.

Clayton Lee Wagner, 40, was captured Wednesday at a village home in Cincinnati. Kinick's copy shop where he was using a rented computer. He had \$150,000 cash in his pocket and had a loaded .40-caliber handgun tucked into his waistband.

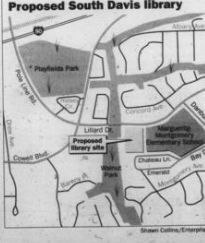
Library would be a South Davis center

Growth stretches services at city's main branch

By David Weinbaum
 The Associated Press

The goal is to build a library at South Davis. It's a 1.6-acre site in Walnut Park that's been zoned for a 30,000-square-foot main Davis Library at 1112 E. 18th St.

But neighbors don't properly describe what a new library would mean to the community. "We would alternate, overcommuting that should occur in the main library and serve the Walnut Park area," said the city's planning director.



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On the Web
 www.davisenterprise.com

Dow returns to 10,000 for first time since early September

By Lisa Shugart
 The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Dow industrial finished above 10,000 for the first time since September 11, 2001, as investors bet on a recovery in the oil market and on U.S. stocks.

But many analysts caution that the Dow's 25th post-9/11 recovery may not be enough to signal a prolonged uptick in the market.

Cops get laughs for patrol car

Davis police endure citizens' mockery of new generic vehicle

By REBECCA NOLAN
 The Enterprise staff writer



Mark Bullard/The Enterprise

The mockery began almost immediately.

Davis police Sgt. Jim Harritt was driving a patrol car around town Saturday when a tow truck driver yelled out his window that he liked the old one better.

The night before, a group of town trucks poked fun at Sgt. Darren Pyle when he stopped to talk to them at a local convenience store.

What is the target for all this public ridicule? The department's new sergeant's car, put to use for the first time Friday night.

Not the most sophisticated of designs, the stark white Ford bears the words "Davis Police" in big blue block letters on its sides. It has no stripes like the other cruisers parked in the lot next to the P Street station.

But the look isn't permanent, Harritt promised. The department has run out of the old badge-shaped decals that liven up the sides of the other patrol cars.

"We had to get something generic just to tide us over in the meantime," Harritt said.

Rolling around Davis day and night can take a toll on a automobile. The old sergeant's car was showing signs of wear and tear.

A few months ago, Pyle pulled the driver's door closed and the interior arm rest came off in his hands. The city's fleet services bolted it back on, but by the next day it had detached again.

Longer screws repaired the problem temporarily, but it was a sign that the old car had seen all the action it could handle.

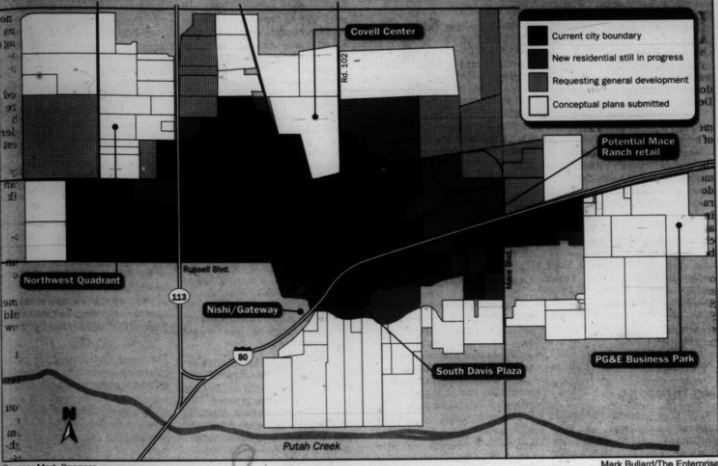
So now the department has a new car, and though it hasn't lost a door handle yet, it is still a little embarrassing, Harritt said, with his tongue firmly planted in his cheek.

A new design for all the patrol cars is in the works — possibly a return to the traditional black and whites — but in the meantime, the department asks that the citizens be understanding and not chastise the officers just because their car isn't the coolest.

Figure 1-4: Clips from the Davis Enterprise, late 90's to the mid-2000's.

OP-ED

Growth pressures along Davis' borders



Keeping our boundaries in sight

◆ We must be resolute against development pressures that would destroy our ag lands

By MARK SPENCER
 Staff to The Enterprise

For flatlanders it's time we acknowledge that size really does matter — that mountains of statistical data and "reasoned" argumentation which reconcile us to the inevitability of growth are not a substitute for vision and should not cancel our intuition or our aesthetic.

