A Message to Our Readers:

In the process of compiling this report, it became clear that the interests of our university and the interests of our students are complementary, not competing. Far beyond providing a residence for students during their undergraduate or graduate careers, providing affordable student family housing – and plenty of it – accomplishes key institutional goals:

- Recruiting the best and the brightest students into our graduate programs;
- Improving the retention rate of our students;
- Achieving greater levels of diversity in our student population, including ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and nationality;
- Boosting the research productivity of graduate students; and
- Decreasing the normative time-to-completion for graduate degrees.

In order to achieve these goals, we have identified several challenges and opportunities that we ask you, our readers and university administrators, to consider:

1. **Challenge**: Provide enough affordable housing to make selecting UC Davis for graduate school an attractive option and allow matriculated graduate students to devote the majority of their time and effort to their research and the timely completion of their degrees.

2. **Challenge**: Redefining affordability. Most universities, including those within the UC System, define affordable housing by benchmarking it against the local market rate. Our research has shown that as a result of this strategy, which does not consider known student TA and GSR incomes, a significant portion of our student families struggle to afford housing.

3. **Opportunity**: Creating a family-friendly housing environment. Fortunately, the template already exists; Orchard and Solano Park have provided a model worthy of national emulation in this regard since they were first built in the 1960s.

4. **Opportunity**: Changing the customer service approach. Meeting the needs of our current and future student families necessitates a participatory management mindset, which can be summarized as “working with” as opposed to merely “working for” these residents.

5. **Opportunity**: Maintaining a collaborative dialogue with the community. The degree of student and community engagement in the redevelopment process has been extraordinary. Not only would the university benefit by tapping into this already existing pool of volunteer labor, but by continuing to do so it also creates a cohort of passionate alumni to whom it can turn for future donations.

The following report is the result of a collaborative effort between students, faculty, and staff to address the above goals for the future of student family housing on campus. It outlines the committee’s recommendations for thoughtfully designed and managed student family housing communities that will best meet the needs of our students and fulfill our institutional aspirations.

Sincerely,

The Student Family Redevelopment Committee
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The committee gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Mark Rutheiser, who helped us understand the
teasibility of various options; staff in Student Housing including Ramona Hernandez who researched and
summarized pertinent information; and Professor Sheryl-Ann Simpson and students in the Community
Participation course LDA 141 (Katherine Perkins, Gary Han, Jessica Friedman, and Jonathan Su) whose
efforts were instrumental in effectively engaging community members. Finally, thank you to all the students
and family members who shared their thoughts with us in focus groups, open forums and community
workshops.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Orchard and Solano Parks have made it possible for students with families and limited financial resources to not only survive but also thrive. However, the apartment buildings in the Parks are nearing the end of their useful lives and it is now time to consider the future of student family housing at UC Davis. The Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee focused on understanding the critical elements of these communities and the issues involved in continuing to provide exemplary student family housing at affordable rental rates.

CHARGE

The Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee was charged with developing broad principles related to student family housing that would:

1. Articulate the purpose and value of having student family housing on campus.
2. Identify the housing environment that will best meet the needs of student families.
3. Identify goals for affordability and develop strategies to meet these goals.

In addition, the committee was asked to (a) identify model housing facilities and funding models at other institutions that embody the principles that the group has articulated and that meet the expressed needs of our students with families, and (b) offer several scenarios for the redevelopment of Orchard Park consistent with the principles developed and information gathered from similar projects.

PROCESS

The committee’s work included:

1. Meeting with UC Davis staff to better understand (a) the history of student family housing, including the previous process that led to the establishment of our committee, and (b) the current budgetary issues and financial constraints.
2. Reviewing information on the Parks and relevant literature on student family housing.
3. Contacting staff and student leaders at other institutions to explore options and strategies to keep family apartment rates as affordable as possible.
4. Engaging community members by holding open forums, focus groups, office hours, community workshops and by conducting a survey of current and recent community members.
5. Working with students in the Community Participation course, LDA 141, related to engaging community members in our committee’s work.

PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

This report outlines the committee’s recommendations for thoughtfully designed and managed student family housing communities that will best meet the needs of our students and fulfill our institutional aspirations. In the event that providing one recommendation impacts the viability of another, most committee members view university delivery/management and maintaining the current level of affordability as the two top priorities. Following these two are the recommendations related to keeping the communities on campus, maintaining or increasing the number of affordable units, providing a variety of apartment sizes, and providing well-designed green space.
Below are the primary recommendations related to the three main focus areas:

**Affordability** – Includes issues that impact construction costs, rental rates, and students’ ability to afford the apartments.

**Facility Design** – Includes apartment size and design, housing density (units per acre) and shared indoor and outdoor public spaces (e.g., the community center, green space, and playgrounds).

**Quality of Life** – Includes issues that affect the residents’ quality of life, such as community support programs, policies, and procedures that contribute positively to a sense of community and belonging for students and their families.

**Affordability**

- For now, maintain at least the current level of affordability relative to a nine-month teaching assistant (TA) salary (rent for a two-bedroom is currently 59% of a TA salary). In time, reduce monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment to be 33% of a nine-month TA salary.
- Solicit donations to help cover construction costs that, in turn, will reduce rents.
- Put any additional development funds we receive in years to come toward an endowment that can bring the rents down even further.
- Consider redeveloping Orchard Park in phases as a strategy to support the recommendations to have UC Davis develop and manage the apartments as well as to maintain or increase the number of affordable apartments.
- UC Davis should contribute funds to lower the rents of the redeveloped communities to an affordable level.
- Densify by adding market-rate units to bring down the rents of the affordable units.
- Provide a rent subsidy program similar to the child care subsidy program. The funds for the subsidy could come from donations or student fees. However, the preference is to have funds go towards reducing rent than providing a subsidy.

**Facility Design**

- Provide a variety of apartment sizes including micro-units and studios as well as one, two and three bedroom units.
- Maintain green space, preserve shade trees, and make the open space useable.
- Design play areas that are safe and visible from inside the apartments and adjacent to community centers.
- Maintain the size of the apartments if this helps to keep the apartments more affordable.
- Ensure that the apartment complexes have visual appeal (architecturally interesting elements that soften the structure and break it down to a human scale).
Quality of Life

- UC Davis should develop and manage the apartments rather than a private, third-party developer even if doing so results in higher rents.

- Keep student family housing on campus. The proximity permits student parents to be more effective as parents, students, researchers, and teaching assistants. It is especially important for nursing mothers.

- Maintain and ultimately increase the number of affordable units. The current number of apartments (200 in Orchard and 276 in Solano) does not meet the current need and enrollment is projected to rise significantly by the end of the decade.

- Student Housing should practice a more participatory and collaborative approach to managing the apartment complexes. Residents should be meaningfully involved in the development of policies and procedures.

- Student Housing should improve customer service and be more responsive to residents’ concerns.

Many of the recommendations can be implemented with relative ease. Some of the recommendations related to quality of life are well within reach and we believe the facility design recommendations are easily attainable as well. Some of the recommendations are more challenging, particularly those related to affordability. A variety of strategies emerged as possibilities and a combination of them will undoubtedly be required to achieve our goal of affordable family housing. By continuing the dialogue and collaborative spirit with which this committee was formed, we believe that student family housing will continue to be an essential part of students’ support system and a model student family community.

- We have no family near. But we do have neighbors that take our children and care for them when a partner breaks his leg or when someone has a baby. We bring each other food, and when our bank accounts are empty at the month's end we have potlucks. We play together. Work together. Cry together. Our children grow up together. People here share. It's not a forced or rule-regulated community; it's a necessarily dynamic, evolving one (2015 community survey).
I. INTRODUCTION

In Chancellor Katehi’s invitation to the UC Davis community to envision the university of the 21st century, she calls on us to “reaffirm our commitment to the mission of the University of California to provide excellence, affordability, and access to higher education and medical care while we vow to become global in our perspective and reach in everything we do.”¹ Our Chancellor challenges us to ponder our potential to become a model public research university and to serve our students in the most contemporary way:

> I believe this is the right moment in our history to ask ourselves what university we would like to be a part of and what university we want to create. And I believe we must first determine and articulate the answers to these big, aspirational questions that define the university for the generations who follow us before we can best determine how to get there and which strategies and metrics we must embrace to be successful.¹

The Chancellor reminds us that students “want the connectivity of being a member of an educational cohort of students with complementary aspirations” and calls on us to create “an environment that supports human equity.”¹ Since they were built in the early 1960’s, the student family housing communities in Orchard and Solano Parks have achieved these goals – affordability, connectivity, and support. The affordable rents and strong sense of community have supported students in ways that the students can best describe:

– It is the community of residents here who are so entirely supportive and amazing. Living in Solano Park has been one of the best, most impactful experiences in my life. And I am choosing to do my PhD here largely due to this supportive, kind, and hardworking community (2015 community survey).

– Once able to settle in, I was overwhelmed by the demands of my graduate program. I realized that time at the playground talking with other parents was actually a wonderful de-stresser. When the weather turned warm and more and more neighbors began to play outside and have outdoor meals, I felt instantly part of a very unique community. I spent two summers studying for exams on my patio while my children played on the green space on the other side of my patio, which all of the neighbors in my building shared. They set up the bouncy house, swimming pools, barbecues and picnic tables and I was able to be both productive in my graduate work and a social and supported parent (2015 community survey).

– Having everyone all be in this together, all poor students just starting families, and in an environment that provided a really enticing setting (enough green space, great playgrounds, and good community center/events) to get us outdoors socializing with each other. All of this added up to a sense of community stronger than I have ever found in any apartment complex (or suburban housing area, for that matter) (2015 community survey).

– I met such wonderful people, and it was so nice to be able to have my kids play with other graduate students’ kids while we would talk. It is tough to have children while in graduate school, and having people to talk to, living nearby, was a source of so much support. (2015 community survey).

Orchard and Solano Parks have made it possible for students with families and limited financial resources to not only survive but also thrive. However, the apartment buildings in the Parks are nearing the end of their useful lives and it is now time to consider the future of student family housing at UC Davis. The Student Family

Housing Redevelopment Committee focused on understanding the critical elements of these communities and the issues involved in continuing to provide exemplary student family housing at affordable rental rates.

