

University Mall Redevelopment

Project Description

April 10, 2020

Brixmor Property Group proposes to redevelop the University Mall to enhance existing retail uses and add residential units to create a vibrant mixed-use development. The purpose of the project is to provide a shopping and residential environment that meets the needs of the local Davis community. This experiential project is designed to create a pedestrian and bike friendly environment while providing better and more functional retail, restaurants, and residential amenities.

Project Location

The site is located north of Russell Boulevard, east of Sycamore Lane and west of Anderson Road, approximately 0.3 miles east of State Route 113. The site consists of APN 034-253-07 and the address is 737-885 Russell Boulevard.

Project Site

The 8.25-acre parcel is developed with the University Mall, a 103,695 square foot (sf) neighborhood shopping center that features commercial uses and restaurants. Tenants include Trader Joe's market, Forever 21, Cost Plus World Market, The Graduate restaurant and sports bar, and smaller shops and services. Professional offices are located on a partial second floor.

The original mall buildings are located on the north portion of the rectangular site. Trader Joe's market is a stand-alone pad that sides on to Russell Boulevard in the southwest portion of the site, at the northeast corner of Russell Boulevard and Sycamore Lane. Paved parking areas, including approximately 427 spaces, are located on the south, east and west portions of the site. The site is accessible by two driveways on Russell Boulevard, two driveways on Sycamore Lane, and three driveways Anderson Road.

Surrounding Uses

An ARCO service station (not a part of the property) with a mini-mart is located at the northwest corner of Russell Boulevard and Anderson Road. Adjacent to the site across Anderson Road to the east is a Rite Aid pharmacy. The University of California, Davis campus is located immediately across the street south of the site. Multi-family apartment communities are located immediately north and east of the site and single-family residential neighborhoods are located farther north and east of the site.

History of University Mall

University Mall was constructed and opened in 1966. In 1970, 20,000 square feet (SF) was added to the mall for Lawrence's, a department store. In the 1970s, The Graduate restaurant and sports bar was built and became the anchor restaurant for the center. In 1984, the west portion of the mall building was added to house Safeway and in 1999, the mall was renovated and some tenants relocated within the site. In 2010, Trader Joe's market was constructed. In 2004, the University Mall was acquired by the (Centro Watt Operating Partnership LLC) Brixmor Property Group, Inc., the second-largest owner of community and neighborhood shopping centers in the United States.

Over the years, many tenants have occupied spaces in the mall including Pay n' Save, Payless, Rite Aid, Gottschalk's department store, Harvest Market, The Warehouse, and several restaurants. The University Mall was one of the first retail centers in Davis to serve the community. However, the current state of the property does not meet today's rapidly changing retail environment. The University Mall buildings and facilities are dated and are in need of revitalization.

Proposed Project

The University Mall Redevelopment project would entail demolition of approximately 90,653 SF of the existing mall to create a mixed-use development. The project proposed would result in the addition of 264 multi-family residential units and 136,800 SF of new retail uses. The existing 13,200 SF Trader Joe's would remain in its existing location. The addition of 136,800 SF of retail uses would accommodate shops, restaurants and other uses. The proposed improvements and uses would intensify and revitalize the center. It includes a garage structure with three levels of parking. At buildout, the project would include approximately 808,500 sf.

	Square Feet	Units
Residential Area	412,500 sf	264
Retail Area	150,000 sf	
Parking Garage	246,000 sf	
Total Project	808,500 sf	264

The existing building that currently houses the mall retail uses would be demolished and rebuilt to include four levels of residential units over three levels of parking and four levels of residential uses over retail uses. Two new pads (Buildings C and D) would be added to the site adjacent to Russell Boulevard and would add approximately 30,000 SF of retail space. It is the intent of Brixmor to retain as many of the existing tenants as possible. The proposed building height would be seven stories or approximately 80 feet.

The intent is to design the project to a LEED Gold equivalency with contemporary architectural elements. The design of the building will utilize energy efficient lighting and HVAC systems. Efficient water-wise fixtures will be utilized to assist in water conservation. Eco-friendly/sustainable materials and energy efficient windows will be selected for design purposes to further improve building sustainability. The redeveloped site landscaping would

include outdoor seating and congregating areas, bicycle parking, plazas and pedestrian connections among buildings. These new nodes will be designed to provide a pleasant experience for both the residences and shoppers alike. Through the intensification of an existing retail development versus converting an open space into a new development a high level of sustainability will be achieved.

