

LRDP WORKING GROUP DRAFT SUMMARY REPORT CITY AND COMMUNITY

Working Group Charter:

The City and Community Working Group will provide a forum to engage the Campus with city and community constituents on campus planning issues. This group will be encouraged to imagine how the campus/community interface and relationship can be strengthened through the built environment, find opportunities for collaborations/partnerships, and furnish recommendations for consideration. The Group will bring forward ideas and principles of how to incorporate a variety of uses and how these uses physically and optimally interact with each other spatially and programmatically.

VISION & IMPLEMENTATION

In 2035, what does UCR look like from the perspective of City and Community?

I. Vision Statement

- The City and Community working group has brought together a diverse group of community stakeholders representing a number of interests and points of view. The committee makeup includes neighbors, business leaders, city representatives, UCR faculty and staff, alumni, foundation members, and others.

The group did not always reach unanimous agreement, let alone consensus, although the perspectives were valuable and everyone's voice added to the vitality of the discussion.

There were a number of recurring themes and perspectives that evolved during the process.

The ability of UCR's infrastructure to accommodate its growth led to a number of robust discussions regarding housing. Concerns were raised about the off campus market absorbing 60% of the student population (although roughly 25% commute from home). While public transportation allows for housing choice beyond the immediate area, available land, market rate demand, and lack of affordability will likely require the university to engage in detailed discussions with the city (especially during their 2019-2020 general plan update process), developers, and transportation agencies to ensure adequate housing options to accommodate UCR's anticipated growth. This does not include housing needs for the anticipated increase in faculty and staff.

The growth envisioned by UCR provides many opportunities for UCR to expand its research, provide this region with additional graduates ready to enter the workforce, and serve as a cyclically resistant economic engine for the city and region. That said, this process has made clear that the perception of ample campus land and the capital funding for expansion to accommodate envisioned growth will be a challenge to keep up with both prescribed demand by the legislature and Office of the President, as well as demand by California students.

As a result, off campus development opportunities, such as downtown Riverside, Riverside's Northside and Hunter Park, or the proposed innovation district may allow for new campus—commerce-community synergies to flourish and allow for less constricted, yet critical growth to occur on the campus proper. In addition, land opportunities in areas such as Riverside's greenbelt and Pellissier Ranch should be identified to both maintain and expand UCR's Agricultural research and operations, as well as play a role in preserving the agricultural history in areas of Riverside. Further, the group recognized the importance of a collegiate core, and suggested the possibility of relocating non-academic or student related functions off campus, citing the relocation of HR and Payroll functions as part of the UC PATH consolidation near March Air Reserve Base.

Note: In addition to specific feedback on the LRDP Planning Assumptions, this report contains a series of thoughts and recommendations from members of the committee.

KEY PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

What are the Working Group’s thoughts regarding the key planning assumptions related to its area of focus?

KPA	WORKING GROUP’S RESPONSE
<i>Category</i>	
Enrollment Target 35,000	<p>Members of the committee voiced concern about the need for a larger discussion about an ultimate enrollment size, rather than be limited to the time horizon of the LRDP. Members of the committee recognized the economies of scale and critical mass advantages of a larger university, however thought the campus should identify an “ultimate size” to ensure that land use choices were being made for a 30 to 50 year time horizon, not a 10-15 year horizon.</p>
KPA #1	
<i>Category</i>	
<p>A. South District and Immediate Land Areas – “Explore campus/partnered development opportunities where feasible.</p>	<p>While committee members were open to opportunities on the toe of the hill, significant concern was raised regarding development on the greater area of campus owned hillside land. Issues raised included 1) Hillside make up of granite would make infrastructure installation cost prohibitive; 2) The City of Riverside has restrictions to hillside development (Prop R & Measure C) and the campus has traditionally been respectful of city regulations; 3) There could/should be a sensitive habitat link between Sycamore Canyon Park and Box Springs in this area.</p> <p>Alternative uses discussed included expansion of the botanic gardens or student recreation opportunities, such as hiking trails or Frisbee golf.</p>
<p>B. Non-UCR owned land southeast of campus – “Acknowledge the potential for future private development</p>	<p>Most of this land is not developable under the City of Riverside’s Prop R and Measure C.</p>

