5. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The impetus for the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan*, and the focus of several General Plan policies, is the eventual expansion of the City toward and adjacent to UC Merced. The BCP covers land between the City boundary and west of UC Merced and establishes a high-level planning framework that strikes a balance between certainty and flexibility by anchoring key land uses while recognizing that their size may wish to adapt to changing market conditions in response to economic growth and the expansion of UC Merced. The BCP also protects the character of existing rural neighborhoods in the Plan area

The Bellevue Community Plan sets the foundation for how land uses connect along the proposed circulation networks.

The Community Character Chapter sets the foundation for how land uses are organized in the Plan Area. As described in Chapter 2 (Vision and Urban Design), the Core Principles from which the Plan was created include providing a "gateway" for UC Merced; making a network of "complete streets"; and creating neighborhoods and districts oriented to pedestrians and transit that are compatible with existing neighborhoods. Moreover, the community clearly expressed a desire for the Plan to be able to respond to market demands and leverage investment in UC Merced. Business growth is supported in the BCP through the creation of a flexible Research and Development employment corridor that is infused with innovation hub design elements in order to attract new firms and industry wishing to locate near the campus. Similarly, land use along Bellevue Road will be influenced by its character as a regional traffic conduit. To accomplish these objectives, the BCP establishes several "Place Types". Place Types are generally mixed-use environments, but may be dominated by a particular land use (for example residential uses or employment centers). Because the BCP focuses on urban form and a mixed-use environment, the term Place Type is used instead of the more conventional "land use", which is the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* nomenclature. The Place Types are defined by their location in the Plan, distinct physical characteristics (Table 9), and proximity to the circulation network set forth in the Mobility and Open Space Chapters.

The Community Character Chapter, together with mobility and opens space elements, establishes a platform from which infrastructure and phasing planning can be undertaken (see "Next Steps" in the Urban Expansion Chapter), and upon which Neighborhood Master Planning (as described in this chapter) can occur prior to actual development within the BCP.

SETTING

The Plan area is surrounded on all sides by existing or proposed future urban development. However, while there are a few rural residential areas to the north and southeast corners of the Plan area, it is largely vacant. The area is generally well positioned to accommodate regional and UC-related growth, but local decision makers and property owners need to work together to overcome annexation, infrastructure, environmental, and other potential obstacles to development.

EXISTING LAND USE ENTITLEMENTS

Please refer to Technical Appendix B (Development Projects and Plans) for land use entitlements near the Plan area.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

While most of the BCP area is outside the City limits, it is within the proposed Sphere of Influence and Area of Interest, and therefore governed by the policies outlined in the City's General Plan. The *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* Land Use Chapter provides key guidance in establishing land use goals and policies that can be implemented in the Bellevue Community Plan. These goals and policies provide direction for where new development will occur and how existing uses should be preserved. While the *General Plan* regulates land use and approximate land use distribution, the Bellevue Community Plan builds upon this vision, and based on community input, provides more specific policies and implementation recommendations.

The *General Plan* Land Use Chapter covers four major issue areas including: Residential Neighborhoods, Economic Environment, Urban Growth and Design, and Community Plans. The guidance provided by the *General Plan* requires that Community Plans follow the "village concept" design when possible. The urban village concept is meant to establish a cohesive mix of land uses with primarily higher densities. The urban village concept allows the Bellevue Community Plan to provide for mixed-use areas within the planning area. Thus, allowing higher density uses next to the UC Merced campus and within close proximity to proposed transit locations. Additionally, the Bellevue Community Plan aims to protect the character of and provide adequate transitions to the Rural Residential communities in and near the project area. This is accomplished by determining appropriate locations for various densities of residential development and compatible commercial and professional development.

The BCP establishes a range of land use amounts and intensities that are consistent with those assumed in the City's General Plan. The *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* includes a illustrative land use plan (Figure 3 in the Introduction Chapter) as a guide to craft the Bellevue Community Plan. The illustrative plan designates large stretches of Bellevue Road within the project area as "Mixed-Use" and a "Business Park" to support a dynamic assortment of future employment generating uses, housing options and commercial and office uses. Surrounding Bellevue Road are areas of Low Density Residential (LD) and Rural Residential (RR). Closer to the UC Merced campus land uses transition from Low to Medium Density Residential (LMD), High to Medium Density Residential (HMD), and then to High Density Residential (HD). The southern portion of the project area contains an established Rural Residential (RR) center.