Finally, Chancellor Katehi asks us:

> What further policies, procedures, and practices can we consider to ensure that our diverse faculty, staff, and students experience an organizational environment characterized by equity, inclusion, academic freedom, freedom of expression, social justice, and a shared responsibility for supporting and enabling the success of others?²

This report is a collaborative effort of students, faculty and staff to answer this question as it relates to student family housing. These recommendations flow from many months of deliberation and consultation with numerous stakeholders in student family housing at UC Davis. Along with our recommendations, the report presents background information on the formation of this committee and offers a summary of key issues that it addressed and the processes that it engaged in while completing its work. The committee believes that our recommendations for thoughtfully designed and managed student family housing communities will best meet the needs of our students while fulfilling our institutional aspirations.

II. COMMITTEE CHARGE & PROCESS

Adela de la Torre, Vice Chancellor – Student Affairs, and Jeffery C. Gibeling, Vice Provost – Graduate Education and Dean – Graduate Studies charged the Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee to develop broad principles that will guide our thinking about student family housing with emphasis on the redevelopment of Orchard Park. They specified that these principles should:

1. Articulate the purpose and value of having student family housing on campus.
2. Identify the housing environment that will best meet the needs of student families.
3. Identify goals for affordability and develop strategies to meet these goals.

In addition, they asked the committee to (a) identify model housing facilities and funding models at other institutions that embody the principles that the group has articulated and that meet the expressed needs of our students with families, and (b) offer several scenarios for the redevelopment of Orchard Park consistent with the principles developed and information gathered from similar projects.

Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee Members

- Carlos Colman Meixner, graduate student in Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Marilyn Derby, Graduate Studies (Project Manager)
- Brittany Derieg, Student Affairs (Project Assistant)
- Aaron Fackler, graduate student in Transportation Technology and Policy
- Sandra Viviana Menza Franco, Solano Park resident and spouse of an international graduate student
- Assistant Vice Chancellor Clayton Halliday, Design and Construction Management
- Angel Hinzo, graduate student in Native American Studies and Graduate Student Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies and to the Chancellor
- Paul Johnson, graduate student in Political Science
- Professor Deb Niemeier, Civil and Environmental Engineering and Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
- Sara Petrosillo, graduate student in English
- Gordon Rees, graduate student in Soils & Biogeochemistry
- Ryan Reynolds, undergraduate student in Mathematics
- Professor Michael Rios, Human Ecology
- Cutcha Risling Baldy, graduate student in Native American Studies
- Associate Dean for Graduate Students Lenora Timm, Graduate Studies (Chair)
- Erica Vonasek, graduate student in Biological Systems Engineering and Chair, Graduate Student Association

Guided by Michael Rios, Associate Professor of Urban Design and Community Planning and Chair of the Community Development Graduate Group, the committee began by developing a timeline and proposing a structure for our work. We grouped the issues involved in student family housing into three focus areas: affordability, facility design, and quality of life. Initially the committee focused on gathering information to better understand the issues and options. As the issues related to quality of life and facility design were more straight-forward, we spent much of our time exploring and understanding affordability strategies including construction financing, operating cost reduction, and rent subsidies.

3 Charge to Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee
The committee’s work included:

1. Meeting with UC Davis staff who could help us to better understand (a) the history of student family housing, including the previous process that led to the establishment of our committee, and (b) budgetary issues and financial constraints. These individuals included Emily Galindo, Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs and Executive Director, Student Housing; Ramona Hernandez, Director, Business and Financial Services; Bob Segar, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Campus Planning and Community Resources; and Mark Rutheiser, Associate Director, Real Estate Services.

2. Reviewing information on Orchard and Solano Parks and data gathered for the previous process which was still useful for our purposes (e.g., Orchard Park Property Condition Assessment4).

3. Reviewing relevant literature on student family housing.5

4. Contacting staff and student leaders at other institutions to explore options and strategies to keep family apartment rates as affordable as possible.6

5. Engaging community members by:
   a. Listening and gathering input through:
      • Two open forums in September and one in February;
      • Three focus groups (Student Housing staff, youth currently living in Solano Park, and international students/family members);
      • One meeting with the Graduate Student Association;
      • Six individual meetings with students;
      • One survey of community members7;
      • One community workshop in March at which we shared the survey results, explained the issues related to affordability, and held small group discussions on quality of life, facility design, and affordability; and
   b. Sharing draft recommendations and soliciting feedback at a community meeting in May.

6. Examining every suggested strategy to keep rates as low as possible. The strategies the committee determined are worth pursuing are explained in the recommendations section.8

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6 Information on Financing Student Family Housing at Other Institutions – Appendix C and http://tinyurl.com/ucdavis-housing-comparison
8 A discussion of strategies that the committee explored and rejected is available at https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/2015-apt-affordability-options.pdf
7. Meeting with Student Housing staff because they were interested in addressing residents’ concerns as soon as possible rather than waiting until the conclusion of the committee’s work.

8. Working with Professor Sheryl-Ann Simpson and four students in her Community Participation course, LDA 141, related to engaging community members in our committee’s work. It was an opportunity for the students to apply the course material and practice their skills. They facilitated the youth focus group and did much of the work preparing for and facilitating the community workshop in March. These events were great successes in large part because the students were skilled and well prepared.
III. SETTING THE CONTEXT

Before our Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee could develop recommendations, we needed to better understand the issues, options, and implications for students, faculty, Student Housing, and UC Davis. This section summarizes the needs and issues that came to our attention related to student family housing. These include the broader implications for academia when graduate education and parenthood appear to be incompatible, the factors student housing departments must consider when setting rates, initiatives and goals for UC Davis, and the specific needs of our graduate students.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS OF STUDENT HOUSING OPERATIONS

...today, it is not unusual to find institutions attempting to serve their graduate and family housing customers with outdated facilities. Some institutions have committed funds over the years to family and graduate housing operations, and they are the ones better positioned for ongoing success. Others struggle to catch up with deferred maintenance issues without the benefit of either a subsidy from the institution or other housing units or a substantial increase in funds to support new construction. Many new construction projects that proceed do so with the risk of being less affordable and therefore changing the demographics of the community (Hernandez & Weider, 2013, p. 29).

...along with [other] responsibilities, a campus housing operation must also generate revenue to cover its expenses and, in many cases, help fund additional auxiliary services. Individuals are not always comfortable considering a campus housing operation in terms of a budget-driven, fundraising, bottom-line-driven business. However, no aspect of campus housing management may be more important than understanding and managing money (Bradley, 2013, p. 3).

These quotes address some of the housing-related issues at institutions such as UC Davis. Facing decreasing revenue from state funds and endowments, and in an effort to provide the best educational experience possible for students, many institutions look to their housing operations as a source of revenue to help fund curricular and co-curricular programs. Hence, housing operations are often caught between trying to keep rental rates low (to address students’ needs) and trying to raise the revenues needed to cover their expenses, to set aside funds for new construction and renovations, and sometimes to support other programs at the institution (to address institutional needs).

From our conversations with housing professionals at other institutions (including most of the other UCs), it seems that most institutions balance these competing concerns by setting rates at or below the market rate for similar apartments in the surrounding community.9 Student Housing at UC Davis aims for setting rates at 85% of the market rate. However, setting rates for the redeveloped student family housing anywhere near 85% of the market rate in Davis would mean that our communities would be unaffordable for a significant portion of our students – those of limited financial resources.

PARENTING AND GRADUATE EDUCATION

Orchard and Solano Parks have been temporary homes for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students with families and single graduate and professional students. Our report addresses some of the needs of single students, particularly single, low-income graduate students. But as the committee’s charge was to

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9 Information on Financing Student Family Housing at Other Institutions – Appendix C and http://tinyurl.com/ucdavis-housing-comparison
focus on the needs of student families and the majority of the students with families are graduate students, we attended to the needs of graduate student families in particular.

Student parents’ responsibilities and stressors are significant. In fact, they are so significant that many graduate students feel parenting and graduate education are incompatible. Some students choose not to have children during their prime child-bearing years. Others, after gaining new insight into the academic and career pressures of graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and pre-tenure faculty positions, change their career focus from academia to a career beyond academia.

Mason, Wolfinger and Goulden (2013) conducted three surveys of University of California doctoral students between 2002 and 2009. Of the 15,223 respondents, only 14% of men and 12% of women were parents. Noting that 32 and 33 are the median ages of male and female Ph.D. recipients respectively, and that over two-thirds of the women believed that the optimal time to have children is between 28 - 34 years old, the authors explored the reasons why so many graduate students elect not to have children during the perceived optimal age range (Mason et al., 2013, p. 9).

In their 2006-2007 survey, the authors asked UC doctoral students about their reasons for not having a child or uncertainty about having one (N = 3,880 – 4,353). The table below summarizes the percent of students who cited reasons related to their graduate school experience. (Other reasons related to their personal situation or future employment were included in the survey but are not listed in the table below.) The highlighted reasons are those that can be directly addressed by housing that is affordable and effectively supports student parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UC Ph.D. Students’ Reasons for Not Having a Child or Uncertainty about Having One</th>
<th>% Men</th>
<th>% Women</th>
<th>% Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time demands of current Ph.D. program/employment</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current level of personal household income</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress of raising a child as a Ph.D. student</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns regarding affordability/availability of quality childcare</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns regarding affordability/availability of quality housing</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns regarding affordability/availability of health insurance</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry that PhD program and caregiving are incompatible</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns regarding degree progress</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns about availability of pregnancy leave</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain current employment situation</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry advisor would take my work less seriously</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry other faculty might take my work less seriously</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry peers would take my work less seriously</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beyond our commitment to supporting students in their academic and personal goals, UC Davis also has a vested interest. In Do Babies Matter? Gender and Family in the Ivory Tower, the authors make the case that the academy is losing significant talent because of the difficulties of having children during prime child-bearing years.

[The graduate student and postdoc years are the time] when many women, and some men, turn away from an academic career after evaluating the academic workplace and reaching the conclusion that they cannot achieve a successful balance of work and family. . . . These critical years represent a
substantial leak in the academic pipeline. Ironically, these are the years receiving the least attention in recent campaigns to make family life more compatible with work life for academics. . . . The new academic workplace must create flexibility for family needs. Without this change academia will lose some of its most talented young stars. It is not just the right thing to do; it is the economically prudent strategy. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent by universities and the federal government to train the best and brightest through graduate school, postdoctoral fellowships, and early tenure-track years to become the new creators of knowledge and innovation. Our sizable investment is lost when our most promising minds abandon academia after this prolonged training period (Mason et al., 2013, p. 96).

