



## 4. LAND USE

### Land Use and the Neighborhood Vision

The Neighborhood Vision for Land Use reflects input from residents at the community meetings discussed in Section 2. Thus the Neighborhood Vision embodies the:

- Neighborhood's desire to protect the single family neighborhoods nestled against the Box Springs Mountain Reserve Park to the east of the existing Watkins Drive and the University's need for quality, affordable housing for residents and UCR students, faculty and staff;
- Neighborhood's and the University's desire for improved Neighborhood shopping facilities where residents, students, faculty and staff can shop and meet in an appealing environment.



### Relationship to the General Plan 2025

The Objectives and Policies carried over from the General Plan 2025 recognize the importance of providing diverse housing opportunities in the University Neighborhood, including new rental apartments, the retention of existing and future rental stock, and affordable housing units. These Objectives and Policies stress the importance of providing quality apartments and multi-family housing within the University Neighborhood, and recommend the development of future new student housing along the University Avenue corridor. Additionally, they encourage the protection of single-family neighborhoods and the minimization of potential town-gown conflicts.

This Plan also accommodates the expansion of UCR while ensuring the preservation and enhancement of residential areas within the University Neighborhood and encourages the reuse and/or revitalization of underutilized commercial areas with appropriately scaled mixed-use developments to serve both residents and UCR students, faculty and staff.

### Land Use Challenges and Opportunities

The Challenges and Opportunities to achieving the Land Use Vision for the University Neighborhood include the:

- Need for an adequate supply of conveniently located housing for students, faculty and staff, which cannot be provided exclusively on the UCR campus due to the varied housing preferences of students, faculty and staff;
- Lack of adequate space for student housing in vacant parcels within the University Neighborhood;





- Student demand for rental units and overcrowding of rental units within the single family areas east of Watkins Drive;
- Current lack of development opportunities for new types of retail areas surrounding UCR that are attractive to and shared by University Neighborhood residents, students, faculty and staff; and;
- Economics of revitalizing small, Neighborhood shopping areas that have limited capacity for expansion and current tenant mixes that do not optimally serve either residents of the University Neighborhood or UCR students, faculty and staff.

Some of the major land use recommendations reviewed with the Neighborhood are illustrated in Figure 4 - Land Use.

**Land Use Objectives, Policies and Implementation Tools**

The Objectives (Objectives LU-81 – LU-84) and related Policies that were developed as part of the Land Use Element of the General Plan 2025 Program have been relocated and integrated into this document. Additional Land Use Objectives and Policies have been developed based on the Neighborhood Vision, as well as Implementation Tools to achieve the Vision and Objectives, and address the Challenges and Opportunities.

**Objective UNP 1: Allow for the growth and expansion of the University of California, Riverside while ensuring preservation and enhancement of surrounding residential neighborhoods.**

**Policy UNP 1.1 Coordinate with UCR and neighborhood groups in joint planning efforts, including the joint development and updates of the UCR Long Range Development Plan.**

*Tool UNP 1.1.1 Formalize a Partnership with appropriate representation to be defined through further discussions involving the City, the University Neighborhood and UCR.*

Roles of the Partnership could include:

- Developing an action plan for the continued vitalization of the commercial and retail environment with the University Neighborhood, particularly in existing commercial and mixed-use areas;



# UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



## LEGEND

### GENERAL PLAN 2025 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

- B/O/P - BUSINESS/OFFICE PARK
- C - COMMERCIAL
- HDR - HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HR - HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL
- I - INDUSTRIAL
- MDR - MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MHDR - MEDIUM HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MU-U - MIXED-USE URBAN
- O - OFFICIAL
- OS - OPEN SPACE
- P - PARK
- PF - PUBLIC FACILITIES
- VLDR - VERY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