That Davis has grown too big, we've known from its bones for some time. And though we cannot pull back — roll up our side-walks and seed the land with corn or native grasses — we can at least stop where we are, and preserve the agricultural and open lands we have.

I grew up in southern Illinois some 40 miles from the giant Cahokia Indian Mounds in a remarkably flat town bounded by cornfields. Though our town had neotidian mounds nearby from which to memorize a view, we found vistas enough in the expanses of corn and sky which appeared suddenly at the end of streets or from behind houses.

The encircling proximity of these boundary lands defined us a sustained look at where we really are and who we really are. Unlike hill-peoples who are presented with intelligible boundaries at every turn, our boundaries do not show themselves until we are upon them. So keeping them close enough that they cross our daily paths is the challenge.

Threatened boundaries: key pressure points

Many of the qualities of life in Davis are inseparable from our remaining a small city. Keeping our boundaries in sight, then, is a very concrete way for us to ensure that the things we love about our city survive. Our General Plan boldly asserts that "Davis can demonstrate that small cities in the Sacramento metropolitan area need not become part of a Los Angeles-scale continuous urban mass." Yet since 1997 we have been demonstrating just the opposite.

Since 1987 we have more than met our "fair share" housing obligations under the Pass Through Agreement with Yolo County, completely fulfilling our commitments through 2010. Beyond the 3,900 unbuild units already approved by the council, we are under no obligation from any jurisdiction to approve or build a single unit more. Not at distinct, cohesive community we would be better to resist these proposals.

On our northern and eastern boundaries we will have to insist that Covell Center and the Northwest Quadrant remain agricultural/open space, and that no commercial or residential development occur north or east of Mace between Davis and the Causeway. Recent council decisions place these boundaries in danger.

Along our southern boundary we must keep the Gateway-Nishi tract agricultural. Visually speaking, the Nishi tract is the most important tract of undeveloped land bordering Davis. All those who approach UC Davis and Davis from the west, or who exit the city at Richards, are greeted with open fields, not with the freeway billboard showcased at Dixon and Vacaville. Yet the Nishi tract is slated for the kind of highway commercial development that has recently mushroomed across 1-80 in South Davis.

Unnecessary expansion: urban growth boundaries

In addition to specific projects, the concept of so-called "permanent" urban growth boundaries poses a very real threat, as well. As they are usual in agreeing to further distance our neighborhoods from our boundary lands we are likely to gain only more traffic, more freeway blight, greater school infrastructure deficits, and a further diminution of our agricultural economy.

We would be better to stand our ground now, ever mindful that Trojan horses, land speculators lodged in their hollow bellies, hide their time before the gates of sleeping cities. It is no coincidence that nationally and locally development interests back urban limit lines as a short term strategy (1) to manage the politics of sprawl which threatens to shut development of complete, and (2) to blunt more in innovative and ecological growth solutions, which though profitable are likely to be much less lucrative.

Redirecting growth: densification and UCD

Rather than embrace an expansive urban growth boundary we would do better to redirect development pressures inward in a manner and to a degree consistent with the character of our downtown and neighborhoods. We need to spur the university to implement a housing program for students, faculty and staff given the out-of-area marketing

50 years ago, Davis was small, quiet, cheap

By Elisabeth Sherwin
 Enterprise staff writer

These In 1952, Davis was a quaint little town. In terms of geography, it was a lot smaller than it is today, and its population, based on motor vehicle license fees collected by the state, was estimated at 3,554.

Pork chops cost 65 cents a pound, a can of sliced pineapple was 27 cents and a 10-pound bag of sugar cost 85 cents. The town was beginning to face growing pains but was doing so cheerfully.

The slogan of The Davis Enterprise was pure boosterism: "If it's for the good of Davis, The Enterprise is for it."