that will be complimentary to the campus' vision.	
G. Adjust % of students living on campus to align with UCR's Housing's knowledge of market absorption	The 40% target must consider the impacts and market need to house 60% of the student body off campus. This committee had very lengthy discussions about this item. See comments below.
H. Latter Day Saints property. "Include in plan to improve approaches to campus	The committee agreed that UCR should work to acquire this property.
I. City Owned Water Reservoir "Include in plan to improve approaches to campus"	This was identified as a likely non-starter for Riverside Public Utilities. Committee members inquired about potential uses above the reservoir, such as recreation or a meditation space.
J. Frost Court Properties. "Include as a second entrance to the Botanic Gardens	Several committee members voice concerns about neighborhood traffic and parking issues that would be associated with Frost Court's uses as an access point to the Gardens. It was also mentioned that UCR is not doing a good job of upkeep on the property that they do own on Frost, much to the frustration of the neighbors. It was also mentioned that the Botanic Gardens staff and donors might not be part of this discussion yet.
K. Marginal retail properties north of Blaine. "Include to improve approaches to campus"	Most committee members believed that this center is very underutilized, with the biggest problem being the County Social Services facility. An interest in higher density and more retail were voiced, although there was some affinity for some of the current tenants. Hope was that the North District Development might spur additional activity.
L. Retail property at Big Springs and Watkins	Most committee members believed that this center is very underutilized, although Goodwins was very popular.
O. Apartment Complexes West of Canyon Crest – "Engage with campus stakeholders to	The committee is concerned about the lack of off campus housing. It was suggested that higher density housing be considered, given these properties proximity to campus – 4 stories instead of the current 2.

discuss appropriate alternate land uses.	
P. Land Areas classified as campus support on Watkins Avenue. “Engage with campus stakeholders to discuss appropriate alternate land uses.	Discussion on this item centered around the consideration of a Metrolink Station on Watkins. Given the limited area east of Watkins, committee members suggested that Metrolink Station Amenities (drop off/pick up, bus stops, etc, be located on UCR’s side of Watkins, minimizing impacts to the adjacent neighborhood. It was also suggested that pedestrian points of access be established and/or enhanced between Watkins Avenue and the main campus for pedestrians to safely navigate the Corp Yard and other current campus support uses.
Y. MLK Access to West Campus Drive.	This idea was largely endorsed by the committee. It was suggested that this would also make an excellent pedestrian/bicycle link, and that infrastructure should be added under the freeway to ensure safety.
A2. Regional Transit. Reference a new train platform at Watkins Drive.	One committee member mentioned that for neighbors to endorse this proposal, that no pick up/drop off should be allowed. Another thought it would decrease parking and commuting demand as service expanded in frequency and from the West. Another said that RCTC must expand weekend service too.
A3. University Avenue ramps removed to improve pedestrian safety and connectivity.	This item was largely rejected by the committee. Given that University Avenue is a business corridor, access from the freeway was too important to lose. Further, traffic at Blaine, which would be a likely alternative access point, is already very impacted with traffic. It was also acknowledged that pedestrian safety continues to be an issue, especially on the south side of University at the EB 60/215 on ramp, as well as the cross walk at University and University Village. Someone suggested that UCR reconsider the bridge or other connection (tunnel), possibly from Lot 30 to Lot 1.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- I. **Any items/issues/assumptions that – from your working group’s perspective- fundamentally affect land use, space, and/or development not identified in the KPA handout that should be considered in this LRDP**

Overall Comments

- The Plan should look beyond its time horizon. Ultimate/ideal size instead of constant growth to ensure wise and effective land use.

Campus Growth

- The City of Riverside is just beginning to undertake a significant update to its General Plan. UCR’s envisioned growth between now and 2035 coincide with the timeframe of the City’s General Plan. UCR must coordinate with the city, to ensure compatible land uses are considered in the new General Plan.
- A 4th Alternative to the 3 scenarios presented might need to be a satellite campus. Downtown Riverside, Innovation District, Northside Specific Plan area would all be transformative.
- While still in the concept phase, the City of Riverside Innovation District proposal could incorporate some UCR off campus opportunities.
- The campus should identify and acquire land to replace and expand agriculture operations and research. In addition to Riverside’s greenbelt, UCR should explore opportunities in the Pellissier Ranch area.
- The sense of campus is very important to students and the student experience. As such, rather than relocating colleges, academic units, research, or recreation off campus, UCR should explore relocating non campus critical operations off campus instead, example - HR and Payroll functions as part of the UC PATH consolidation relocated near March Air Reserve Base.
- If the campus chooses to densify the campus core, don’t be short sided. Build high and leave space.
- Is UCR’s target of UC system wide averages for faculty and staff levels realistic given that UCR has never been at those levels?

- Arizona State University built a second campus in downtown Phoenix. UCR should identify units that might benefit off campus to better allow for other units to properly grow.
- If UCR is looking at moving a Graduate Professional School off campus or further away from the core (West of 60 fwy or downtown) then we should also have student housing (dorm, apartments, amenities) in the same location to serve the students and provide them a better learning collaboration experience. You need to have family housing and non-family housing. This model is used in some of the major Universities.
- Are there units/research/instruction that could be relocated to the underutilized Palm Desert Campus?