POTENTIAL UNIVERSITY-RELATED RENTAL HOUSING ENHANCEMENT AREA

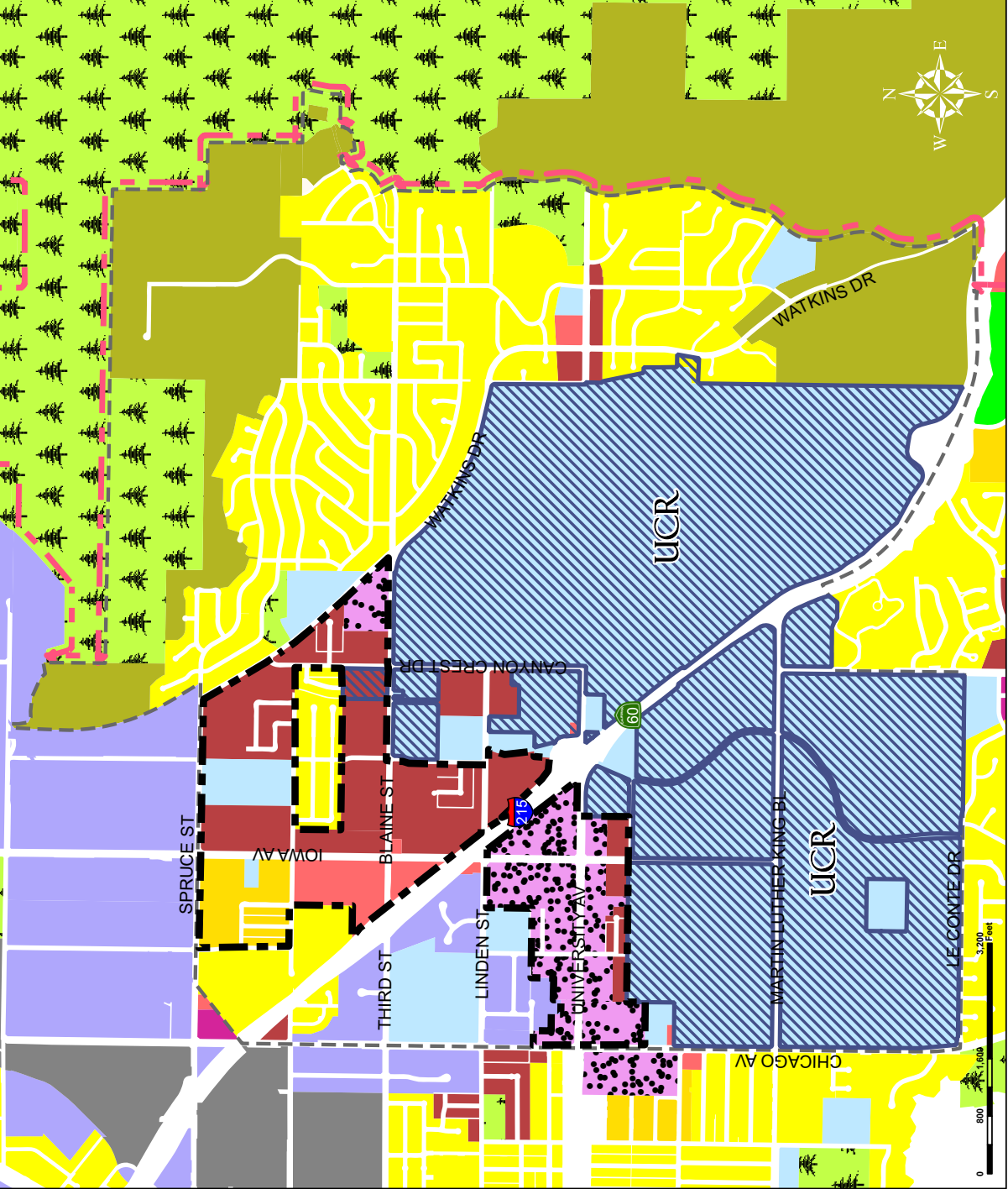


FIGURE 4:  
UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD  
LAND USE



- Identifying potential real estate developers who are interested in investing in the University Neighborhood and working with the University Neighborhood and UCR to upgrade local shopping areas;
- Encouraging developers interested in enhancing the University Neighborhood shopping areas to apply for zoning changes that are consistent with the General Plan;
- Preparing joint applications for funding of physical projects and community and educational enhancement programs to obtain state, federal, private foundation and corporate funding projects supported by the Partnership; and
- Holding regular (annual or bi-annual) meetings to discuss the Objectives, Policies, and Tools of the University Neighborhood Plan.

*Tool UNP 1.1.2 Continue to encourage UCR to share development and expansion plans with the City and the public during the earliest possible planning stage.*

The residents have expressed frustration with UCR's approach to development and lack of public involvement in land use processes. Involving the public in the early stages of the process allows ample time to digest the proposals for growth and development and also provides an opportunity for feedback.

**Policy UNP 1.2 The City should support UCR created Educational Programs for UCR Students regarding their relationships with the University Neighborhood.**

*Tool UNP 1.2.1 Utilize existing programs, such as the City's website or the "Mayor's Night Out" events, to facilitate the dissemination of information regarding UCR's "Good Neighbor Guidelines."*

**Policy UNP 1.3 Protect the character of the existing single-family neighborhoods, seeking to minimize potential "town-gown" conflicts.**

**Policy UNP 1.4 Encourage the reuse and/or revitalization of underutilized commercial areas through appropriately scaled mixed-use development.**





**Policy UNP 1.5** Seek opportunities to develop commercial centers that serve both students and civilian needs.

**Objective UNP 2:** Provide a diversity of housing opportunities throughout the University Neighborhood.

**Policy UNP 2.1** Encourage the construction of new rental apartments as well as the retention of existing and future rental stock and the provision of affordable units.

**Objective UNP 3:** Enhance the University Neighborhood's quality of life by protecting single family areas, providing quality, affordable housing and enhancing neighborhood shopping.