Attending graduate school and having a family can be compatible. The authors shared an example of a student at UC Berkeley whose “decision to start a family was strongly influenced by the benefits available to graduate student researchers at Berkeley, which include subsidized childcare and family housing, evening and weekend childcare to support study time for parents, free healthcare for graduate student researchers and instructors, and breast-feeding support” (Mason et al., 2013, p. 22).10

While some of the programs offered in this example are beyond the focus of our report, UC Davis has offered affordable student family housing communities that have provided exceptional support to student parents. Sara Petrosillo, a graduate student member of the committee, reflects on how life in the Parks benefits students.

> For fifty years Solano and Orchard Parks have fostered a community in which student families support one another in innumerable ways including parenting, childcare, breastfeeding, academic, nutrition, well-being, cultural, and financial. The support network inherent to the Parks is something the university does not directly have to fund in order to support normative time to degree, keep graduate students on-track, and reduce attrition. The strong community already in existence at the Parks provides residents an antidote to the stresses and pressures that would otherwise force many women to drop out of their programs.

In many ways, Orchard and Solano Parks are model student family housing programs. Our current challenge is how to continue providing exemplary student family housing at affordable rental rates. Of the issues the committee explored (quality of life, facility design and affordability), the most difficult aspect of our challenge relates to affordability.

**UC DAVIS INITIATIVES AND GOALS**

UC Davis is committed to a substantial increase in enrollment, as articulated in the 2020 Initiative.11 Given the extremely low vacancy rate of 0.3% in Davis, housing these students continues to be a significant challenge.12

With insufficient cash in reserves to fully finance housing redevelopment and a limited debt capacity, our administration needs to carefully consider the options for financing new construction for undergraduate and graduate housing. We must also consider how these financing options would impact the design, management, and affordability of the facilities. Finally, we must consider how the design, management, and

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10 For additional information on UC Berkeley’s programs, see Berkeley Parent Support Programs [http://grad.berkeley.edu/financial/families/](http://grad.berkeley.edu/financial/families/)


affordability would impact residents’ quality of life and educational experience as well as our institutional ability to attract and retain students.

In their report, “Prioritizing and Strengthening Graduate Education at UC Davis,” the Joint Administration / Academic Senate Special Task Force on Graduate Education makes the case for student family housing that meets students’ needs.:

In order to recruit and graduate students among the best in the country, we must bolster commitments of campus resources, provide superior academic and professional opportunities, and cultivate a satisfying graduate student experience (p. 2).

A suitable living situation for graduate students and (in many cases) their families, is crucial to students’ academic and social success. Especially in light of growth objectives for our campus, relevant campus constituencies should carefully assess the current use and need for campus housing for graduate students and graduate student families, attending as well to child care resources (p. 23).

Addressing concerns related to the earlier redevelopment plan for Orchard Park (which initially included significantly higher rents), members of the Davis Faculty Association raised the important issue of diversity. “It is likely [that] this redevelopment plan will have an adverse impact on the ability of UC Davis to recruit a broad spectrum of graduate students, since students from under-represented backgrounds often have lesser monetary resources. This change will [seriously] undermine the efforts that faculty and the university generally are making to bring a diverse set of graduate students to our campus.”

Recent data demonstrate, once again, that students from less affluent families have much lower graduation rates than students from more affluent families. Dr. Susan Dynarski, a professor of education, public policy and economics at the University of Michigan, recently published an article in The New York Times, “For the Poor, the Graduation Gap Is Even Wider Than the Enrollment Gap.” For students in the highest quartile of educational achievement in high school (most similar to UC Davis students), 74% of the students from the most affluent backgrounds had achieved a bachelor’s degree 12 years after high school compared to only 44% of students from least affluent backgrounds. As housing is one of the most significant expenses for students, providing more affordable housing is an important element of our institutional effort to support students from under-privileged backgrounds.

- Below market-rate student Family housing was the only way I, as an undergraduate single parent, could afford to move to Davis to go to school to better my life for my son. The fact that UC Davis had affordable and well maintained student family housing, with lots of open space for my son to play in with other kids, was a big factor in my decision to come here for school (2015 community survey).

- Being a single parent going to school is one of the toughest tasks I have encountered, and without living at Solano Park I may not be able to go to school and have the resources to provide for my daughter and my education (2015 community survey).

15 http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/02/upshot/for-the-poor-the-graduation-gap-is-even-wider-than-the-enrollment-gap.html?r=1&abt=0002&abg=0
UC DAVIS STUDENT NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Three recent surveys of UC Davis students provide insight into what our students need in family housing. In preparation for the development and redevelopment of housing for graduate students who are single, married/partnered, and have children, Student Housing surveyed students in 2012. In 2013-14 the UC Davis Chancellor’s Graduate and Professional Students Advisory Board surveyed graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. Finally, in March 2015, our committee surveyed community members. Respondents included current residents of Solano Park, former residents of Orchard and Solano Parks, and students/scholars who have never lived in the Parks. These surveys helped us to better understand students’ concerns, needs, and priorities. Relevant findings from each of these surveys are summarized below.

2012 Student Housing Survey

In 2012, Student Housing surveyed all graduate students, families registered through the WorkLife Balance office, and residents of the Parks and Atriums apartments (1255 respondents). Of these, 139 or 11% were students with children and 12% of the student parents were single parents.16

![Table](https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/2012-housing-survey.pdf)

Average level of importance in selecting apartment (1 not at all, 2 slightly, 3 important, 4 fairly, 5 very)

- 4.49 - Rent price
- 3.79 - Free parking
- 3.60 - Family-friendly area
- 3.04 - Size of the living space
- 4.03 - Age of facilities
- 3.62 - Proximity to campus
- 3.74 - Amenities
- 2.05 - Housing to students only

2013-14 UC Davis Chancellor’s Graduate and Professional Students Advisory Board Survey

In 2013-14, the UC Davis Chancellor’s Graduate and Professional Students Advisory Board (CGPSA) conducted a survey related to housing and family needs to which 459 graduate students and 67 postdoctoral scholars responded.17 18

- 20% stated that their income was below $20,000 per year and 30% stated that their income was between $21,000 and $30,000 per year.
- 9% of respondents with families stated that their income was less than or equal to $20,000 per year and 26% stated that their income was between $21,000 and $30,000 per year.

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• 40% stated that the availability of affordable housing impacted their decision to study or continue at UC Davis.

• 44% often worried about money to the point that it affected their work or academic performance.

• 51% stated that they did not plan to have any or more children and 20% were not sure. Of those 374 respondents, most cited reasons of academic stress and pressure, difficulty being academically successful with children, or a desire to focus on their career. However, 12% cited a lack of childcare or medical services, 16% cited a lack of family support, and 10% cited financial considerations. Many students added comments such as, “Want to wait to have kids until I can afford it. I can’t imagine having a family on a TA or GSR salary” (2013-14 CGPSA survey).

• 55.26% of respondents with families identified the availability of support for families (child care, health care, etc.) as major factors that impact their decision to continue at UC Davis.

2015 Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee Survey

In March 2015, the Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee conducted a survey to assess community members’ priorities related to the many aspects of student family housing. Some of the options that had been suggested to lower construction costs or rental rents might require certain trade-offs (e.g., lowest possible rental rates versus university development). The survey had 146 respondents who shared their preferences and comments on each of the identified options. Of these, 51% were parents with children and 21% were partnered with no children. Most respondents either currently live in Solano Park (32%) or recently lived in one of the Parks (38%).

• 87% are open to increasing the density of the Parks.

• 58% prefer that the University finance, construct, and manage the project, even if it means higher rent.

• 23% of teaching assistants and graduate student researchers rely on their stipend as their sole income.

• 32% of student respondents stated that their income was less than or equal to $20,000 per year and 35% stated that their income was between $20,001 and $30,000 per year.

• 29% of student respondents with families stated that their income was less than or equal to $20,000 per year and 36% stated that their income was between $20,001 and $30,000 per year.

• 35% use government assistance programs (e.g., WIC, CalFresh, free reduced lunch, MediCal, etc.).

When asked to rank options related to facilities, respondents’ top three priorities are (1) affordability of the apartment, (2) preserving open outdoor space, and 3) having a variety of apartment options.

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19 2015 Student Family Housing Satisfaction & Redevelopment Priorities Survey
IV. PRIMARY ISSUES: AFFORDABLE HOUSING, FACILITIES DESIGN, & QUALITY OF LIFE

The issues related to student family housing can be grouped into three main focus areas:

**Affordability** – Includes issues that impact construction costs, rental rates, and students’ ability to afford the apartments.

**Facility Design** – Includes apartment size and design, housing density (units per acre) and shared indoor and outdoor public spaces (e.g., the community center, green space, and playgrounds).

**Quality of Life** – Includes issues that affect the residents’ quality of life, such as community support programs, policies, and procedures that contribute positively to a sense of community and belonging for students and their families.

Because a significant portion of our students must support their families on very limited incomes, the affordability of housing is a primary concern. Although students have been relatively satisfied with the design of the Parks and the community that has developed in these facilities, these areas are just as important to students and their families. Thus we felt it necessary to understand the factors that affect these three areas: housing affordability, facility design, and quality of life in student family housing.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Student income and access to financial support varies significantly. Students with higher incomes or more financial support have more options and can often find housing that meets their needs and is affordable for them. This is not the case for many students. Students who need the type of affordable housing historically provided by Solano and Orchard Parks have very few options. They cannot afford apartments with the square footage and amenities to which many of us are accustomed. While they are students on very limited budgets, they need basic, functional, affordable accommodations.

**Davis lacks adequate affordable housing.** In fact, the market is tight and getting tighter. The 2013 vacancy rate in Davis was 3.5% and the most recent vacancy rate is 0.3%. With such high demand and short supply, rental prices in Davis are very high compared to surrounding communities. In addition, students reported their inability to get housing in the area because many apartment complexes require proof of income equivalent to 2.5 to 3 times the rent, which they often do not have. Even at the more affordable rates offered in the Parks, many students reported that more than half their income goes to pay rent.

