



GRADUATE STUDIES
OFFICE OF THE DEAN
TELEPHONE: (530) 752-0650
FAX: (530) 752-6222

ONE SHIELDS AVENUE
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA 95616-8610

June 2, 2014

Dear Graduate or Professional Student,

As many of you know, the campus has been planning for several years to redevelop student family housing in Orchard and Solano Parks. These apartments were opened in the early 1960's and are in great need of being upgraded. Because of increasing maintenance costs and expectations of significant costs to renew major utilities and amenities, a decision was made five years ago to close Orchard Park in July 2014 and redevelop the site for family and graduate student housing that would open in Fall 2016. Solano Park would close at the same time as the new Orchard Park came online, but no specific plans were outlined for its redevelopment. At the same time, Student Housing developed plans for replacement of the former Castilian housing, located just off campus, with residences for single graduate students. That project, now called 8th and Wake, will open this Fall.

To keep everyone aware of these plans, Student Housing began notifying residents about the closure and future of The Parks in May 2009, continuing to do so for the next several years. Information about the planned closures was also sent through mailed letters, emails and community newsletters beginning in January 2012. Several open forums and focus group meetings also began at that time, with some organized by Student Housing and others by the Chancellor's Graduate and Professional Student Advisory Board. Information provided to residents included procedures for requesting a transfer from Orchard Park to Solano Park or third-party properties on campus. Additional details regarding the consultation process were made available at [this website](#).

Planning for Orchard Park's redevelopment was undertaken by a committee that included two graduate student representatives. The committee's work was also informed by several surveys of graduate students that looked at the types of amenities and costs that were desired as well as the income and rents for the current residents. A survey of the local housing market provided additional information. The selection and engagement of an experienced third-party developer occurred after a detailed qualification process that included on-site reviews by the committee of similar projects around the country.

On March 13th and 15th of this year, results of this planning process were presented to the community at two information sessions. Information was shared at the meetings regarding the proposed building configuration at the current Orchard Park site, types and sizes of units, project amenities and proposed rents. Information was also provided regarding a rent subsidy program for financially needy student families and single graduate students.

It was through feedback from the information sessions and additional email from the community that specific concerns with the redevelopment process surfaced. Those included concerns about proposed rents as well as the number and size of the apartments. As a result of those concerns, a decision was made by Chancellor Katehi to stop the current redevelopment plans and embark on a new planning approach that focuses on those concerns as much as possible and reevaluates how best to proceed. A new and more inclusive strategy for planning and consultation will help move the project forward in a more acceptable manner as a new committee with significant student representation is created. Although planning has stopped, Orchard Park will close on July 31st as originally scheduled and Solano Park will remain open.

Information about planning for redevelopment of Orchard and Solano Parks will be available to the entire community through a soon-to-be-created website. I urge you all to stay informed and to contribute your feedback when we reach that stage.

Sincerely,
Dean Gibeling