**Policy UNP 3.1** Protect and maintain the single-family residential areas located primarily east of Watkins Drive and the pockets of single-family areas located west of Watkins Drive.

*Tool UNP 3.1.1* Initiate amendment of Section 19.520.030 of the Zoning Code to consider allowing the rental of rooms to a maximum of two individuals per single-family dwelling unit, plus members of the family occupying such dwellings, within all Residential zones.

The existing Single Family and Mixed Densities Residential areas illustrated in Figure 3 are areas of the Neighborhood that are subject to Zoning Code violations and need to be protected. In order to maintain the quiet, family-oriented nature of these areas, it is recommended that the number of renters be limited to two people per dwelling unit plus members of the family occupying such dwellings. Limiting the allowable residential density to two individuals per dwelling unit will help preserve existing single-family areas by preventing overcrowding that creates traffic, excessive on-street parking and noise.

**Policy UNP 3.2** Provide quality, affordable housing for University Neighborhood residents, students, faculty and staff.

*Tool UNP 3.2.1* Consider future private student-oriented housing only in areas where they do not negatively impact existing single-family residential neighborhoods.

A common "town-gown" problem related to student housing arises when University students, in search of adequate off-campus housing, turn to existing single-





family residential areas because it is the best housing they can find. Local houses are popular with students because they can live dorm-style—where two people often share a room—in order to cut the cost of housing. Many town-gown plans have recognized that the way to offset the intrusion of students into single-family areas is to provide private student-oriented housing in appropriately located developments that are close to campus and provide students with a variety of local amenities and services, including public transportation.

The most appropriate areas for these developments are within High-Density Residential and Mixed-Use Urban land use designations in the University Neighborhood and along University Avenue as illustrated in Figure 4, and within Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace. In addition to being affordable for students, the apartments should include or be located near amenities such as cafes, gyms, music stores, performance venues, coffee houses, clothing stores and other retail stores that are popular with University students as well as other residents.