Intermixed with the varying residential land uses near UC Merced, at the intersection of Bellevue Road and Lake Road, are areas designated as Business Park (BP), Thoroughfare Commercial (CT) and Neighborhood Commercial (CN). The table depicting the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* land use designations and densities which the BCP community character areas are derived from can be found in the Introduction of this plan (Table 1).

While the *General Plan* regulates land use and approximate land use distribution, the Bellevue Community Plan builds upon this vision, and based on community input, provides more specific policies and implementation recommendations.

The *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* depicts a large area of Open Space – Park Recreation (OS-PK) at the southern end of Lake Yosemite. This creates a natural flow from the existing recreational areas near Lake Yosemite to the proposed nearby residential areas. There is also an Open Space – Park Recreation designation in the southern portion of the Bellevue Community Plan area within a Low Density Residential area. The BCP Open Space corridors allow for additional pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the neighborhoods to act as connectors to other nearby areas and provide outdoor amenities to residents directly adjacent to homes and neighborhood conveniences.

More information about how the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* supplies the foundation for the Bellevue Community Plan can be found in Appendix A.

CORE ELEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY CHARACTER AREAS

TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENTS

The foundation of the BCP is set up by the interconnected street network discussed in the Mobility Chapter of this Plan. The grid patterned street structure promotes walkable connections to transit, bicycle infrastructure, and other pedestrian amenities. A multi-modal street network is a vital component to encouraging increased and efficient use of public transit and transit oriented development. The grid structure of the street system also promotes the benefit for residents and visitors to park once and walk to multiple destinations or "Place Types" within the BCP.

A key feature of most of the Place Types located within a quarter-mile of Mandeville Avenue is the ability to meet the requirements of Transit Priority Projects (TPP). TPPs were introduced in California's Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) and are intended to align regional transportation, land use, housing, and greenhouse gas emissions planning. One main requirement of TPPs is that it be located within one-half mile of either a major transit stop or high-quality transit corridor included in a regional transportation plan, with service intervals of not less than 15 minutes during peak hours (see Figure 25). This criteria reinforced the need for a basic, connected block structure (see Figure 7) which forms the basic structure of the mobility framework and the community character designations.

Transit Priority Projects which meet the requirements of SB 375 can invoke significant California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulatory streamlining. The BCP allows for densities and intensities to meet TPP requirements along the Mandeville transit route. However, since TPPs will be implemented at the project level, the exact size and locations have no been determined.

Requirements of Transit Priority Project (TPP)

TPPs must meet the requirements of SB 375 which include the following:

- TPPs must be located within 1/2 mile of either a major transit stop or high-quality transit corridor
- Service intervals of transit must not be greater 15 minutes during peak operating hours
- 50% of a TPP must be residential use by square footage
- Minimum of 20 dwelling units per acre (20 du/ac)
- Commercial uses within a TPP are not required to meet a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) if the use accounts for less than 25% of the project area by square footage.
- Commercial uses which account for 26 - 49% of a TPP area by square footage, must meet a required FAR of no less than 0.75.

COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT WITH EXISTING & PLANNED NEIGHBORHOODS

It is a priority of the BCP to protect the character of existing neighborhoods within the Plan area. There are two Rural Residential neighborhoods within the northern and southern portions of the Plan area. Through the proposed interconnected street network, these neighborhoods will be afforded the same pedestrian and transit amenities as the rest of the area. By establishing where key features and land uses should be located and how they interface with existing homes, the existing neighborhoods can be integrated into the overall framework of the planning area while retaining their current character.

In addition, connections with street networks adjacent to the BCP will provide for greater overall connectivity from the UC Merced campus to other parts of the City along transit routes. This structure will position the BCP as a central connection between downtown Merced and UC Merced. The walkable block structure of the BCP allows infrastructure to easily connect with adjacent plan

areas. This will support natural transitions from the BCP to other plan areas such as the Bellevue Ranch Master Plan and the University Community Plan.

COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT WITH UC MERCED

The BCP includes an appropriate mix of compatible uses that are anticipated to occur in close proximity to UC Merced. The Plan's Place Types respond to UC Merced's campus 'Gateway District,' while providing an attractive location for businesses to convert new ideas into functional technologies which can provide many social, economic, and environmental benefits to Merced.

