

## **Orchard Park Redevelopment Status Report**

**March 2, 2016**

The [final report](#) of the Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee was submitted to Vice Provost and Dean Gibeling and Vice Chancellor de la Torre on June 9, 2015. In addition, the committee made a presentation to Chancellor Katehi and other senior administrators on September 30, 2015. Subsequently, the Chancellor and other senior administrators have discussed this project on several occasions. Most recently, student representatives of committee met with Vice Chancellor Lawlor, Vice Provost and Dean Gibeling and Associate Vice Chancellor Galindo on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to discuss the status of the project.

Consistent with its charge, the report of the Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee provides a framework for redevelopment that articulates the value of student family housing to the campus, identifies the key requirements to meeting the needs of students and identifies goals of affordability and strategies to meet those goals. The committee agreed that it was not economically feasible to renovate the existing Orchard Park. It therefore recommended redevelopment, with the following key points:

1. Couple rents to graduate student income;
2. Solicit donations to help subsidize construction costs and/or rents;
3. Include at-market units on the property to help subsidize affordable rents for family housing;
4. Provide a variety of apartment configurations (studios, 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms) and limit sizes to maintain affordability;
5. Include safe play areas visible from apartments and preserve open, shady space between buildings;
6. Keep family housing on campus;
7. Develop the project within the University rather than engaging a third-party developer;
8. Student Housing should develop a more collaborative approach to managing student family housing.

One of the underlying themes of the report and of subsequent discussions is that both Orchard and Solano Parks having provided an environment that stimulated and supported a strong sense of community. This is a key element that must be achieved in the redeveloped Orchard

Park as it contributes to graduate student well-being, enhances the ability of student parents to focus on their academic work and helps to develop strong alumni ties to the institution.

In keeping with the recommendations of the Committee, the current plan includes the following:

1. The University commits to redeveloping Orchard Park in a manner that provides the greatest level of affordability possible, with the goal of limiting future rent increases above the current level to the rate of increase of TA and GSR salaries.
2. Recognizing the enormous capital needs of the campus for classrooms, laboratories, student housing and support buildings, coupled with the limited debt-carrying capacity, a public-private partnership is the best model for Orchard Park redevelopment. This partnership will strive to create the maximum number of new family housing units consistent with other objectives (e.g. maintaining an environment that creates community and provides open space). In addition to family housing, at-market housing will be developed on the periphery of the property in order to support affordability. The agreement with the private partner will include rent increase limits with additional controls to avoid maximum increases when not warranted.
3. Responding to student concerns about a private developer, Student Housing will be assigned the responsibility to serve as the liaison between student lease holders and the property owner. Student Housing will work to maintain certain key features of the Parks that are essential to ensuring that residents feel that they are part of the University, in particular providing regular programming for the community and campus internet connections.
4. The Vice Provost-Graduate Education and Dean – Graduate Studies and the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs will appoint a Solano Park Community Advisory Board to work with Student Housing leadership and Solano Park management to inform on-going operations and needs of residents as well as to develop a model for the future Orchard Park Community Advisory Board. In connection with this effort, non-student partners of student lease holders will be provided the opportunity to sign up to receive electronic communications from Solano Park management.
5. The University commits to maintaining Solano Park in good operating order until the new Orchard Park is available. However, major system replacement (e.g. re-roofing) will not be undertaken in anticipation of the end of the useful life of Solano Park. Rents will increase only at a rate equivalent to the annual increase in TA and GSR salaries, whichever is lower.
6. An architect will be hired to develop the conceptual design and Project Planning Guide for Orchard Park Redevelopment. This architect will work with the community in multiple interactive sessions as the design develops.
7. The University will use existing housing reserves for the demolition of the current Orchard Park in order to keep project costs down and the project on schedule.

8. A Project Advisory Committee (PAC) with significant student representation will be appointed to work with the architect and Design and Construction Management. The PAC will be separate from the Solano Park Community Advisory Board.
9. The University will create and implement a Parks Alumni Fundraising Campaign and has developed a proposal for a Big Idea under the upcoming comprehensive campaign. Funds raised will be used to maintain affordability and provide community amenities identified by the future Orchard Park Community Advisory Board.
10. A concrete timeline for the entire Orchard Park redevelopment process will be created by April 30, 2016.