

BNC eNews, Issue 16

June 16, 2015 by [BNC Archivist \(Edit\)](#)

Welcome to the Sixteenth Issue of the BNC eNews

This is a Special Issue devoted entirely to development in the Downtown.

BNC holds that the Downtown belongs to every neighborhood and resident. The Downtown is the very heart and soul of our City — its government, its culture, its commercial vibrancy, its history and its future. The Downtown represents our City, and with all of that, it is also a neighborhood with thousands of residents impacted by a multitude of daily visitors. Great care must be taken in planning for both growth **and** the preservation of its history. Growth will occur, but we must be very, very careful about how to manage it.

BNC wants to engage our readers in the current critical discussion about its development. What happens now could result in the irreversible loss of the character of our City *if* the proposed developments are approved simply because they have been proposed and there is a blind rush to just “build” without care about the consequences. This is an issue that no resident or neighborhood can ignore, and the time has come for you to speak up, one way or the other. Please read thoughtfully not just what we provide, but other news sources as well, ask questions, get involved in this important discussion and above all observe carefully what your elected representatives and their appointees are doing.

There have been lots and lots of meetings about Downtown Development — at the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Zoning Adjustments Board, Design Review Committee and City Council. The discussion currently revolves mostly around the project at 2211 Harold Way, but moving up the ladder of concern is another at 2129 Shattuck Avenue (the Bank of America building) and a proposed UC building near Berkeley Way.

To try and sort this out, we’ve divided the information into 5 Parts:

PART I: A description of two Downtown Development Proposals, 2211 Harold Way (the Residences at Berkeley Plaza) and the hotel/condominiums at 2129 Shattuck Avenue.

PART II: A Brief History of How This All Came About.

PART III: What People Knew or Didn't Know About 2010 Measure R.

PART IV: All About Housing — how much, where and for whom.

PART V: Significant Community Benefits are supposed to provide that developers pay their “fair share” of the huge economic value given to them from the up zoning of the Downtown. Is that what's really happening?

PART VI: Comments on Movies, Art, Children, Views and When is Green really Green.

BNC asks that you not only get involved, but that you also send your thoughts and questions to us at bnc50@berkeleyneighborhoodscouncil.com so that we can as united neighborhoods, work together for a positive solution.