*Tool UNP 3.2.2 Continue the Neighborhood Livability Program and aggressive code enforcement action to upgrade residential zones designated in the General Plan 2025.*

Within the University Neighborhood, there are areas near campus that are designated as high-density residential. These areas are comprised almost entirely of student apartments, due to their proximity to campus. Many of these apartments were built in the 1970s and 1980s, and are now starting to show signs of age and neglect. In order to effectively plan for future growth and the expansion of UCR, this aging stock of local apartments must be upgraded. The City's Neighborhood Livability Program, along with aggressive code enforcement action, can continue to improve problem properties within the Mixed Densities Residential areas indicated on Figure 3.

The homes within the Single Family Residential areas indicated on Figure 3 are also subject to neglect and are increasingly being used as university-related rentals. The Neighborhood Livability Program can also be an effective tool to improve the conditions of these residences.





*Tool UNP 3.2.3 Explore opportunities to encourage property owners to upgrade older or neglected facilities.*

In addition to aggressive code enforcement, there may be other solutions or assistance programs that could be developed to encourage upgrading of rental properties by the owners or tenants.

**Policy UNP 3.3 Explore opportunities to revitalize older shopping centers by increasing the level of neighborhood shopping and pedestrian amenities, upgrading the tenant mixes and encouraging private sector investment in the existing shopping centers throughout the University Neighborhood. This may include introducing mixed-use housing where appropriate.**



*Tool UNP 3.3.1 Remain open to implementing or changing the land use designations for the commercial centers throughout the University Neighborhood to facilitate the most appropriate mix of retail, office and limited home ownership opportunities to serve the local residents as well as students, faculty and staff from UCR, with special consideration to building height and parking.*

It will be of utmost importance that any future mixed-use development proposals within the University Neighborhood include coordination with neighborhood residents to ensure that the development is consistent with the surrounding land uses and the neighborhood vision.

**Policy UNP 3.4 Continue to upgrade University Avenue as a location for community and University related housing and commercial areas as well as enhancing University Neighborhood's accessibility to Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace.**

*Tool UNP 3.4.1 Initiate an amendment to the University Avenue Specific Plan to make it consistent with the General Plan 2025 with additional design guidelines and public improvements.*

The University Avenue corridor, shown in Figure 4, may be an appropriate location for higher density mixed-use developments and student, faculty, staff and community housing.

The maximum FAR for this area should remain at 4.0, while the residential component of any future



development should also be forty units per acre. However, higher densities are permissible for projects that have the potential to serve as transit-oriented developments. While the FAR for transit-oriented projects will remain at 4.0, a residential density of 60 dwelling units per acre is allowed. Qualifying projects must be constructed within one-half mile of a transit stop including Bus Rapid Transit stops along University Avenue.

**Objective UNP 4: Ensure coordinated development along University Avenue in recognition of the street's importance as a key route between the University and the Downtown Core, a center for the hospitality industry and a source of commercial services for surrounding residential neighborhoods.**

**Policy UNP 4.1 Update the University Avenue Specific Plan to allow for mixed-use and residential development along the corridor that supports land use designations of the General Plan.**

**Policy UNP 4.2 Encourage the creation of a continuous uniform streetscape along University Avenue.**

**Policy UNP 4.3 Encourage student housing and activities along the University Avenue corridor.**

**Objective UNP 5: Recognize and preserve existing rural lifestyles within the University Neighborhood by recognizing topographical constraints to conventional urban development.**

**Policy UNP 5.1 Preserve the rural lifestyle in the Mount Vernon Bowl District.**

**Policy UNP 5.2 Encourage Riverside County to carefully review development proposals for open spaces adjacent to the Box Springs Mountain Reserve Park in order to ensure sensitivity to the natural terrain and compatibility with residential uses in the Mount Vernon Bowl area.**