Residential Uses. Redevelopment of the site will introduce four levels of multi-family residential units over parking and retail to create a vertically mixed-use project. The project proposes 264 multi-family residential units. The units will consist of one, two, four, and five-bedroom units ranging in size from 700 SF to 1,800 SF with an average unit size of 1,124 SF, and a total bed count up to 894 beds. The area of the residential portion of the project would be approximately 412,500 SF and a density of approximately 32 units per acre. Residential buildings would be a Type III construction.

Due to the immediate proximity to the University of Davis campus, the residential is primarily focused on student use, but will also welcome and include many options for non-students as well. The residential units will be arranged around a courtyard with a pool and an outdoor lounge area. Additional amenities will include will include a fitness room, extensive bike storage, a bike repair station, rooftop terrace and resident services.

Access. Access from Russell Boulevard, Anderson Road and Sycamore Lane would continue to serve the site. The site is accessible by two driveways on Russell Boulevard and two driveways each on Sycamore Lane and Anderson Road respectively. Pedestrian walkways will be added throughout the property to enhance walkability to all areas of the project.

Parking. The parking requirement for the site is one parking space for each three hundred fifty square feet of gross area of nonresidential use, and one for each dwelling unit pursuant to City of Davis Municipal Code Section 40.25.090. The proposed project will include a total of 693 parking spaces, 264 for residential units and 429 for retail uses. Of the 429 required parking spaces for retail uses, 269 spaces are planned for the first, second and third levels of the parking structure and 160 spaces in the surface parking lot. The third level of the parking structure will also provide the 264 residential parking spaces. The proposed parking plan will provide parking spaces for Electric Vehicle and ride sharing. The Electric Vehicle Charging plan will be designed to accommodate future growth for additional EV charging stations.

In addition to vehicles, the proposed project will provide 683 long term and 335 short term bike parking stalls, which exceeds the City of Davis Municipal Code 40.25A.040 Bicycle parking standards.

Entitlements

Entitlement History. The following are the previous planning actions for the University Mall site.

1965	Building permits issued for construction for the shopping mall
1970	Conditional use permit issued for 20,000 sf department store (Lawrence's)
1985	City Council approved west wing addition to the mall
1998	City Council approved Planned Development #2-97 for University Mall and the ARCO parcel to reflect a Neighborhood Commercial base zone.

- 1999 City Council approved amendments to PD #2-97 to allow certain retail uses up to 36,000 SF.
- 2003 City Council approved General Plan Text and Map Amendment to create a new “Community Retail” land use designation and to re-designate the University Mall land use from Neighborhood Retail; a CUP to allow a Cost Plus World Market store; Minor Modification to increase department store space from 36,000 SF maximum to 39,000 SF, and approved Design Review for façade changes to the main University Mall building.
- 2006 City Council approved amendments to the Planned Development (PD #2-97B) and approved a Final Planned Development Plan for Trader Joe’s. The PD amendments included modifications to development standards.

Zoning and General Plan Designations. The site is zoned PD #2-97B (Neighborhood Commercial Center). The Planned Development (PD #2-97B) applicable to the property was approved by the City in 2006 and establishes a building height limitation of 50 feet and allows residential uses above the ground floor.

The site is designated in the General Plan as Community Retail. Under the Community Retail designation, residential uses are allowed with approval of a Conditional Use Permit and the maximum floor area ratio for retail is 0.50 with an additional 0.15 allowed for the residential component in a mixed-use project.

Proposed Entitlements. The project proposes a Rezone/Preliminary Development and a General Plan Amendment to permit the mix of retail and residential uses at the proposed density and building height. Modifications to PD #2-97 are proposed to reflect development standards for the proposed project. A General Plan Amendment is needed to address the mix of uses with the larger residential component, as well as addressing the allowable floor area ratio to accommodate the project’s 1.56 floor area ratio for the residential and retail building area.