**The need for affordable housing among graduate students is significant.** In Yolo County, residents whose incomes are below specified levels are eligible for subsidies through the federally-funded Section 8 tenant-based Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) assistance program. According to the three recent surveys of UC Davis student families, at least 57% qualify for federal rent assistance.22

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21 Yolo County Housing [http://www.ych.ca.gov/new_residents/index.php](http://www.ych.ca.gov/new_residents/index.php)
Percent of student families that qualify for rent subsidies at each level

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 - 29</td>
<td>extremely low-income (income at or below 30% of median income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 67</td>
<td>very low-income (income at or below 50% of median income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57 - 84</td>
<td>low-income (income at or below 80% of median income)</td>
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Based on a careful analysis of the 2013-14 CGPSA survey data, a conservative estimate for the percentage of graduate and professional students with at least one child is 21 - 27%, or 930 - 1142 graduate student parents. Using the lowest percentage of the UC Davis student respondents who qualify for rent vouchers, we can estimate that 57% of the estimated graduate student parents (530 - 651) are considered low-income in Yolo County. Added to these student families, are low-income undergraduate student families, married/partnered students, and single graduate students. (The committee was unable to access data on the estimated numbers of these students.) In addition, analysis of the CGPSA data revealed that between 40 - 50% of the student families who live in Davis and are eligible for affordable housing (using Yolo County standards) were paying at least $1,000 in monthly rent as of winter quarter 2014. These analyses indicate that with only 476 apartments, Orchard and Solano together do not come close to meeting the current need for affordable housing for student families living in Davis and the enrollment is only expected to increase.23

The demand for affordable housing will rise. UC Davis’ 2020 Initiative calls for an increase of 5,000 undergraduate students.24 If the proportions of students remain the same (79% undergraduates, 14% graduate and 6% professional students in 201225), we can expect an increase of about 900 graduate students and 400 professional students.

Providing affordable housing supports institutional goals. It increases the likelihood that prospective students will apply and admitted students will enroll. Issues related to affordable housing can have a significant impact on students’ normative time to degree. As noted above, 40% of the students surveyed by the CGPSA stated that the availability of affordable housing impacted their decision to study or continue at UC Davis.

– Please, UCD! Graduate students live with a very limited budget but are the ones who do the research and write grants to get funding for UCD research. We are a valuable asset!! Affordable housing is far away from campus, which is a big problem when having kids (pay for parking space on campus when biking is not possible, pay for gas, commute here and there...). Please, please! We need affordable housing! (2013 community survey).

– We have considered moving outside of Davis, but were urged by my advisors to settle in Davis because of the "great schools." Having struggled to make it work, we would move but now our daughter has settled here and we hesitate to uproot her yet again to move to Woodland or another more affordable town. I am very upset about this and have considered quitting the program. In many ways I regret my decision to come to Davis because it has brought us nearly to financial ruin. We have years ahead of us. I wish I had gone with the other school I considered. It was in a town with a cheaper cost of living. For a family like ours, that will become the single most important factor in my ability to finish my degree (2015 community survey).

FACILITY DESIGN

Students and family members need to have basic needs met in their living spaces (e.g., safety, security, functionality). They need a community that is aesthetically pleasing and built to human scale. Additionally, in order to achieve the four elements necessary for a strong sense of community (see the next section – Quality of Life), residents need to spend quality time together and develop relationships. The design of residents’ apartments, community facilities, and landscaping has a profound impact on the quality of residents’ lives.

Festinger, Schachter, and Back (1950) and Mercer (1985) found that in an apartment complex the physical setting and the proximity of apartments to each other determined the pattern of social life by influencing the number of chance meetings among residents. These passive contacts formed the basis for the development of friendships, which may have been the key to reducing stress. Taylor (1982) noted that neighborhoods can reduce stress by promoting social interaction, social control, a sense of security and ease, organizational ties, collective identity, and a sense of place for socialization (Whalen & Winter, 1987, p. 28).

Student families need basic, functional, comfortable living spaces. They overwhelmingly agree that they do not need or want large apartments with upscale amenities. If they want to gather as a larger group, they are able to do so outside or in a community center. They want shaded areas for the community to gather outdoors and for children to safely run and play. They appreciate the park-like setting created by the lawns, benches, and large shade trees. Finally, the community garden provides an option for affordable, fresh vegetables and a meaningful task for some of the older residents such as a student’s parent or grandparent.

– I really liked the grass and playgrounds for my children to play in. We lived outside every day and it was wonderful. I enjoyed the sense of community that prevailed and felt safe among my neighbors. We lived at Alhambra prior to living at Solano. I [we] didn’t feel any of that enjoyment of nature and outdoors or community support while living there. Also, I thought it would be really hard to live in 600 sq ft, as it was the smallest apartment we had ever lived in and we had the most family members we had ever had (two parents and two children). But it was well worth the squeeze because of how enjoyable it was to live on campus with other student families and enjoy such a sense of community. We really loved it! (2015 community survey).

QUALITY OF LIFE

In every conversation and in every survey students stressed a strong sense of community as essential to the quality of life in student family housing. Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (1998) propose that a strong community is “not just a place where interaction occurs, but a spirit of connection and commitment that sustains relationships and purpose” (p. 229). McMillan and Chavis (1986) outlined four elements to define sense of community:

1. a feeling of belonging or of sharing a sense of personal relatedness,
2. a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group,
3. integration of the feeling that members’ needs will be met by the resources received through their membership in the group, and
4. shared emotional connection based on shared experiences, common places, and time together.
A STRONG COMMUNITY EXISTS

Current and former residents of the Parks overwhelmingly agree that the elements of a strong sense of community exist in the Parks. The many benefits of living in a well-developed, on-campus community of student families include:

Support and Trust - Residents live in a community of shared values, needs, experiences, and struggles (education, diversity, limited financial resources, modest lifestyle, academic requirements, research, professional development, life balance). They support and trust each other with their children.

- With limited funds available for child care and other expenses, we depend on each other for informal babysitting cooperatives. It’s a place where we can develop close, trusting relationships with neighbors much more quickly than we could in a typical apartment complex off-campus. New students with families need that level of support (2013 community survey).

Programming - Residents attend programs designed specifically for residents’ needs.

- While living off-campus in my first year of grad school at UCD, whenever we visited Orchard Park, there was a thick and glorious sense of community that you could feel just walking on the grounds there. After I moved to Orchard Park in my second year here, that feeling was still there, outdoors, and in large measure because of the frequent programs and activities for residents designed to get us out of our apartments and socializing with each other. The community center and the picnic tables and shaded playground area immediately adjacent to that center were absolutely indispensable for facilitating the programs and helping to create that strong sense of community (Paul Johnson, graduate student committee member).

Effectiveness as Parents, Students, and Researchers - Living in proximity to academic facilities permits students to be more involved in children’s lives and better attend to family and academic responsibilities. This proximity is particularly important for nursing mothers.

Directly feeding the infant from the breast during the workday is the most effective strategy for combining breastfeeding and work in terms of the breastfeeding outcomes of change in breastfeeding intensity and duration of concurrent behavior. Pumping milk only is an effective strategy for maintaining breastfeeding intensity after return to work, but it is less effective than directly feeding the infant for breastfeeding duration after return to work. Establishing ways for mothers to directly feed their infants after they return to work is important for meeting U.S. breastfeeding goals of total breastfeeding duration for at least 12 months. (Fein, Mandel, Roe, 2008).

As one student parent put it, “Experiments do not follow a 9-5 work day and neither do children.” The proximity increases student parents’ effectiveness in all their roles and reduces stress.

Sustainability - Proximity to campus also increases the likelihood that students will walk or bike to class and research facilities.
**Diversity** - Few campus environments are as effective at bringing together individuals of diverse identities for genuine, authentic, and sustained interaction. It is in environments such as student family housing that some of our most challenging institutional diversity goals are achieved.

– *Living in Orchard Park felt like the way to achieve real world peace. There were students from all over the world living together with all the different cultures to share. We all helped each other out. We loved it* (2015 community survey).

**QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES RELATED TO MANAGEMENT**

Yet, even with all that is going so well in student family housing, our committee found that some aspects related to residents’ quality of life need to be addressed – particularly related to management. Before discussing the issues that emerged, it is important to note that survey respondents and students who spoke with us also praised Student Housing staff. Although there is room for improvement in resident satisfaction, residents generally seem to feel more positive than negative overall. For example, current and former residents of the Parks rated their experience with the process of applying for and being placed in an apartment between neutral and positive (2015 community survey).

The survey also asked about issues such as residents’ experience during the first few weeks, policy enforcement, perception of staff concern about the quality of residents’ lives, and whether concerns were addressed. On average, residents reported feeling somewhat positive on all these issues.²⁶

The majority (82%) of residents supported the establishment of a student advisory board to work with Student Housing staff related to the development and enforcement of housing policies and procedures. Student Housing staff have already organized an advisory board for Solano Park, which began meeting in May 2015. In addition, staff responsible for the assignments process are working on clarifying and getting resident feedback on how units should be reserved and how the lease signing process can be improved.

**Perception of Student Housing** - Too many residents do not have a positive perception of Student Housing. Residents reported a lack of understanding of the policies and procedures as well as their rationale. In fact, many residents reported feeling that Student Housing is more concerned with enforcing seemingly unnecessary policies (often accompanied by a sizable fine) than they are with providing excellent customer service and attending to residents’ needs.

²⁶ 2015 Student Family Housing Satisfaction & Redevelopment Priorities Survey
Students also expressed frustration with a lack of customer service (e.g., the Solano office is closed after 4:00pm and on weekends, making it difficult for students to get assistance since many of them are researching or teaching on campus during normal weekday hours). Although many staff members in Student Housing are very concerned about the residents’ quality of life, the fact that this perception exists is a significant issue that needs to be addressed.

– It’s been my experience and others’ that when we raise concerns, we are often dismissed or rebuffed. Frequently we do not feel heard (2015 community survey).

– Student Housing is incredibly difficult to work with. They have a reputation for saying “no” to whatever is asked. I have never had a positive interaction with them (2015 community survey).

Clarity, Transparency & Effectiveness of the Assignments Process - Many students reported that the process of getting an apartment was a challenge to understand. For some students, actually accomplishing all the steps necessary to sign a lease was difficult or impossible. This is particularly true for international students. Many spouses and partners of international students unable to meet the requirements within the specified time frame. These international families are thus unable to secure housing on campus during their first, and often, most difficult year. Furthermore, by the time a new student is admitted, most of the more reasonably-priced apartments in the community have been rented. These students are left trying to figure out how to rent an apartment sight-unseen when they are unfamiliar with the culture and rental processes. Achieving our institutional goals of increasing our international student enrollment requires us to attend to these needs.