Now: Fifty years later, on the brink of 2002, Davis is still considered quaint. Unlike many medium-size towns, Davis has a busy retail center. But its residential neighborhoods are no longer confined to the Core Area; they have spread in every direction like a middle-age punch. It has a population of

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My failure to divine answers from reels of microfiche lead me to look elsewhere for answers about the police station. Because my previous interactions with the library’s Special Collections and Archives had proven so fruitful I decided to further explore stored primary documents. I searched the Online Archives of California, Calisphere, and the UC Davis Library catalog to find photos, maps, and any other primary sources I could get my hands on about the police station and its history. I had never before gone through physical archives to find information. Though the online research engines were complex to use it was well worth the time spent carefully searching through the collections. I struck gold with the City of Davis collection – boxes 18 and 4 had a treasure trove of information about the F Street joint City Hall, Fire Department, Jail, and Police Station. Again I found yet more fascinating information I lacked the time and space to discuss. An initially humorous letter from the architect of the building, P. L. Dragon, to city attorney N. D. Thomas about needing more funds struck me differently after realizing that it was sent in 1938, at the tail end of the Great Depression where architects were likely still struggling to recover and reliant on government-funded WPA projects like this one. I found pure enjoyment in watching how an extended conversation over the course of several months about filing cabinets (and the pros and cons of upgrading them to a handsome green color) developed. The scribbled accounts on sheets of aging paper, the small typo corrections, and the carefully saved magazine cut-outs of desired furniture all brought real life and humanity to historical figures who would otherwise have felt amorphous and lofty. Likewise examining Paul Dragon’s lovely handwritten blueprints and designs felt powerful. It filled me with a renewed passion for my major in landscape architecture.



Figure 5-7: Davis City Hall correspondence, cut-outs, blueprints, and other forms. (City of Davis collection boxes 4 and 18)

Though I never managed to find the “perfect photograph” I was searching for of the 5th street police station right after its construction, the stories I unearthed about the history of Davis’s municipal buildings were more meaningful and powerful than I could have predicted.

Stop 2: 5th and G Street

My Internet research at 5th and G Street produced general information about a Mars Wrigley office at 434 G Street and the USDA offices nearby. I found more information about it through a conversational interview with Mars employees working at their cacao greenhouses located UC Davis – Allison was particularly helpful in explaining their goal of developing a high level biosafety site for conducting IPM research.

Based on the rather sparse maps from Davis’s early history I had low expectations for primary source photographs and knowledge about the intersection. The information I was able to dig up on this stop was also generally more sparse because it was privately and commercially held, thus lacking the wealth of carefully archived public records that Davis’s police station had. I doubted that such a small field would have been of particular note until its incorporation in the city’s downtown. Therefore I was pleasantly surprised to find not one, but two photographs of the intersection of 5th and G in Lofland and Haig’s book “Davis California: 1910’s – 1940’s”. In other classes I have broadly studied the development of agriculture from horse drawn ploughs to computer controlled leveling and mechanization. And I have grown up hearing my parent and other folks around me complain how my hometown has gone from a farm area to an increasingly metropolitan suburb. Seeing photographs of the same area in Davis change from its inception to the present day, yet still retaining its connection to the area’s agricultural roots made me wonder what my hometown could have looked like had it retained its historic orange groves.