Housing

- While the committee did not view the campus' 40% target on campus housing target as unrealistic, the committee did have serious concerns that UCR identify or coordinate with outside stakeholders to identify and accommodate the 60% of students that would not be living on campus.
- Off-campus sites identified as potential locations for multi-family or student housing included the Kmart site on Iowa Avenue and the Cask n Cleaver site on University Avenue. It was also noted that the area near UCR lacked a sufficient density or severe underutilization of non-housing commercial facilities. Specifically mentioned included the commercial centers at Watkins and Big Springs, the Commercial Center on Blaine between Watkins and Canyon Crest, and University Avenue between Iowa and Chicago.
- It was noted that with UCR and Riverside Transit Agency's partnership allowing for students to ride RTA buses for free, that potential housing for students might not be limited to a close proximity to campus. Potential links could include Highgrove and extend out to Perris.
- There should not be an overriding consideration in the EIR for off campus housing impacts.
- While condensing the land uses in housing to one land use might leave more flexibility, the needs of graduate students vs. undergraduate students vs. students with spouses/children are very different.

- The Riverside area was recently named one of the 10 least affordable markets in the country. Between campus housing price points and the off campus market (including absentee landlords), how can UCR and the city work affordable in to the housing mix.
- Current on campus housing rates are based upon (partially) on area market research. The campus should use historical tracking to compare its affordability in the past.
- Classroom usage should be added to housing projects in a mixed-use style.
- The growth in demand for student housing has begun to impact the Eastside neighborhood, raising rents and home prices, as well as pushing out long-time residents in favor of students.
- New housing is often built for market rate (or higher) residents. Given the demographic makeup of UCR students, how can affordable housing be added to the areas product mix, both on and off campus?
- To what degree can tiny homes or modular housing be incorporated in to the housing mix?
- North District and Bannockburn area student housing needs to be more denser, 8-10 stories. This is an area that can accommodate more on-campus student housing and thus have less impact to neighborhoods adjacent to UCR. Student housing will only keep getting more expensive in surrounding areas due to limitations of growth. UCR can set the ground work now to take advantage of this now and control its need into the next 20 years. Its easier to modify existing plans of the North District before construction than the demolition of existing structures. Other private student housing developments around UCR are already at this height. University Village Towers is at eight stories.
- Building a student housing complex near the International Village Apartments. The need to balance student housing is vital due to the impact of surrounding neighborhoods. All current housing is currently clustered on the northern part of campus. This housing could be for graduate and family housing.

Student Academic Experience

- Given the time horizon of the LRDP, UCR needs to seriously consider the increase of online courses and implementation of other learning technologies to accommodate a greater amount of its growth than currently projected.
- A growing number of university students are older, retuning, or are parents. These students require different needs, including housing and class times.
- Consider adding additional evening and Saturday classes to better utilize classroom space and provide options for working students.
- Graduate Courses, especially in professional programs would have a much greater potential for online learning than currently used.

Recreation & Athletics

- One option of recreation is UCR's investment in hiking trails southeast of campus and in the Box Springs Mountains, where a master hiking trail plan was recently created.
- Athletic fields for Division 1 programs should be clustered to maximize synergies of parking and stadium amenities. If you are going to move the Softball stadium, then we should look at replacing it near the baseball stadium. Stadiums can share practice fields, parking, concessions and bathrooms. Other universities have common plazas/open areas between stadiums to host tailgate or pre-party events. You can utilize this for Alumni and other corporate type hospitality. Food trucks are used to deliver different types of food. You need to have a cohesive space to park up to 8 different vendors and incorporate an area for beer/mixed drink bars.
- Need to build an Event center to host large student meetings, conferences, graduations, concerts and Division 1 Basketball. This is vital to UCR and would be "welcome statement" to the Inland Empire. All UC's and other major universities in Southern California have an event center. Having a larger 5,000-6,000 seat event center is extremely important in creating a college environment.

Parking and Transportation

- How will the campus consider parking ratios in the future given the changing demand of auto use, alternative transportation, public transportation, driverless cars, etc.?
 - Can parking structures be designed to be repurposed over their lifetime?

- A better mobility solution for pedestrians, cyclists, etc. needs to be developed to get students from one side of the 60/215 freeway to the other. A bridge, tunnel, skyway, etc.

Safety

If the LRDP is to target UC averages for faculty and staff levels, it should go slightly deeper in some areas, such as ensuring targeted police staffing levels so police staffing keeps up with growth.

Other

- University Extension should not be identified in the Land Use category – “External Partner.” Extension is an integral part of the campus that plays a significant role in the University fulfilling its mission.
- University Extension should be involved in the determination of the future use of Parking Lot 50.
- While architecture evolves over time, many campuses have a look and feel that give it a timeless sense of continuity. The UCR campus brick has been consistent in most of UCR’s construction. It should continue to be a prominent element in future UCR projects.
- Need to build a Business Building complex similar to UC Irvine. If this is one of the main programs that are unique to UCR then you need a modern building that is able to have state of art lecturer facilities, meeting rooms and offices for faculty. Facility needs to have onsite food services.