– The only issue I had as a new international student was to not be allowed to register for the waitlist while I was overseas. Student Housing kept telling me the waitlist was closed, however, when I arrived I learned that the waitlist is open all year around. There needs to be better information for international student on how to apply (preferably online) for student housing before they arrive in Davis (NOTE: international students are NOT allowed to enter the country earlier than 30 days prior to the beginning of the school year, they rarely get campus visits and are thus in a difficult position to apply for student housing in person and/or by writing out a check (which requires a US bank account, which in turns requires proper legal paper work such as DS 2019, or I-20) for the application process - this issue needs to be solved, for instance allowing international students to sign up for apartments and paying the fee once they arrive) (2015 community survey).

Orientation to Student Family Housing & Community Resources - While UC Davis and Student Housing provide support to new students and their families, some students and family members need better support during their transition. International students are often unfamiliar with institutions such as childcare, the school system, and healthcare in the United States. For some residents, particularly those whose English skills are not yet strong, the transition process can be very difficult. Just finding grocery stores that stock familiar foods or finding transportation to get to those stores can be significant challenges. Additionally, families of limited financial resources could use assistance accessing state and federal support programs.

– The staff at Orchard Park were unaware of the Davis community and were not invested with the families. For example when I asked what the local school was I was given the response of “I have no idea.” This is unacceptable. It is an important job to make sure families are as comfortable with their new homes as are freshman. There are no resource offered to families about how to navigate Davis and options available to kids. I can imagine this only being worse for international students. . . . I felt left to fare on my own while trying to settle my kids and start my education (2015 community survey).
V. RECOMMENDATIONS

As in the previous section, we’ve grouped most of our recommendations into our three areas of focus: affordable housing, facility design, and quality of life. A few recommendations pertain to more than one focus area and these we discuss separately: rebuilding rather than renovating, university delivery rather than third-party development, and maintain or increasing the number of affordable units. In the process of talking with community members and university staff, reviewing the literature on student family housing and affordable community housing, and exploring methods employed at other institutions, we came across a variety of potential solutions and approaches. Where appropriate, we offer these strategies to achieve our recommendations.

REBUILD RATHER THAN RENOVATE

Orchard Park should be rebuilt rather than renovated. After conducting an in-house review of the facilities and then contracting with an outside consultant to perform a facility condition assessment, it was determined that the investment for renovation was too costly. The difference between a significant renovation project and building new was minimal. Additionally, the consultant reported that a significant renovation project would only yield 15-25 years of useful life while a newly constructed property would have an expected life of 50-60 years.27

UNIVERSITY DELIVERY RATHER THAN A PRIVATE, THIRD-PARTY DEVELOPER

In the previous redevelopment process, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was developed to solicit proposals from potential third-party developers for the project. The RFQ stated, “UC Davis seeks a Project that will result in the lowest possible rental rates for its students while including certain amenities such as on-site playgrounds, in-unit laundry facilities and a community center that includes child activity space, meeting space and study space” (p. 3). The committee selected University Student Living because they specialized in developing affordable housing and the goal of the project was to be as “affordable as possible” (Real Estate Services staff member, during a presentation to community members on March 13, 2014). Both their initial proposal and their revised plan offered an inadequate number of units that they defined as affordable, and those were in fact far from affordable for our graduate student population (March 2014).

The majority of our committee members believe that it is not possible for a third-party developer to ultimately operate according to the students’ best interests. Given that the previous redevelopment committee selected University Student Living as the best option, we do not foresee that choosing a third-party developer again would produce results different enough to make this a viable option.

The development costs may be significantly lower because a third-party developer may be less-constrained with contractor selection and construction/management standards, and its contractors may not be required to pay its construction workers or maintenance staff prevailing wages.28 However, staff in Real Estate Services explained that privately developed projects may not necessarily result in significantly lower rental rates for


28 Prevailing wage is a pay scale that is established by regulatory agencies for public work. A housing project on campus may be considered a public work if any amount of public funds is used in the development of the project. When delivered by a private party, and no public funds are used, a project may be exempt from the prevailing wage requirement. Prevailing wages can increase overall construction costs by 10-20%.
students because the third-party development scenario includes profit for the developer/landlord. According to one financial model we considered (developed by staff in Real Estate Services), contracting with a private developer may only result in an average decrease in rental rates of $24 per two-bedroom unit.

The majority of the students surveyed and the committee agree that the benefits of having the apartments owned and managed by the University exceed the value of the rate decrease. In fact, 58% of respondents stated that they would prefer to have the University finance, construct, and manage the project, even if it means higher rent, whereas 27% would prefer a third-party developer if it means lower rent.²⁹

The majority of committee members do not support the option of third-party development because we feel it would run counter to our mission – to make recommendations that are in student families’ best interests. A residential housing community for student families is a critical component of creating an overall supportive experience for students as they pursue their academic goals. Issues that emerge for student families in their residential communities affect students’ academic experience, and it is thus crucial that we protect these communities. Most committee members are concerned that the community’s interests may ultimately be neglected by a third-party developer.

– Being able to delay rent a month in the case of emergency (as often is the case in September or October when we are not paid for working until November) is key. A third party developer would not do this (2015 community survey).

A third-party developer’s mission is not education. If issues arise for residents living in a private development, the management is under no obligation to address residents’ concerns beyond their contractual agreement with the university. If a private landlord is not responsive to residents’ needs, residents have the option of moving at the end of their lease. While the same is true for student families, affordable options for families are extremely limited; moving a family with young children is very disruptive, and there are no other communities that support student families as effectively as a community of student families.

We feel that the adoption of a third-party developer would ultimately mean that the university would lose control over prioritizing student community wellbeing, including the option to decrease rent to our goal of 33% of a TA salary. Many student concerns regarding their residential situation would need to be directed to private management, which does not share the university’s directive and obligation to protect the interests of students or understand how intimately student living situations are connected to academic success. The institution has a stake in the success of its students; third-party developers do not.

If the university opts for a private developer, we can only address those issues that are currently apparent and written into the contract for the next 60 years. Under UC Davis oversight, residents can work with administrators to collaboratively manage the community and retain the ability to address future needs and opportunities as they emerge. As discussed in Appendix D – Best Practices Related to Quality of Life, involving residents in the management of the community is a best practice that supports community development and resident satisfaction.

Affordability has remained the number one priority of student residents. Yet the affordability of units at Solano Park and Orchard Park is a result of the university’s imperative to offer the most affordable option to student families; it does not derive from a percentage of market rate rental costs in Davis. Given the unique financial and support needs of graduate student families living under federal poverty level, a majority of committee

²⁹ 2015 Student Family Housing Satisfaction & Redevelopment Priorities Survey
members maintain that a university-run development is the only option for keeping those needs as a top priority. To ensure that it meets students’ needs for the life of the complex, the university needs to be responsible for affordable housing, not a third-party developer.

To convey the sentiments of the majority of committee members and the students with whom we spoke, we developed a questions-and-answer dialogue that we believe articulates the primary issues of concern to university administrators who might be inclined to opt for third-party development and those of students and committee members who support university delivery. See Appendix E.

MAINTAIN OR INCREASE THE NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE UNITS ON CAMPUS

The committee recommends keeping both Orchard and Solano Parks as affordable family housing communities and, at a minimum, maintaining the number of affordable units on campus (476 units, with Orchard and Solano combined). Given the expected growth in the graduate and undergraduate student populations and the high need for affordable family housing, it would be ideal if the number of affordable units on campus could be increased, as they will have to serve students over the next 50-60 years. Other considerations will limit the number of affordable units each site can support. For example, market-rate units will likely need to be included in order for the redevelopment to be financially feasible and issues related to quality of life and facility design need to be addressed as well.

Maintaining affordable student family housing on campus is important to the well-being of our student parents and their families.

— It’s absolutely vital that parents, especially breastfeeding mothers like myself that work at UCD, be able to come home quickly for family matters (such as nursing). The university has many programs to encourage breastfeeding and have published findings that prove the necessity of breastfeeding infants. Therefore the university should not discourage breastfeeding by working mothers by placing a large distance between their workspace and their home/infant (2015 community survey).

— I think that right now it’s often true that Woodland, Dixon, Winters, etc. ARE more affordable places to live. The import of on-campus affordable housing is that it allows working mothers (and fathers) easier access to their children during the working day, builds community, and makes it easier for busy grad students to transition between work and home life. This option of off-siting them is better than no option, but it think it pretty sorely leaves out some key things grad students need (2015 community survey).

In addition to the redevelopment of affordable family housing on campus, we support the development of affordable family housing off-campus to accommodate the expected increase in enrollment. In our survey this spring, 31% of respondents felt that affordable housing off campus would not be an acceptable alternative to student family housing on campus and 50% felt off-campus would be an acceptable alternative but only in addition to affordable student family housing on campus (N = 91).
MAINTAIN CURRENT AFFORDABILITY

Graduate student financial resources and incomes vary greatly. However, according to the three most recent surveys of graduate students discussed in this report, 20 - 32% of students’ incomes are below $20,000 per year. Based on this data, the current $906 per month for a two-bedroom apartment in Solano Park is 54% or more of the income for 20 - 32% of our students. Paying for rent, even in the relatively affordable student family housing on campus, is still a struggle for many students. Therefore, we strongly recommend that rental rates remain at least as affordable as they are now.

Our committee carefully considered the question of how to define affordability. Most student housing departments at other institutions define affordable housing as providing rental rates at or below the market rate of apartments in their respective communities. Student Housing at UC Davis aims for setting rates at 85% of the market rate. For a significant portion of UC Davis students, however, rental rates at 85% of the Davis market is not an option. The most recent average rental rate for a two-bedroom apartment in Davis was $1,373 and 85% of this rate would be $1,167, or 70% of the income for 20 - 32% of our students.

The market rate for apartments in Davis can rise at a much faster rate than student incomes. In fact, the average market rate for a two-bedroom apartment in Davis increased by 13% in just the last year. So rather than define affordability relative to the Davis apartment market rate, we suggest defining our goal differently – relative to students’ income, and specifically to student income over which the university has control.

Given the variation in the salary levels of Graduate Student Researchers (GSR), we opted to define affordability relative to Teaching Assistant (TA) salaries. The current nine-month TA salary is $18,538 per year. The current rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Solano Park is $766, or 50% of a TA salary, and the current rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Solano Park is $906, or 59% of a TA salary.

