COVER PAGE

CHAPTER 6: Urban Design

Chapter 6—Urban Design

What development models were considered and used in crafting the Community Plan? What do the future UC spin-off development types look like? How will the Plan create an attractive entrance to the University of California at Merced? How can the development within the Bellevue Corridor Community Plan use natural resources and energy in a more sustainable manner? This chapter addresses these and related questions.

6.1 Introduction ..... 6-__

6.1.1 Development Models Used in the Planning Area ..... 6-__

6.1.2 Development Orientation ..... 6-__

6.2 Issues and Intent ..... 6-__

6.2.1 Urban Form ..... 6-__

6.2.2 Gateway to UC Merced ..... 6-__

6.2.3 Natural Resource and Energy Utilization ..... 6-__

6.2.4 Innovation Hub ..... 6-__

6.3 Consistency with the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* ..... 6-__

6.3.1 Transit-Ready Development/Urban Villages ..... 6-__

6.3.2 Overall Community Appearance ..... 6-__

6.4 *Bellevue Community Plan* Goals, Policies and Actions ..... 6-__

6.5 Bibliography ..... 6-__

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Development Models Used in the Planning Area

CENTERS

CORRIDORS

NEIGHBORHOODS

DISTRICTS

6.1.2 Development Orientation

AUTO-CENTRIC

Big-Box Retail

URBAN VILLAGE

6.2 Issues and Intent

INTRODUCTION

6.2.1 Urban Form

6.2.2 Gateway to UC Merced

Establish Gateway Design Standards

Design of Structures along Road Corridors

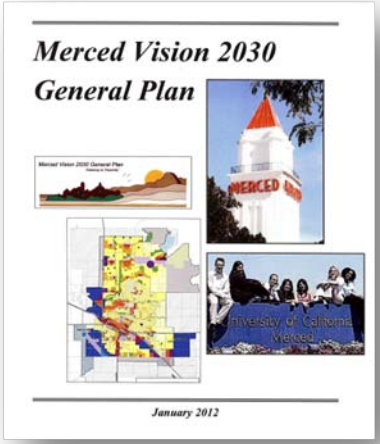
Require all New Utility Lines to be Placed Underground

6.2.3 Natural Resources and Energy Utilization

6.2.4 Innovation Hub

6.3 Consistency with the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan*

INTRODUCTION



To assure that the Bellevue Community Plan was crafted in a manner consistent with the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan*, this section describes how General Plan policies and implementing actions were utilized to develop and implement the "Open Space, Conservation and Recreation" Chapter of the BCP.

For ease of reference, BCP applicable Urban Design-related General Plan polices and implementing actions are listed in this section of the BCP. These may be applicable for various reasons:

- guided the crafting of the Bellevue Community Plan (BCP);
- guide design of future development projects; and
- formed the foundation upon which new policies were written to apply specifically to the BCP. Where used to develop policies for the BCP, a brief discussion is added to explain the relevance of the BCP planning area to the policy.

Use of the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* goals and policies in this manner assures that the Community Plan is consistent with the City's General Plan.

Subject areas include:

- Transit Ready Development or Urban Villages
- Overall Community Appearance

6.3.1 Transit Ready Development or Urban Villages

Urban Design Policy UD-1.1

The fundamental building block of the Plan is the Village, a compact, mixed-use district that will accommodate projected growth, maintain Merced's present quality of life and help ensure its continued economic vitality. Villages achieve these goals by encouraging pedestrian and transit travel, and by minimizing single-use, low density developments that generate traffic congestion, air pollution, a scarcity of affordable housing, monotonous landscapes and poor utilization of environmental and land resources. The City of Merced has established the "Urban Village" model (also known as "Transit Ready Development") as the basic design concept governing urban form in new growth areas. Its principles should be applied as much as feasible in new growth areas throughout the Merced urban area. For these reasons, the **Urban Design Policy *UD-1.1*** of the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* spotlights the need to ***Apply Transit-Ready Development or Urban Village Design Principles to New Development in the City's New Growth Areas.***

The Fundamental Building Block of the City is the Village

Implementing Action UD-1.1.a of the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* states, **"The focus of new development will be the "Urban Village," which are mixed-use, pedestrian- and transit-friendly communities within a one-square mile area."** Villages should include a mixture of parks, shops, a variety of housing types, and civic uses. Villages combine these uses within a convenient distance, making it easier for residents and employees to travel by transit, bicycle or foot as well as by car. Village sites should be located on or near planned transit segments and provide a physical environment that encourages pedestrian and transit travel.

Encourage Job-Generating Uses within the Urban Villages near UC Merced

Implementing Action UD-1.1.h of the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* states, "**Develop special "Urban Village" design principles to encourage more job-generating uses within the Urban Villages."** Special "Urban Village" designs should be developed to provide for increased opportunities for job-based land uses attracted by a university climate in some Urban Villages, especially in the northwestern area of the City, while still maintaining the basic concept of mixed-use, pedestrian and transit oriented communities. These "Urban Villages" may differ from others in the Community in the mixture of business park, research and development (also supported by Implementing Action UD-1.1.f), office, public/cultural uses, and retail uses within the Village Core areas instead of the retail/office/public facilities focus of other Villages which are more residential in nature.

6.3.2 Overall Community Appearance

Urban Design Policy UD-2.2

Over the years, the City of Merced has developed a unique physical character and civic flavor. The City's compact form, tree shaded streets, well kept neighborhoods and extensive open space areas have contributed to its charm and attractiveness. To preserve and enhance this positive community appearance, the City has traditionally committed to a policy of civic improvement and beautification. For these reasons, the **Urban**

Design Policy *UD-2.2* of the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* spotlights the need to ***Maintain and Enhance the Unique Community Appearance of Merced.***

Establish Gateway Design Standards

Implementing Action UD-2.2.a of the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* states, "**Encourage joint City and County cooperation in establishing land use and development standards along all major gateways to the City.**" Working in cooperation with the County, the City shall propose development standards for these city entrances and outline a strategy for implementation.

Require all New Utility Lines to be Placed Underground

Implementing Action UD-2.2.e of the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* states, "**Expand the City's programs for undergrounding utility lines and require all new utility lines to be placed underground**." Working closely with PG&E and other utility companies, the City shall continue its efforts to place existing overhead electrical and communication lines underground. All new utility lines shall be placed underground.

6.4 Bellevue Community Plan Goals, Policies and Actions

INTRODUCTION

Consistent with the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan*, the goals of this BCP chapter are grouped into two areas as follows. This approach fosters consistency and builds on the City's broader General Plan guidance; these subjects include:

- ***Goal Area UD 1:*** Transit-Ready Development/Urban Villages
- ***Goal Area UD-2:*** Overall Community Appearance

Policies and Implementing Actions specific to the BCP planning area are set forth in the Tables below:

Goal Area UD-1: Transit Ready Development/Urban Villages

GOAL

- C_____

POLICIES

UE-1.1 E_____

UE-1.2 P_____

Policy UE-1.1
E_____

Implementing Actions:

1.1.a P-----

1.1.b T------

1.1.c A--------

1.1.d W-------

Goal Area UD-2: Overall Community Appearance

GOAL

- C_____

POLICIES

UE-1.1 E_____

UE-1.2 P_____

Policy UE-1.1
E_____

Implementing Actions:

1.1.a P-----

1.1.b T------

1.1.c A--------

1.1.d W-------

6.5 Bibliography

1. *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan*
2.
3.
4.
5.