

UNIVERSITY AVENUE DENSITY TRANSFER PILOT PROGRAM

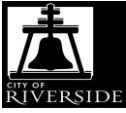
**CITY OF RIVERSIDE
UNIVERSITY AVENUE
DENSITY TRANSFER PILOT PROGRAM**



**CITY OF RIVERSIDE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PLANNING DIVISION**

**3900 MAIN STREET
RIVERSIDE, CA 92522**

**ADOPTED APRIL 21, 2026
RESOLUTION No. #####**



1. PURPOSE

The University Avenue Specific Plan (UASP), established in 1993, sets forth specific standards for development in the eastern portion of the University Avenue corridor (Park Avenue to I-215/SR 60), to revitalize this key linkage between Downtown Riverside and the University of California, Riverside (UCR). Four key revitalization strategies identified in the UASP include:

1. Alteration of the land use mix;
2. Investment in quality, affordable housing;
3. Investment in the business community; and
4. Investment in the people.

Bringing additional housing to the UASP in line with these strategies has proven challenging. The UASP has a maximum residential development capacity of 6,819 housing units and 133 out of 138 parcels comprising the Specific Plan permit housing, yet less than 10% of the maximum number of housing units have been developed. Most parcels in the UASP are already developed, largely with nonresidential uses. Fourteen surplus, *city-owned parcels* have remained vacant due to their small size and limited development capacity. Many of the UASP's parcels, including eleven of the fourteen vacant city-owned parcels, are also *Housing Element Opportunity Sites*, which have been identified and zoned to meet the City's share of regional housing needs.

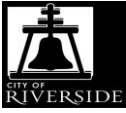
This policy establishes a *density transfer pilot program* as a potential solution to increase housing supply. Under the program, residential development rights can be transferred from one site (*donor site*) to another site (*receiver site*) within the Specific Plan area through either deposit and withdrawals of units into a bank (*bank method*) or direct transfer of development rights between properties (*direct transfer method*). This pilot program is intended to make housing development more feasible for constrained sites by making additional development capacity available without requiring changes to the Specific Plan or General Plan. If successful, this pilot program can serve as a model for expanded and permanent density transfer programs in the City in the future.

2. DEFINITIONS

Bank method means one of the two transfer methods available in the Program, where a donor site transfers all or part of its housing unit capacity to a development bank, to be withdrawn by a receiver site at a later time.

Direct transfer method means one of the two transfer methods available in the program, where a donor site transfers all or part of its housing unit capacity directly to a receiver site.

Donor site means a parcel that donates all or part of its housing unit capacity to a receiver site through the density transfer program, either by depositing units into a development bank or through direct negotiation with a receiver site.



Housing element site means a parcel that has been specially designated and zoned for housing to meet the City's share of regional housing needs (regional housing needs allocation or RHNA). The City closely monitors and reports on its progress in developing units from these sites to multiple state agencies.

Receiver site means a parcel that receives additional residential development rights from a donor site through the density transfer program, either by withdrawing units from a development bank or through direct negotiation with a receiver site.

3. APPLICABILITY

This program applies to parcels within the University Avenue Specific Plan area. Parcels located outside of the University Avenue Specific Plan area are not eligible to participate in the pilot program.

4. ELIGIBILITY

Besides location in the University Avenue Specific Plan area, parcels are eligible to be donors and receivers, based on the following criteria:

- A. All parcels are eligible to be donors, except for:
 - 1) Housing Element Sites included in the Opportunity Sites Inventory of the 6th Cycle Housing Element.
 - a) Exception: 6th Cycle Housing Element sites where approval has been granted after adoption of the Housing Element for non-residential development, or has been granted for residential development at less than the maximum development capacity of the site, shall be eligible as donor sites and shall contribute any remaining residential development capacity to the Development Bank or otherwise transfer directly.
 - 2) Parcels that are already developed to their maximum residential capacity; and
 - 3) Parcels that do not have residential development capacity (i.e., do not have a General Plan, Specific Plan or Zoning designation of residential or mixed-use).
- B. All city-owned surplus and all Housing Element parcels are eligible to be receiver sites.

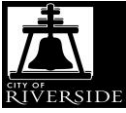
5. PROCESS AND APPROVAL

Applicants for projects on eligible receiver sites can withdraw units from the development bank or can negotiate the direct transfer of units from an eligible donor site via the direct transfer method, as described in greater detail below.

- A. Bank Method.
 - 1) Depositing into the bank.
 - a) At the start of the program, the City will seed the development bank with residential capacity from City-owned surplus sites.



- b) Beyond the initial seeding, applicants for eligible donor parcels will continue to seed the bank in one of two ways:
 - i. Applicants for eligible donor sites shall replenish the bank with their unbuilt residential unit capacity as a condition of approval of nonresidential development or residential development below the site's maximum residential capacity. For instance, if a site has a residential development capacity of 100 units and an applicant proposes a nonresidential project on the site, they would be required to transfer 100 units of the site's residential capacity to the development bank. On the same site, if an applicant proposes a 90-unit residential project, they would be required to transfer 10 units of the site's residential capacity to the development bank.
 - ii. In the absence of a development proposal, property owners of eligible donor parcels may voluntarily surrender their unbuilt residential capacity to deposit into the bank. This may be of interest if seeking nonresidential development in the future.
 - c) When an applicant for an eligible donor site seeks to deposit into the bank, they shall submit a Request to Transfer Units (in conjunction with the general application if part of a development project). The request must include the following information:
 - i. The site's zoning and general plan designations and assessor's parcel number(s)
 - ii. Current land use and number of existing residential units (if any);
 - iii. A brief description of the proposed development including proposed number of units (if applicable)
 - iv. Total residential unit capacity and number of units being deposited into the bank; and
 - v. Any additional information and submittal requirements as noted on the application.
 - d) A deed restriction or similar instrument shall be prepared and recorded against the property documenting the transfer and surrender of associated residential development rights. Upon recordation of the instrument the Planning Division will count those units as deposited.
- 2) Withdrawing from the bank
- a) Applicants for development projects on an eligible receiver site shall submit a Request to Transfer Units (in conjunction with the general application for land use entitlements if part of a development project). Withdrawals from the bank will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis; however, to ensure the efficient disposition and development of surplus City land, development