GATEWAY DISTRICT

The UC Merced Long Range Development Plan describes the 'Gateway District' as the campus entrance and public face of the University. The Gateway is located immediately east of Lake Road, south of Bellevue Road, placing it adjacent to the BCP's Mixed-Use TOD Center. The Gateway District is the link between UC Merced and Central Valley communities; serving UC Merced's core mission of focused education, research, and public service on the one hand, and the private sector on the other. The characteristics make it a resource for public-private ventures and a means for expression of the growing entrepreneurial culture at UC Merced. The Gateway District is planned to include visitor and conference facilities as well as associated support services for those engaged with the campus in joint research, education, and public service initiatives.[18] Administrative offices and continuing education or extension programs can also be located in this district. Within the context of the Gateway District, the City should allow public and government offices and service centers in the Mixed-Use TOD to enhance, support, or complement uses that may occur in UC Merced's "Gateway District" area. The formation of public-private partnerships in or adjacent to this area could form a strong economic-driver for the local and regional economy.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT USES

The placement of UC Merced within the growth boundary of the City presents an opportunity for the BCP to create a setting for entrepreneurs, businesses, and social enterprises to benefit from the research activity and competencies of innovations at the University. To capitalize on this opportunity and create an innovation hub, the Plan includes a research and development (R&D) employment area geared to attract and foster talent in the 21st century.

While the uncertainty surrounding UCM's future research programs and their potential for technology transfer coupled with the lack of an established real estate market for R&D space in Merced make it difficult to establish an estimate of long-run demand for such space, a review of market areas with a UC campus provide a basis for a potential range. For example, Yolo County, near Sacramento and home to the UC Davis campus (established more than 50 years ago), supports about 500,000 square feet of R&D/flex space. Meanwhile, Orange County, where UC Irvine is located, supports roughly 18 million square feet of such space. However, employment in scientific industries in Orange County is dramatically higher than in both Yolo and Merced Counties.

Overall, given consideration of real estate market factors, employment characteristics, UC programs, and the City's desire for employment-supporting uses, planning for 2.5 to 5 million square feet of R&D/flex space in the BCP area would be reasonable albeit slightly aggressive, provide sufficient capacity to satisfy near-term R&D demand, and allow for long-term upside potential for new development and job growth. As such, the BCP provides for nearly 3 million square feet of R&D space in about 100 acres. In addition, the Plan provides for expansion of this R&D area (see light blue area in Figure 38) with additional CEQA review.

Place Types provide flexible land uses and are designed to adapt to future growth within the BCP. Several areas are designed to be Transit Priority Project compatible.

COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The BCP encourages a mix of land uses, whether in a multi-story building or spread horizontally throughout a project or neighborhood. To overcome potential conflicts between adjacent uses and their occupants, the BCP advances several proven strategies and includes provisions for urban form, design, and performance standards, and incorporates a master planning process. Refer to the "Neighborhood Master Planning" section at the end of this chapter for more information.

RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

As stated earlier, based on General Plan guidance, the BCP must ensure that development within the BCP complements rather than competes with existing development and community focal points, including Downtown Merced and other regional retail areas. Given this, the retail component of the Plan was developed to primarily serve potential retail demand generated from workers and households in the Plan area. Based on estimates of aggregate spending by new workers and persons in the Plan Area, new residential and nonresidential development could support between 450,000 and 500,000 square feet of retail. While retail uses may be permitted in a wide range of BCP character areas (see Table 9), retail is allowed as a primary use in the Neighborhood Center TOD character areas. Placement of large retail uses, particularly in the Flexible Mixed-Use character area, should only be done in a manner that protects the viability of existing and/or future retail within the Neighborhood Centers and TODs and may require further market analysis.

PLACE TYPES/CHARACTER AREAS:

The BCP builds upon the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* land uses by establishing specific Place Types. These Place Types provide flexible land uses and are designed to adapt to future growth within the BCP. Figure 38, on the following page, illustrates the recommended general distribution of Place Types, each of which is characterized by a range of land uses and a range of development types, scales, and intensities (See also Table 8). The Mixed-Use TOD, Research and Development (R&D) Employment District, and Neighborhood Centers are intended to be flexible in size to respond to future market conditions, but should generally be centered where shown below, and could even grow into the Flexible Mixed-Use Neighborhood area. The Multi-Family Neighborhood is intended to have flexible and variable residential density, including single-family types. The quantified physical characteristics of these place types are as summarized in Table 9. Although, real zoning regulations should be developed to implement the Plan.