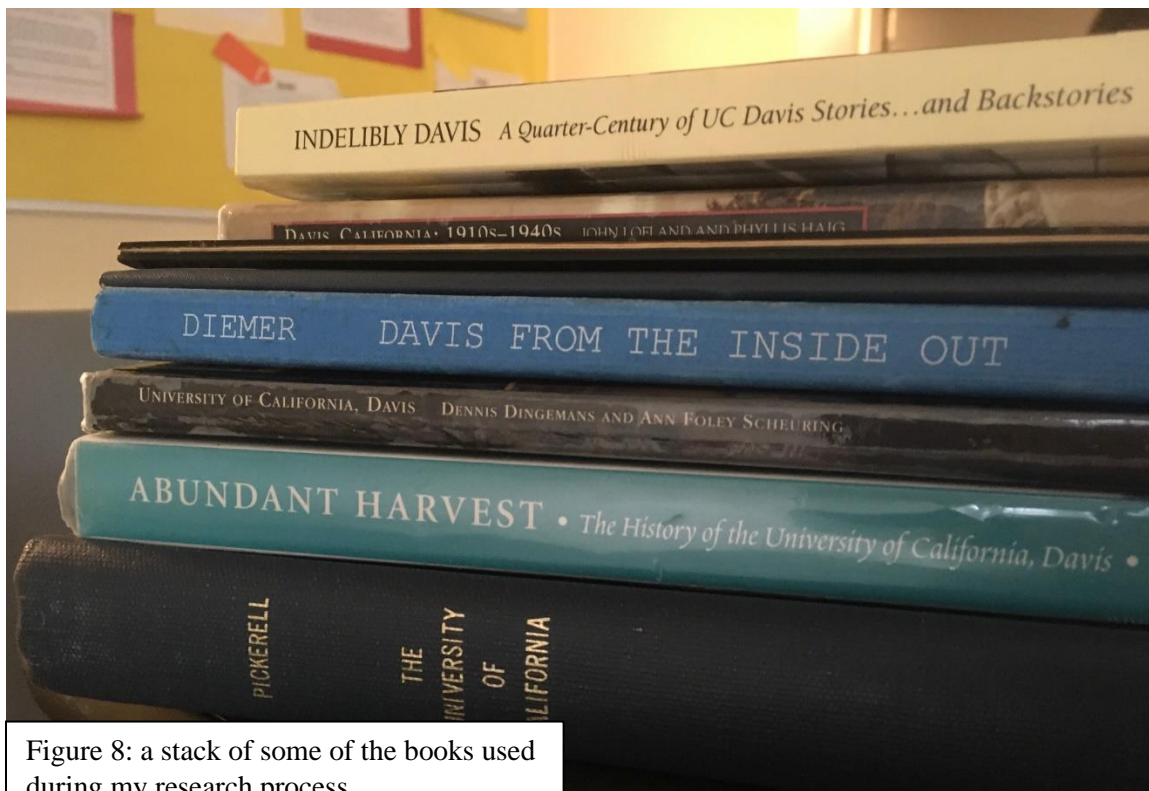


Figure 8: a stack of some of the books used during my research process.

Stop 3: Anderson and Russell

One of the challenges I encountered throughout my research was that many of the books I was encountering were about UC Davis and not about the city of Davis. Rather than viewing this as an obstacle I needed to overcome, I realized that this was a strong indication of how closely intertwined the two of them are. During this stop I was finally able to utilize many of the aerial photographs I had found of Davis. I found both photographs of the UC Davis College of Agriculture gate in Dingeman and Scheuring's book about UC Davis. The 1964 aerial photograph of Davis was the only one included in my transect which I got to see a physical copy of in the Davis map collection. All of the others were published in various other books of campus. I found synthesizing maps, traditional photographs, aerial photos and sketches together to be astonishingly exciting. Determining the perspective each photo was taken at and identifying salient landmarks was a wonderful experience. I used the distinctive overhead appearance of the Aggie Villa (a fork/horseshoe shaped neighborhood), the Segundo housing complex (four offset buildings surrounding a green), and the Quad to orient each overhead image of campus. After trying to explain why these photographs are fantastic to my friends, I quickly realized that not everyone was able to interpret or enjoy them as much as I did. Hence why I added annotations pointing out where Russell Boulevard and where my third stop was. I found these vivid graphic demonstrations of the changes in Davis to demonstrate the city and university's development more clearly than any (albeit enjoyable) books or historical records. As an architect in training it was crucial for me to communicate knowledge through strong photographs, maps, and other visuals rather than relying on the written word alone.

Conclusion

I was fascinated by the plethora of different primary resources available which brought me fresh insight into the history of Davis. What I wish I had better been able to discuss within my report was how completing this research helped me feel more connected and tied to the place I now call home. I see the buildings around me as havens for stories and past lives and history which is powerful and meaningful. Often the research I conducted told the stories of public officials and high level university faculty because that is the sort of knowledge which is archived and saved. The picture of Davis I sketch with my transect report is that of a macro sort of land-expansion based perspective which captures the development of the city from an impartial birds-eye perspective. While this approach is grounded in fact, its broad strokes paint over those who all too-often fall in the cracks of history. In the future I hope to do more research about the experiences of people of color, especially the indigenous populations and Japanese-Americans, in Davis.

Though my transect and subsequent research may be limited in scope, completing it has given me the toolkit I need to do more complex and detailed research in the future. It is common for histories of Davis to err on the overly expansive side, covering all of the city's history from its conception to the present. I appreciated how being restricted to a single east-west road forced me to think more carefully about spaces which I might have otherwise dismissed as historically unimportant. I look forward to revisiting the library's general stacks and special collections in the future!

Note: Please see "Works Cited" in my full report for the citations for images and sources used in this.