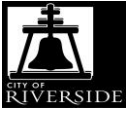


proposals on City-owned surplus sites would be given priority access to the bank in the event there are not sufficient units available to accommodate concurrent requests. The request must include the following information:

- i. The site's zoning and general plan designations and assessor's parcel number(s)
 - ii. Current land use and number of existing residential units (if any);
 - iii. A brief description of the proposed development including proposed number of units (if applicable). If part of a proposed development, this must include a vicinity map and preliminary site plan, drawn to scale, including building footprints, driveways, and parking layout;
 - iv. The number of any proposed affordable units and the intended household income level to which they are proposed to be affordable;
 - v. Total residential development capacity of the site and number of units being requested from the bank (residential development capacity must be met to request to withdraw units);
 - vi. If an additional density bonus, concessions or incentives available under RMC Chapter 19.545 (Density Bonus) or the California Government Code is requested, a description of the requested incentives or concessions and a calculation of the appropriate amount of bonus density based on the proposed quantity and income level of affordable units; and
 - vii. Any additional information and submittal requirements as noted on the development application.
- b) The density transfer request shall be reviewed concurrently with the application for necessary land use entitlements for the project. Approval of the transfer request shall be by action of the same approving authority as the project's land use entitlements.
 - c) If the withdrawn units are intended to be used for affordable housing, an affordable housing agreement must accompany the request.
 - d) Upon approval of the request, the Planning Division will count those units as withdrawn.
- B. Direct Transfer Method
- 1) Direct transfers shall only occur between eligible donor and eligible receiver sites.
 - 2) An applicant for a development project on an eligible receiver site shall seek an eligible donor site either themselves or by consulting with the Planning Division and the list of sites they maintain.



- 3) Applicants for an eligible receiver site shall jointly submit a Request to Transfer Units with an eligible donor site (in conjunction with the general application if part of a development project). The applicant's request must include the following information:
 - a) For the eligible donor site:
 - i. The site's zoning and general plan designations and assessor's parcel number(s)
 - ii. Current land use and number of existing units (if any);
 - iii. A brief description of the proposed development including proposed number of units (if applicable);
 - iv. Total residential development capacity; and
 - v. Any additional information and submittal requirements as noted on the application.
 - b) For the eligible receiver site:
 - i. The site's zoning and general plan designations and assessor's parcel number(s)
 - ii. Current land use and number of existing units (if any);
 - iii. A brief description of the proposed development including proposed number of units (if applicable). If part of a proposed development, this must include a vicinity map and preliminary site plan, drawn to scale, including building footprints, driveways, and parking layout;
 - iv. Total residential development capacity;
 - v. If an additional density bonus, concessions or incentives available under RMC Chapter 19.545 (Density Bonus) or the California Government Code is requested, a description of the requested incentives or concessions and a calculation of the appropriate amount of bonus density based on the proposed quantity and income level of affordable units; and
 - vi. Any additional information and submittal requirements as noted on the development application.
 - c) For both parcels, the number of units being transferred from the eligible donor parcel to the eligible receiver parcel.
 - d) If the withdrawn units are intended to be used for affordable housing, an affordable housing agreement must accompany the request.
- 4) Once the application has been approved, the applicant and representative for the donor site shall jointly draft a density transfer agreement ("agreement"), which shall be reviewed and revised as appropriate by the Community & Economic Development (CEDD)



Director and the City Attorney's Office. Minimum terms for the agreement shall include the following:

- a) The total number of units proposed within the housing development;
- b) A schedule for completion and occupancy of the units;
- c) A description of any additional incentive being provided by the city;
- d) A description of ramifications and remedies for breach of the agreement by either party;
- e) Any other provisions to ensure implementation and compliance with any density bonus provisions established in Chapter 19.545 (Density Bonus) or in the City's Housing Element, as applicable, including but not limited to:
 - i. A description of the household income group to be accommodated by the housing development, and the standards for determining the corresponding affordable rent or affordable sales price and housing cost;
 - ii. The location, unit sizes (square feet), and number of bedrooms of affordable units, as described in Chapter 19.545; and
 - iii. Tenure of use restrictions for affordable units;
- f) For the representative of the donor parcel, an acknowledgement that once the agreement is approved, the representative will forfeit the right to develop those units in perpetuity, recorded in an accompanied deed restriction running with the land.
- g) Upon approval of the agreement and recordation of the deed restriction, the Planning Division will count those units as transferred from the donor parcel to the receiver parcel.

6. DOCUMENTATION AND MONITORING

- A. Through the Request for Transfer applications and density transfer agreements, the City of Riverside Planning Division will track transfers, both into and from the bank and between parcels, in a database that it will maintain throughout the life of the pilot program. Unit transfers shall be monitored to ensure that the University Avenue Specific Plan does not exceed its maximum residential development capacity of 6,819 housing units.
- B. One year following the adoption of the program, the Planning Division will prepare a report to the City Council or designated standing committee describing the program's implementation with a recommendation on the feasibility of future density transfer programs for the City.