The descriptions in this section focus on their physical design and basic land use characteristics. The general location of joint-use school and park sites, while not a Place Type, are depicted on the Place Type Map. Similarly, the Bellevue Gateway is not a Place Type, but a special design area which is described in the Urban Design Chapter. The BCP recognizes the potential to expand some Place Types. This increased development potential is based on future development patterns and additional CEQA review would be required. See Appendix A for further discussion of development capacity.

Table 8 Place Type Characteristics

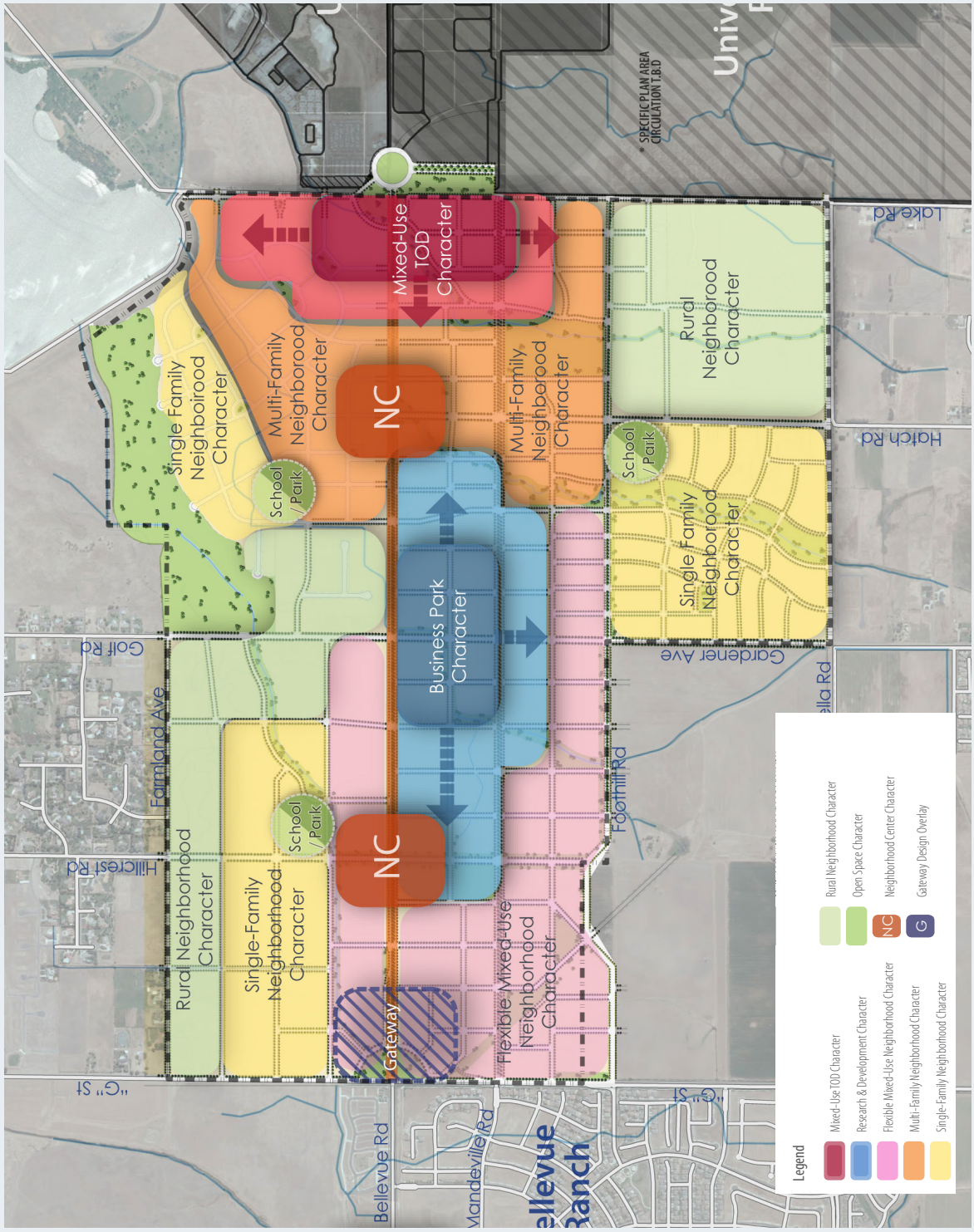
Place Type	Approximate Acreage in the BCP (Gross)
Rural Residential Neighborhood	192
Single Family Neighborhood	417
Multi-Family Neighborhood	120
Flex-Mixed Use Neighborhood	147
Neighborhood Centers (NC)	25
Mixed-Use TOD	74
R&D Employment District	103
Potential Expansion Area[2]	335
Other[1]	182
Total:	1,595