We recommend that we work on strategies to reduce the rent of a two-bedroom apartment to the ideal rental rate of 33% of a TA salary. Until we achieve that goal, we recommend that rent be capped at the current level of affordability relative to a TA salary. A one-bedroom apartment should be capped at 50% of a nine-month TA salary, rent for a two-bedroom apartment should be capped at 59% of this salary, and rates for other types of units should be priced relative to these units.

We opted not to recommend that rents be capped at a certain annual percent increase because student income increases may lag significantly compared to rental price increases. Capping rental rates increases at a certain maximum percent can still result in apartments becoming less and less affordable.

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30 UC Davis Student Surveys on Family Income & Federal Rent Subsidies
31 Information on Financing Student Family Housing at Other Institutions
   http://tinyurl.com/ucdavis-housing-comparison
32 2014 Davis Apartment Vacancy & Rate Survey
33 https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/faculty-staff/academic-personnel/salary-scales
34 Our committee recognizes that some TAs have sources of income in addition to their TA salary. We are not suggesting that all students with TA positions are paying 50 – 59% of their income on housing. Rather, it is useful benchmark for defining affordability.
35 We believe it is generally accepted that individuals and families should not spend more than a third of their income on housing. “Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.”
STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE AFFORDABILITY

Affordability can be addressed by strategies which (1) provide funds for construction costs upfront, (2) minimize operating costs, (3) provide sources of income to supplement the rent from the affordable units, and (4) provide or identify sources of additional financial support for students.

1. Provide funds for construction costs upfront.

Solicit donations - In the chapter, “Sources of Funds,” Bradley (2013) discusses fundraising as an option to supplement cash reserves and borrowed money. Some institutions provide naming opportunities while others have established capital campaigns. When “an institution is not in a position to borrow money, and the prospects for seeking a large contribution are deemed unlikely, [another option] may be a concentrated capital campaign fund” (Bradley, 2013, p. 10). He explained how two institutions successfully raised the funds needed to support student housing construction and renovation.

In addition, one of our committee members visited Rice University in 2008 and learned that, because of the strong allegiance to their residential communities, alumni contributed more to their residential programs than they did to the institution. This year we learned that Rice University has secured major gifts to support construction of new residential communities. For example, the naming gifts for McMurtry and Duncan residential colleges were about $30 million each.

The committee believes a compelling case can be made for financial support of affordable family housing. UC Davis must to be accessible to all students, not just those with greater financial resources. As tuition and healthcare costs have increased significantly and graduate student teaching and research position salaries have not, students are struggling more than ever. Many donors are motivated to support less privileged students, and donations to student family housing would impact thousands of low-income students for the next 60 years. As demonstrated by the quotes in this report, many alumni who are former residents of the Parks have strong emotional ties to their residential experience. This cohort is likely to be an untapped source of development funds for the project.

One of our committee members was on the 2020 Initiative committee and recalls Chancellor Katehi’s impassioned comments regarding our institutional ability to raise far more funds than we have historically. Since then, we have seen the success of a focused fundraising effort. We could put the funds raised in the near future toward construction costs and later donations toward an endowment that would be used to reduce rental rates. Another approach would be to incorporate innovation and new technology (e.g., sustainable design) into the project and look to donors who are typically interested in supporting such projects. While we did not find that soliciting donations to attain affordable housing rates is a common practice, the committee remains convinced that with a concerted effort, donors can be identified and funds secured to help the university maintain this vibrant student family community on campus.

Have the university contribute funds - UC Davis makes tremendous investments in graduate students – in their tuition, stipends, fellowships, and appointments. Given the impact of students’ residential situation on their overall educational experience, we need to recognize that affordable housing is just as essential for our lower-income students as any number of our other institutional investments. Considering the other demands on institutional funds, we recognize the difficulty of this recommendation. But in just the past year we have financed the support of other uniquely disadvantaged students (e.g., the opening of the AB540 and Undocumented Student Center) and these students’ needs are just as compelling.

Redevelop Orchard Park in phases – Currently Student Housing only has $8.5 million to contribute towards financing a project. If a combination of equity and borrowed funds totaling $57 million is used to
build 200 two-bedroom apartments, keeping the initial apartment rents at the current $906 per month with an annual 3% increase, may require an initial contribution of $38 million. Therefore, after a Student Housing contribution of $8.5 million, an additional $29.5 million may be needed. This shortfall might be reduced by renting some of the units at market rates. However, estimates show that it could require as many as 117 units out of 200 be market-rate rentals in order to subsidize 83 units at an affordable rent (defined here as 50-59% of graduate student TA salary).  

Replacing 200 affordable units with 83 is clearly not an option the committee supports. However, if Student Housing is able set aside additional funds in the next few years and if fund-raising efforts are successful, Orchard Park could be developed in phases as funds become available. If phased redevelopment of Orchard Park is a viable option, the committee recommends that Student Housing make a firm commitment to keeping Solano Park open until Orchard Park has at least 200 affordable units.

2. Minimize operating and student living costs.

Consider strategies to ensure that the affordable units are available to students and student families with limited financial resources - Student Housing could work with current residents and Financial Aid staff to explore viable options (e.g., establishing income limits or a sliding scale for affordable apartments).

Reduce administrative overhead by increasing student leadership - We should seriously consider the possibility of a student-managed community as a strategy to reduce costs and to increase student engagement in a meaningful co-curricular experience. Students could receive rent reductions or waivers in exchange for doing work such as being a resident assistant, supervising the resident assistants, staffing the office, managing marketing and communications, and handling the assignments processes. Residential programs at many institutions are successfully managed by undergraduate and graduate students, and often with minimal oversight.

Establish rent controls and/or impose a cap on upward annual adjustments to rents - As stated above, we recommend that rent for a one-bedroom apartment be capped at 50% of a TA salary, rent for a two-bedroom apartment be capped at 59% of a TA salary, and that rates for other types of units be priced relative to these units.

Install washers & dryers in apartments - In the financial models we considered, staff in Real Estate Services estimate that installing a washer and dryer would likely increase the rent of each unit by $8. Most students we surveyed indicated that $8 would be a cost savings for them compared to using a laundromat and would appreciate the convenience of being able to do laundry in their apartment.

3. Provide sources of income to supplement the rent from the affordable units.

Densify by adding market-rate units - Rent from market-rate units would generate more income than it cost to build them. The additional income could be used to subsidize the cost of the affordable units. This is a model frequently used in developing affordable housing in communities off campus. The market-rate units could be rented by faculty, staff or students, perhaps with students having priority over faculty and staff.

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36 Cautionary note - So many factors affect actual cost (building design, site layout, amenities, inflation, interest rates, etc.) that we cannot rely on the estimates provided in this example as the actual cost of development.

37 Provost Hexter supported consideration of this recommendation in his letter on implementing the recommendations of the Provost Implementation Advisory Committee for Graduate Education (PIACGE). http://provost.ucdavis.edu/initiatives-and-activities/initiatives/PIACGE.html
4. Provide or identify sources of additional financial support for students.

Continue permitting residents to use Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and provide guidance and support for students to access assistance programs - Many students reported significant difficulty accessing funds through local, state and federal financial support programs and services for which they qualify (e.g., CalFresh, WIC, Medi-Cal, Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers). It should be relatively simple to periodically bring in individuals to conduct workshops or work with students one-on-one to better understand their options and fill out applications.

Provide a rent subsidy program similar to the child care subsidy program\(^{38}\) - This program could be need-based in order to prioritize graduate students with families/dependents and those who are lower-income. UC Berkeley provides student parent grants of up to $8,000 per year to students with dependent children who demonstrate financial need. They can be used for housing/living expenses, dependent health insurance, childcare, and/or tuition. These grants are separate from and in addition to child care reimbursement funds.\(^{39}\) Their program is funded by an allocation from return-to-aid assessed on campus student service fees.

Another option is to solicit donations to provide rent subsidies. Stanford provides one such example – anonymous donors fund a rent-subsidy program for 50 - 80 families of Ph.D. students who live on campus, have at least one child, and demonstrate financial need (Petruccelli, 2012).

However, the issue of subsidies raises a new set of concerns: (1) Subsidies can affect students’ eligibility for other forms of financial aid. Thus, it doesn’t always add income; it just replaces other income. (2) Income from subsidies may mean that students no longer qualify for essential low-income assistance programs. (3) When a student applies for credit, the lender looks at the student’s salary relative to expenses. Regardless of a subsidy, if the student’s rent is 50 – 60% of their salary, the lender is less inclined to approve the credit. (4) Students are taxed on money they receive as a subsidy. Because of these reasons, the option of providing subsidies is much less helpful for our students than putting donated funds toward construction costs or otherwise decreasing the rental rates.

**Pursue multiple strategies to achieve affordability**

To accomplish our goal of providing basic, functional housing at rental rates that are as low as possible, the committee recommends that UC Davis administration consider all the strategies listed above and adopts those that are deemed viable. It is likely that a combination of approaches will be necessary to achieve our goal.

The committee explored many funding strategies for the redevelopment of student family housing. Those that we deemed worthy of further consideration are outlined above. We considered many additional ideas that we are not recommending for various reasons. A summary of these ideas and our rationale for not recommending them is available the committee’s webpage.\(^{40}\)

\(^{38}\) A summary of the UC Davis Child Care Funding Program [https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/2014-childcare-funding-program.pdf](https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/2014-childcare-funding-program.pdf)

\(^{39}\) For additional information on UC Berkeley’s programs, see Berkeley Parent Support Programs [http://grad.berkeley.edu/financial/families/](http://grad.berkeley.edu/financial/families/)

\(^{40}\) A discussion of strategies that the committee explored and rejected is available at [https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/2015/apt-affordability-options.pdf](https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/2015/apt-affordability-options.pdf)
FACILITY DESIGN

To meet the needs of student families, the committee recommends the following features related to facility design.

VARIETY OF APARTMENT SIZES AND STYLES

**Larger and Smaller Apartments** – Although we believe the majority of the units should be two-bedroom apartments to meet the needs of families, we recommend providing a variety of apartment options including micro-units and studios as well as one, two and three bedroom units.\(^1\),\(^2\) Some students also expressed interest in larger apartments. As some families outgrew their two-bedroom unit in Solano and Orchard Park, they had to move off-campus and go without all the benefits of the Parks communities as student parents.

