



## Measure J Nishi Residential Development Project

**Ballot Language:**

Shall Resolution 18-023 amending the Davis General Plan to change the land use designation for the Nishi property from Agriculture to Medium High Density Residential and Natural Habitat Area, as set forth in the Resolution and establishing the Baseline Project Features for development of the Nishi Project be approved?

**Why is this project on the ballot?**

City rules require voter approval for any project that changes agricultural land to urban uses. The City is also required to identify “Baseline Project Features” such as allowable land uses, densities, parks and recreation facilities, and significant project design features that cannot be reduced or eliminated without subsequent voter approval. It requires a majority (50% +1) of votes cast to pass.

**Where is the property?**

The Nishi Property is a 47-acre parcel at the west end of Olive Drive, between Interstate 80 and the Union Pacific railroad track.



**LEGEND**

- UCD Underpass
- Olive Drive Emergency Access
- Existing Bike Path
- Existing Putah Creek Parkway

**Land Use Summary**

15-Jan-18

Land Use Type	Acreage	Total Units	Density
RMH Residential Medium High Density	27.0	700	26 units/acre
P Satellite Parking	6.3		
B Putah Creek Open Space	3.3		
UF Urban Forest Open Space	7.1		
O/D Stormwater Detention/Open Space	3.2		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46.9</b>		
<b>PARKING</b>		<b>Cars</b>	<b>Bikes</b>
		700	2200

**Why is this proposal being considered?**

The City's General Plan identifies the Nishi property as a potential location for university related development, including student housing. In February 2018, the City Council voted to approve applications for the Nishi Residential Development Project and place the proposal on the June 2018 ballot.

**What land uses are proposed?**

The project is a maximum of 700 multifamily rental units, with no more than 2,200 beds. Accessory buildings are permitted, including up to 10,000 square feet of ancillary ground-floor retail, office, and service uses. The project also includes 3.3 acres to expand the Putah Creek corridor, an urban forest / buffer between the residential buildings and Interstate 80, and stormwater facilities.

**How will drivers, bicyclists and buses access the site?**

Vehicular access would be provided from a new grade-separated connection under the Railroad tracks to Old Davis Road on the UC Davis campus. Bicycle/pedestrian access would be provided from Olive Drive, the new connection to Old Davis Road, and the existing Putah Creek Parkway bike connections under the freeway and the railroad tracks. Public transit access may also be provided from Olive Drive. Construction on the Nishi property cannot begin until construction has started on the new UC Davis connection.

**Haven't the voters already said no to this project?**

In 2016, the City Council approved applications for a mixed-use innovation district comprised of the Nishi property and west Olive Drive. The innovation district included rental apartments, for-sale condominiums, and office/R&D properties. The Nishi component of the proposal was placed on the June 2016 ballot and the approvals were rejected by the voters. Potential redevelopment of the properties on Olive Drive was not subject to voter approval and those entitlements remain in place.

The Nishi Residential Development has the following key differences from the earlier proposal:

- ◆ The project has rental housing only. It does not include condominiums or office/R&D properties.
- ◆ Private vehicle access is only from the UC Davis campus, not from Olive Drive.
- ◆ There is an affordable housing component as part of the rental development.

**Is Affordable Housing provided?**

The Development Agreement between the City and the property owner calls for a minimum of 330 of the residential beds to be leased to extremely low income and very low income students. Monthly rents, including utilities, are limited through a formula based upon maximum annual income. Renters of the Affordable Beds will enjoy the same amenities and living experience as all other residents in the project.

**How will this affect the City financially?**

The urban forest and stormwater facilities will be owned and operated by the property owner. The City would provide public safety and other municipal services to the project and its residents. The project would generate property taxes to the City. The property owners in the project will be required to make payments to the City, Yolo County, and Davis Joint Unified School District in the event the property is acquired or master leased by an entity exempt from property taxes. The City's Finance and Budget Commission concluded that annual ongoing revenues and costs for the city from the project would be modestly net positive over time.

**Are there environmental issues?**

The City approved an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in 2016 covering a mixed use innovation district for the Nishi property and West Olive Drive. An Addendum to that EIR was prepared in 2018, concluding that there were no new or greater impacts from the Nishi Residential Development project than had previously been identified.

All potential impacts were required to be mitigated to the extent feasible, but some impacts were determined to be significant even after mitigation. These are:

- ◆ Conversion of agricultural land to urban uses
- ◆ Exposure of residents to off-site sources of toxic air contaminants and ultrafine particulates
- ◆ Contribution to greenhouse gas emissions
- ◆ Exposure of residents to noise from train horns and project construction
- ◆ Impacts to an intersection on the UC Davis campus (Mitigation could be provided through roundabout improvements, but UC Regents approval cannot be guaranteed.)
- ◆ Increase in vehicle miles travelled

All mitigation measures from the original EIR were incorporated in the approvals for the Nishi Residential Development, as modified to reflect the revised project.

**What about air quality?**

Federal and state agencies have not established standards for ultrafine particles (UFPs), but it is known that exposure to UFPs may lead to adverse health effects. Field measurements were taken for the Nishi EIR, and the EIR concluded that measured concentrations of UFP would have a substantial level of health risk from long-term exposure to UFP concentrations. The EIR requires the applicant to establish a vegetative barrier between the freeway and the apartment buildings, and to include a state-of-the-art air filtration system within all on-site structures that will remove no less than 95 percent of UFP from indoor air. Because of the mitigation requirements, interior air quality conditions would be very good.

Future residents would need to evaluate any health implications of living on the Nishi property as part of their determination of where to live. The California Air Resources Board notes that spending time near high-volume roadways can contribute to health problems. Compact, urban development can also provide benefits such as:

- ◆ Promoting physical activity by facilitating active transportation (biking and walking) and by shortening the distances that people must travel for their daily activities;
- ◆ Shortening car trips or replacing them by these other modes, reducing exposure to on-roadway emissions; and
- ◆ Improving quality of life by supporting community connectivity.

**Has UC Davis committed to providing access?**

The Nishi Residential Development proposal assumes that vehicular access will be provided through a grade-separated crossing of the railroad tracks to the UC Davis campus. Construction cannot begin until construction of that connection has commenced. This is anticipated to require approval of both UC Davis and the Union Pacific Railroad. UC Davis has pledged to work cooperatively toward finalizing access agreements for the Nishi project. As a first step, UC Davis has approved a Memorandum of Understanding to guide the future access agreement process. The Memorandum is anticipated to be presented to the City Council for approval in April. Emergency vehicle access will be provided through the new connection to UC Davis and from the pedestrian/bicycle connection to Olive Drive.

**Hasn't a lawsuit been filed?**

A lawsuit has been filed challenging the City's environmental compliance and other aspects of the project. The City believes it has fully complied with the California Environmental Quality Act through the preparation and approval of the EIR and the Addendum for the project. The lawsuit does not stop the election. The lawsuit also does not stop the implementation of project approvals in accordance with the EIR and the Baseline Project Features.

Litigation was also filed in 2016 over the earlier approvals of the mixed-use innovation district. The lawsuit challenged the EIR and the affordable housing determination for the project. In 2017, the litigation was resolved in the City's favor, and with the litigant ceding the affordable housing argument.

***For more information, please visit: [CityofDavis.org](http://CityofDavis.org)***