Community & Economic Development Department
Planning Division

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# UNIVERSITY AVENUE DENSITY TRANSFER PILOT PROGRAM
# REQUEST TO TRANSFER UNITS FACTSHEET

On April 21, 2026, the City of Riverside adopted Resolution 31364, creating the University Avenue Density Transfer Pilot Program. This program allows properties in the University Avenue Specific Plan Area, which spans the University Avenue corridor from Park Avenue to I-215/SR 60, to transfer units to other properties within the Specific Plan Area. Properties that send units to other properties are referenced here as **donor sites**, and properties that receive units from other properties are referenced here as **receiver sites**. The goal of the program is to facilitate the development of housing, particularly on small, city-owned surplus and Housing Element sites, without requiring a General Plan or Specific Plan Amendment to increase the amount of housing that can be developed on a property.

## PROCESS

Through this program, donor sites can transfer units to receiver sites using one of two methods: indirectly through the development bank method, or directly through the direct transfer method. This section includes just an overview of each process; consult the University Avenue Density Transfer Pilot Program policy document for more details on each process.

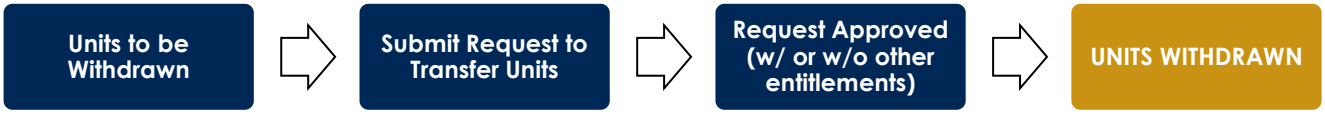
### Development Bank Method

*Deposits*

The City will initially seed the development bank with the 210 units from the city-owned surplus sites in the Specific Plan. Beyond that, donor sites must deposit units into the development bank as a condition of approval of development below residential capacity. In the absence of a development proposal, donor sites can also deposit units voluntarily. In any case, the applicant will submit this request form to the Planning Division, along with request forms for any other entitlements if the deposit is part of a development project. Once the request is approved, a deed restriction will be drafted to document the transfer and surrender of residential development rights. Once the deed restriction is approved, the Planning Division will count the units deposited into the development bank.

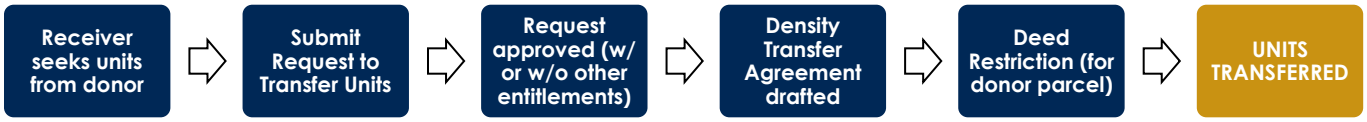
*Withdrawals*

Receiver sites can draw units from the bank to develop more units than is otherwise allowed. The applicant will submit this request form to the Planning Division, along with request forms for any other entitlements if the deposit is part of a development project. Once the request is approved, the Planning Division will count the units withdrawn from the development bank.




### Direct Transfer Method

A receiver site can negotiate directly with a donor site to transfer units so the receiver site can develop more units than is otherwise allowed. The receiver site will negotiate with the donor site for the transfer of units, then submit this form to the Planning Division along with request forms for any other entitlements if the deposit is part of a development project. Once the request is approved, a density transfer agreement will be drafted, along with a deed restriction documenting the transfer and surrender of units for the donor parcel. Once the density transfer agreement is approved the Planning Division will count the units transferred.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

## Which parcels can participate in the program?

To participate in the program, all parcels must be in the University Avenue Specific Plan Area. Any parcel in the Specific Plan area is eligible to donate units, except for privately-owned parcels that are 6th Cycle Housing Element Sites (with some exceptions), parcels that are already built to maximum residential capacity, and parcels that do not contain residential capacity (not designated Residential or Mixed Use). Any parcel in the Specific Plan area that is a city- owned and/or Housing Element Site is eligible to receive units.

Please contact the Planning Division to determine if your parcel(s) are eligible to participate.

## Are there any fees or special permits required to participate in the program?

No. If the transfer is part of a development project with other entitlements, any fees or permits will only be those required for the entitlements.

## Is there a limit to how many units a project can request?

There is no hard limit to how many units a project can request, though it is controlled by the amount of units available in the development bank or from other properties. Regardless of the number of units requested, the project must meet existing development standards such as height, setbacks, lot coverage, et cetera.

## How long will it take to approve unit transfers?

If the transfer is part of a development project with other entitlements, the transfer of units will be approved when those other entitlements are approved. This will vary by project; contact your case planner to determine an approximate timeframe.

## How much parking is required for projects using this program?

None. Because the University Avenue Specific Plan Area is in a designated high-quality transit corridor under Assembly Bill (AB) 2097, parking is not required anywhere along the corridor. The decision of how much parking to provide, if any, is entirely up to the applicant based on the individual needs of their project.

## Are the transferred units required to be affordable?

If the receiver site is a city-owned surplus site, it may be subject to the 15% affordability requirement of the Surplus Land Act. Other than that, there are no affordability requirements. Contact the City's Successor Agency if looking to develop a city-owned surplus site.

## What are the key advantages of each transfer method?

Two key advantages of the development bank method are that city-owned parcels get priority to withdraw, there is no need to negotiate with another property, and there is no limit to the number of units that can be withdrawn from the development bank as long as there are enough units available and the units built will fit within the existing development standards.

Key advantages of the direct transfer method are that there is no prioritization between city-owned and non-city-owned parcels, and it can be used when there are not enough units available in the bank.

## Can this program be used with state density bonus allowances? How is this program different from state density bonus allowances?

Yes, this program can be used with any density bonus, incentive, and/or concession permitted under state law. Density bonuses, however, must be calculated from the base density of the site *before* the transfer of units, not after. For instance, if a parcel has a base density of 10 units and wants to request an additional five units through this program, the density bonus must be calculated based on 10 units, not 15.

One key difference of this program from state density bonuses is that the number of units that a project can receive is not controlled by the base density, only limited by existing development standards. Additionally, there are no affordability requirements for projects to participate in the program (except for some city-owned surplus sites).

## Can a donor site request its units back from a receiver site? If the receiver site does not build all the units it requested, what would happen?

At this time, there is no process for a donor site to request its units back from a receiver site. However, if a receiver site does not build all the units it has requested within a certain timeframe, the deed restriction on the donor parcel will be deemed null and void and the units will go back to the donor site.