Student Housing reports a consistent increase in the number of students needing ADA-accessible units and requesting to live alone for a variety of medical reasons. Given the financial constraints of many students, we were not surprised to hear strong student support for smaller, more affordable units for students who need to live alone.

- In a 2013 survey of Orchard and Solano Parks residents conducted by Student Housing (N = 68), 46% stated that they would give significant consideration to a compact and space efficient unit for reduced rent and 41% would give it some consideration. Only 13% would not consider a compact and space efficient unit for reduced rent.\(^3\)

- In our committee survey in March 2015, (N = 87), 67% of single respondents, 29% of married/partnered respondents, and 19% of respondents with children indicated that they would be interested in in renting a micro-unit at a reduced rent.\(^4\)

The size of the apartments in Orchard and Solano Parks is much smaller than the typical apartments in the surrounding area (square footage relative to the number of bedrooms). The committee feels that the size of the apartments is acceptable because the climate in the Davis area permits community members to spend significant time outdoors. Although students agreed that they support smaller units if it means lower rental rates, our committee discussed the possibility that the size of the apartments may need to be larger for the market-rate apartments to be competitive.

- Orchard Park was our home for 2 years. My children lived a life there that allowed them to be kids. The green space and family environment was what made living in a 550 sqft apartment bearable. We made friends for life there including the maintenance people (2015 community survey).

- I absolutely loved my time raising my family at Solano Park while my husband attended UCD. I loved being surrounded by other families of diverse nationalities and finding common experience together at the parks. I loved the open spaces and pathways where my children could learn to ride bikes away from

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\(^{1}\) A studio apartment is a housing unit that combines the living and sleeping area into one room and includes a small bathroom and kitchenette.

\(^{2}\) A micro-unit is defined here as “a small studio apartment, typically less than 350 square feet, with a fully functioning and accessibility compliant kitchen and bathroom.” [https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/uli-microunit-report.pdf](https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/uli-microunit-report.pdf)


busy streets. The community garden and open space allowed for outdoor living, so the small size of the apartment mattered less to me and my family. I would love to see these things mirrored in the new community plan (2015 community survey).

**Pet-Friendly Apartments** - Student Housing reports a consistent increase in the number of students with disabilities requesting emotional-support animals. Therefore, we recommend that some pet-friendly apartments be developed. A section of units along an edge could have patio gates that open into a fenced area that could be a designated dog run. Residents in these units could work with Student Housing to develop policies related to its use and the dogs would have an area where they could get exercise off leash.

**DENSIFY WITH VISUAL APPEAL**

In order to add affordable units and the market-rate units needed to achieve financially feasibility, the Parks will need to accommodate more units per acre. Students and committee members agree that a higher-density design is acceptable if the design is architecturally interesting. If done well, the facility design can disguise higher density by having architectural elements that soften the structure and break it down to a human scale. To give higher-density housing visual appeal, structures should have design features that attend to:

- Articulation (expressing individual dwelling units);
- Roof shapes (enhancing the silhouette of a building against the sky);
- Room-sized elements, all of which relate dwellings to the street (porches, bay windows, dormers, room projections, porticos, arcades); and
- Architectural detail (brackets, railings, sunscreens) (Jones, Pettus & Pyatok, 1996, p. 54).

The current density of Orchard and Solano Parks is 17 and 18 units per acre, respectively. Community members who attended the workshop in March were open to designs of much higher density as long as the overall design prioritized open, green space as well.45

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45 Examples of Higher Density Housing & Community Workshop Discussion Group Notes

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Figure 3: Committee member and Professor Michael Rios, along with an undergraduate facilitator from LDA 141 present a variety of housing examples with varying levels of density.

The apartments should have private patio or balcony space as “a transitional space between the public realm and the privacy of the home” (Jones et al., 1996, p. 56) and a large outdoor closet or screened area to store...
items such as wagons, bicycles, garden tools, and muddy shoes. We recommend consideration of design elements that provide some definition of private space and permit parents to see children playing outside near the apartment.

**LANDSCAPING - USEABLE, OPEN, GREEN SPACE**

We recommend that particular attention be paid to balancing the need to densify with the need to maintain open, green space, preserve shade trees, and make the open space usable, not just charming. Community members need inviting, shaded areas to sit and socialize outdoors and for children to safely run and play. Design the apartments so that residents coming and going from their homes interact in the shared green space. As much as possible, play structures and grassy areas that are adjacent to apartments should be visible from inside the apartments and community centers. Parents appreciate the ability to keep an eye on their children while the parents are involved in other activities.

The community gardens should continue. They bring residents together, give older residents such as a student’s parent or grandparent a meaningful task, and provide a source of affordable, fresh food. If possible, locate several smaller garden areas, perhaps in raised beds, near the apartments so that families can attend to them while children play in the open areas nearby.

The walkways and traffic patterns should increase resident interaction be appropriately designed for children’s tricycle and bicycle use, as they currently are.

Finally, we recommend a wall or landscape feature that separates the community from nonresidents. Community members, particularly in Solano Park, expressed security concerns related to thefts of personal items and bicycles by nonresidents. The wall at Segundo is an example of one that is visually pleasing.

**COMMUNITY CENTERS**

We recommend providing one or two community centers with kitchens and play areas (depending on the number of units at the site) that are adaptable for different types of activities. Ensure that outdoor play structures are adjacent to these centers and that they are visible from inside the centers.

**QUALITY OF LIFE**

The committee believes that most of the current concerns related to quality of life (new resident orientation, perception of Student Housing, and clarity, transparency and effectiveness of the assignments process) can be addressed by a shift in management philosophy.

**Practice a Participatory and Collaborative Management Approach** - The committee recommends that, minimally, residents be meaningfully involved in the development of policies and procedures. Instead of managing the community for the residents, we recommend that Student Housing manages the community with the residents. Creating opportunities for students to be engaged, challenged, and supported in meaningful ways is at the core of our educational mission. A residential community presents a co-curricular opportunity to enrich the student experience through engagement. A specific recommendation is that UC Davis establish a...
committee, similar to ones at other UC institutions with broad institutional representation, to consider proposed rental rate increases.\textsuperscript{46} We further recommend that Student Housing seriously consider the possibility of a student-managed community as a strategy to more fully engage residents, reduce operating costs, and increase resident satisfaction. The student cooperative at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities offers one example.\textsuperscript{47}

**Improve Customer Service and Be More Responsive to Residents’ Concerns** - By implementing periodic resident satisfaction surveys, following up on concerns, and working collaboratively with residents, we believe that student concerns will come to Student Housing’s attention and can be addressed. We further believe that by working together, students and Student Housing staff will develop more trusting relationships that will facilitate more effective problem-solving and higher resident satisfaction. As noted by Sarnoff (2000), “Experiences in the participation process show that the main source of user satisfaction is not the degree to which a person’s needs have been met, but the feeling of having influenced the decisions” (p. 17). For additional discussion on best practices related to quality of life, please see Appendix D.

**PRIORITIES**

Many of these recommendations are unlikely to have a direct relationship with one another. However, in the event that providing one recommendation impacts the viability of another, decision-makers will need to weigh carefully the trade-offs. *Most committee members view university delivery/management and maintaining the current level of affordability as the two top priorities.* Following these two are the recommendations related to keeping the communities on campus, maintaining or increasing the number of affordable units, and providing well-designed, usable green space. The remaining recommendations are either less important (e.g., pet-friendly apartments) or relatively easily achieved (e.g., improved customer service).

\textsuperscript{46} Information on Financing Student Family Housing at Other Institutions. [http://tinyurl.com/ucdavis-housing-comparison](http://tinyurl.com/ucdavis-housing-comparison)

\textsuperscript{47} The Commonwealth Terrace Cooperative is a resident-directed management corporation at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. [https://www.umnctc.org/index.html](https://www.umnctc.org/index.html)
VI. CONCLUSION

The members of our Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee look forward to the prospect of creating a new model for affordable graduate and family housing – one that serves the needs of students with limited financial resources and is aligned with our vision for a 21st century university. It may not be easy, however. We must be committed and diligent in our efforts to provide the excellence, affordability, and access to higher education that we all envision.48

Many of our recommendations can be implemented with relative ease. The recommendations related to quality of life are well within reach and, thanks to committed staff in Student Housing, some are already in process. With ongoing collaboration with students, staff, and design professionals, we believe the facility design recommendations are easily attainable as well.

The recommendations related to affordability are clearly more challenging. With significant increases in the price of tuition, food, housing, health care and childcare, and relative stability of incomes, students are more financially stretched than ever. Student Housing is facing the task of housing thousands more students as well as attending to the required maintenance and facility upgrades of the current housing stock. At the institutional level, UC Davis faces the tremendous challenge of delivering a world-class educational experience and moving forward with the 2020 Initiative even though revenues from the state have decreased considerably.

Where can we find the funds needed to redevelop affordable family housing? A combination of strategies will undoubtedly be required. A few of these strategies may only result in nominal cost-savings. But, when added together, they could make a meaningful difference.

In our discussions with administrators and in our search for strategies employed by other institutions, we found only a few who were successfully fundraising to support student housing. However, we want to reiterate our firm belief that, with a concerted effort, fundraising is likely to be a worthwhile endeavor. In addition, the recent awards won by the UC Davis development staff demonstrate that they possess the creativity and commitment to succeed at such a fundraising effort.49

Our committee of faculty, staff and students has been able to work collaboratively to identify strategies that address students’ needs and concerns as well as financial feasibility issues. We recommend that administrators continue this dialogue with students, including residents of our student family communities, as these recommendations are considered and decisions are made regarding the redevelopment of student

48 [Link](http://chancellor.ucdavis.edu/envisioning.pdf)
49 CASE awards: ‘UC Davis a force to be reckoned with’ [Link](http://dateline.ucdavis.edu/dl_detail.lasso?id=15146)
family housing. We have engaged the community and rebuilt some trust between students and staff related to this project. By continuing the dialogue and collaborative spirit with which this committee was formed, it is our belief that student family housing will continue to be an essential part of students’ support system and a model student family community.

We appreciate the administration’s commitment to providing the best and most affordable family housing facilities possible. It is worth the effort.

Figure 6: Two boys, current and former residents of the Parks, pose for a picture in the bouncy house.
VII. CITATIONS


Petrucelli, M. (2012). Support Services for Students with Children. Retrieved April 4, 2015, from http://www.eab.com/~media/EAB/Research-and-Insights/SAF/Custom/2012/03/Support-Services-for-Students-with-Children.pdf (This report is available through the Education Advisory Board (Please note, you will need to sign up using your @ucdavis.edu email address to gain access.)


APPENDIX A
RESOURCES

Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee webpages (with additional reports and meeting minutes)
https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/current-students/student-family-housing-redevelopment

Student Housing’s website for Solano Park Apartments
http://housing.ucdavis.edu/housing/apartments-solano-park.asp

Information on Orchard & Solano Parks (including floorplans)

2012 Student Housing Survey

2013 Family and Graduate Student Housing Survey

2013-14 UC Davis Chancellor’s Graduate and Professional Students Advisory Board Survey

2013-14 CGPSA Survey: Analysis Commissioned by the Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee

2014 Davis Apartment Vacancy & Rate Survey

2015 Student Family Housing Satisfaction & Redevelopment Priorities Survey

A discussion of strategies that the committee explored

Information on UC Berkeley’s Parent Support Programs
http://grad.berkeley.edu/financial/families/

Information on affordable housing in Davis
http://city-managers-office.cityofdavis.org/Tags/affordable_housing

Yolo County Housing
http://www.ych.ca.gov/new_residents/index.php

Examples of developments with varying densities
http://www.menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/View/1861

The Commonwealth Terrace Cooperative at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
https://www.umnctc.org/index.html
APPENDIX B
MAPS OF ORCHARD AND SOLANO PARKS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Housing: Only self-developed or purchased through financial aid</th>
<th>Interest rates: 5.25% ad. (student and parent allowable) or 7% default. 4-year rate applies if parent accessible.</th>
<th>Recommended rate: 6.2% (I'm not sure what this means)</th>
<th>Acceptable services:</th>
<th>Below market rate:</th>
<th>Lease terms: 1-year minimum term for 4.850 Studio units, 2-year minimum term for 4.110 Studio units, 3-year minimum term for 3-bedroom units, 4-year minimum term for 3-bedroom units.</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>UC San Diego</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes and the director believes it should be协商!!!!!!</td>
<td>Below market rate (less than 3%)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>For 12 months, no minimum term.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCLA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>We pay a tax to the Chancellor and do not have an interest in the market rate. We assess expenses to students and families</td>
<td>Below market rate, currently 12% below market rate.</td>
<td>No plans.</td>
<td>12.2-year lease term, currently 38% below market rate.</td>
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<td>UC San Francisco</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>We pay a tax to the Chancellor and do not have an interest in the market rate. We assess expenses to students and families.</td>
<td>Below market rate.</td>
<td>No plans.</td>
<td>12.2-year lease term, currently 38% below market rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC Santa Barbara</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>We pay a tax to the Chancellor and do not have an interest in the market rate. We assess expenses to students and families.</td>
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<td>Below market rate.</td>
<td>No plans.</td>
<td>12.2-year lease term, currently 38% below market rate.</td>
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### Additional Notes on Housing:
- **UC San Diego** suggests it’s a self-sufficient housing unit with no step or sliding scale tuition.
- **UC Santa Barbara** mentions a 12-year lease term, which may not be typical.

### Financial Strategies:
- **Sliding Scale**: Yes, if it’s a self-sufficient housing unit.
- **Financial Assistance**: 15% below market rate, possibly no interest.
- **Institutional Support**: 10% of their expenses are covered by UCSD, plans for next year.

### Institution Goals:
- **Affordability**: No fiscal year plan to build on. Important for off-campus students.
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<th>How Are Rates Set?</th>
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**Assessments**

- **Financial Assistance**
- **Sliding Scale**
- **How Are Rates Set?**
- **Self-Sufficiency**
- **Affordability**
- **Costs**
- **# of Units**

**Institutional**

- **UC Berkeley**
- **UC Santa Cruz**
- **UI of Washington, St. Louis**
- **Iowa State U, 5,500**
- **UW - Milwaukee**
- **UW - Madison**
- **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**
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**Financing Strategies**
- Sliding Scale
- Financial Assistance
- Student Assistantship

**How are rates set?**
- Cost-of-living adjustments
- University administration

**Student Assistance?**
- No, student family housing is not subsidized

**Affordability?**
- No, overall rise in family housing is 15% in 2016

**Goals?**
- No

**Additional information:**
- Currently in use: 5 of 5
- Budget: $12,722
- Units: 980

**Summary:**
- Twin Cities, two student family housing properties are owned by the university but independently managed as cooperatives. The co-ops are resident-owned and operated by the co-op residents.

**Notes:**
- Most 10% service charge.
- Students report a high satisfaction with the model and they have been practicing it successfully since 1970. Their website.

**Financing Strategies:**
- Sliding Scale
- Financial Assistance
- Student Assistantship

**How are rates set?**
- Cost-of-living adjustments
- University administration

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**Summary:**
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APPENDIX D
BEST PRACTICES RELATED TO QUALITY OF LIFE

Providing a supportive campus environment is a best practice determined by the Defining Effective Educational Practices Research Project (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005). Elements of this practice include (a) promoting good relations between students and peers, staff and faculty, and (b) helping students succeed academically, cope with nonacademic responsibilities, and thrive socially.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) also provides guidance related to best practices by setting standards for all student affairs offices (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, 2012). The standards for housing and residential life programs include:

1. nurturing environments that are welcoming to and bring together persons of diverse backgrounds;
2. involving students in programming, policy development, and self-governance;
3. initiating collaborative interactions with stakeholders who have legitimate concerns and interests;
4. addressing characteristics and needs of diverse populations when establishing and implementing policies and procedures;
5. being responsive to needs of individuals, diverse and special populations; and
6. conducting regular evaluations of resident satisfaction with programs and services, resident relations and sense of community, safety and security, ability to study in apartment, interactions with staff, responsiveness of administration to resident suggestions and concerns.

The degree to which students can be involved in policy development and self-governance depends on several factors. Most of the students served by Student Housing at UC Davis are first-year undergraduate students who require more guidance and are less prepared to manage their own communities. But residents in graduate and family housing are more capable of collaborative management. Furthermore, the community would benefit.

Simply doing things for residents of family housing will not solve problems, because the provision of services will not address the problems created by the absence of a neighborhood. People who live in family housing must play an essential role in the development of the environment (Shuh, 1985, p. 27).

Best practices in the community development of affordable housing also emphasize the importance of participation. In Community Participation Methods in Design and Planning, Sanoff (2000) states, “Community design is based on the principle that the environment works better if the people affected by its changes are actively involved in its creation and management instead of being treated as passive consumers” (p. x). He goes on to explain the benefits in more detail:

Participation reduces the feeling of anonymity and communicates to the individual a greater degree of concern on the part of the management or administration. With participation, residents are actively involved in the development process; there will be a better-maintained physical environment, greater public spirit, more user satisfaction, and significant financial savings. The main purposes of participation are as follows:
1. to involve people in design decision-making processes and, as a result, increase their trust and confidence in organizations, making it more likely that they will accept decisions and plans and work within the established systems when seeking solutions to problems.

2. to provide people with a voice in design and decision-making in order to improve plans, decisions, and service delivery.

3. to promote a sense of community by bringing people together who share common goals (p. 14-15).

The extent to which students can participate in the management of co-curricular programs and services depends on many factors. But all programmatic decisions exist on a continuum: solely administrators, administrators with student input, collaborative, students with guidance from administrators, and solely students. To the degree possible and appropriate, involving students in programmatic decisions increases their satisfaction and enhances their educational experience.
APPENDIX E

DIALOGUE SUMMARIZING THE PRIMARY ISSUES REGARDING THIRD-PARTY DEVELOPMENT

To convey the sentiments of the majority of committee members and the students with whom we spoke, we developed a question and answer dialogue that we believe articulates the primary issues of concern to university administrators who might be inclined to opt for third-party development and those of students and committee members who support university delivery.

Administrator question – It seems that affordability has always been the top priority for students. Why is university delivery emerging as a top priority?

Students’ response – A third-party developer isn’t going to place students’ and families’ needs as a priority. The university, as an educational institution, understands the importance of students’ family lives to their overall educational experience.

Anticipated response from some administrators – Many of these third-party developers are staffed by individuals who have spent their careers working for college and university residential programs. They understand students’ and families’ needs and are absolutely committed to meeting those needs. They just work for a third-party now, developing and delivering the same programs and services as the universities do.

Students’ response – The bottom line is that their organizational mission is not education. Their staff members, as individuals, may be committed to meeting students’ needs, but their organizational mission and highest priority is not the students’ and family members’ quality of life; we believe that eventually this will prove detrimental to students’ educational experience.

Administrator question – Because some of the third-party developers are nonprofit third-party organizations, they can deliver student family housing at less cost, and we can write binding contracts to ensure that they remain affordable. Considering their capacity to provide more affordable housing, all the capital projects the university has under development, and the university’s limited debt capacity, can you understand why the university might need to opt for third-party development?

Students’ response – The last committee looked at the redevelopment of Orchard Park and they selected a nonprofit third-party that was experienced and committed to developing affordable housing. The first rental rates they presented were nearly 80% of a TA salary. They went back to see what they could do to bring the rental rates down further and presented lower rents that were still far from affordable. This was a third-party developer that was supposedly the best of the best. Even they couldn’t deliver anything close to what is needed to meet our needs.

We also believe that over time, a third-party developer may find ways to increase residents’ costs without violating their contract with the university (e.g., fees for use of services or facilities). If budgets get tight (and they always do), they will look for ways to increase their income, and they are likely to find ways. We need the exact opposite. We want student family housing to be managed by university administrators who will work will us to bring rents down over time, not increase them.

We’ve heard that the university has a limited debt capacity and administrators must therefore consider a third-party developer. We need administrators to understand that many of us have hit our personal debt capacity. We cannot get any additional support from financial aid. Banks will not give us a loan, or raise our credit limit, because we do not have income sufficient to qualify. We cannot secure housing that meets our families’ needs off campus in Davis because we do not have the landlord-required incomes of two and a half to three
times the monthly rent. We can live outside of Davis for rents we can afford but the cost to our families’ lives and our educational experience is tremendous. We cannot go back and forth to our labs, work late, or come home to breastfeed our infants. And the time and cost of transportation is significant. We are out of options. We need to live on campus, at housing rates that we can afford, and under university management.

We are asking the administration to keep working with us to find a solution that works for both the institution and its students.