1. Including ROW (except local roads) and open space.

2. Requires additional CEQA review.

3. Joint use school and park sites are anticipated to be 10-13 acres and would primarily be located in the Single-Family Neighborhood

Figure 38. Community Character Place Type Plan



BLOCK CONFIGURATION

The conceptual land use and block structure diagrams below illustrate two of the many variations that may evolve as each property owner pursues development opportunities based on economic conditions at the time of development. In both diagrams the general location and street orientation of buildings is illustrated by the heavy black lines and rust colored areas, and the general land use and development intensity of each block - or in some cases each frontage of a block - are color coded per the legend. R&D employment district uses (blue and purple) are prioritized along the south side of Bellevue Road to the east and west of Gardner Road.

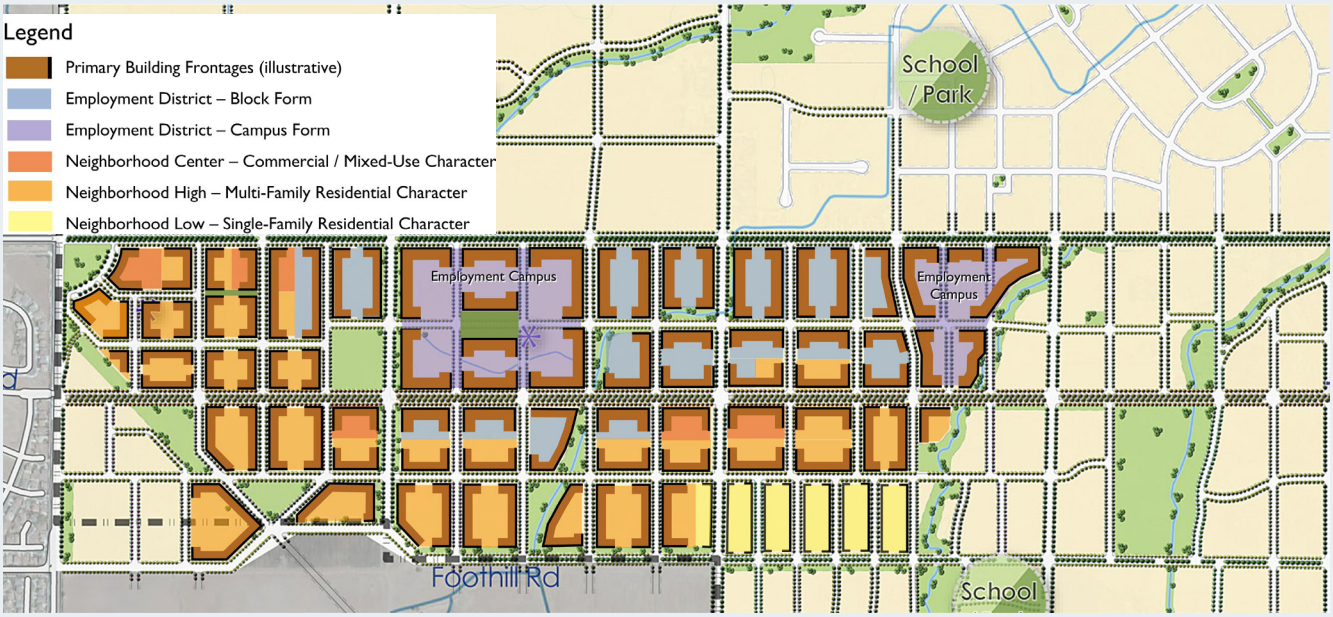
Also, in both diagrams, mixed density neighborhoods with significant amounts of multi-family housing (orange) abut the R&D blocks, generally back to back rather than face to face. Mixed-use neighborhood centers (red) are located at key transit nodes, and may be either small retail centers or mixed-used development that includes multi-family residential and neighborhood-serving commercial uses. And in both diagrams, blocks to the south transition to single-family neighborhood character, which may include small-scale multi-family uses in the form of duplexes or triplexes or quadplexes, and perhaps townhomes.

The first diagram illustrates more blocks of R&D development than the second diagram, and also illustrates that in some areas R&D development may aggregate multiple blocks into larger "R&D campus" environments. Within such campuses pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is maintained - along with internal vehicular circulations and shared parking arrangements - but public streets are not extend through.

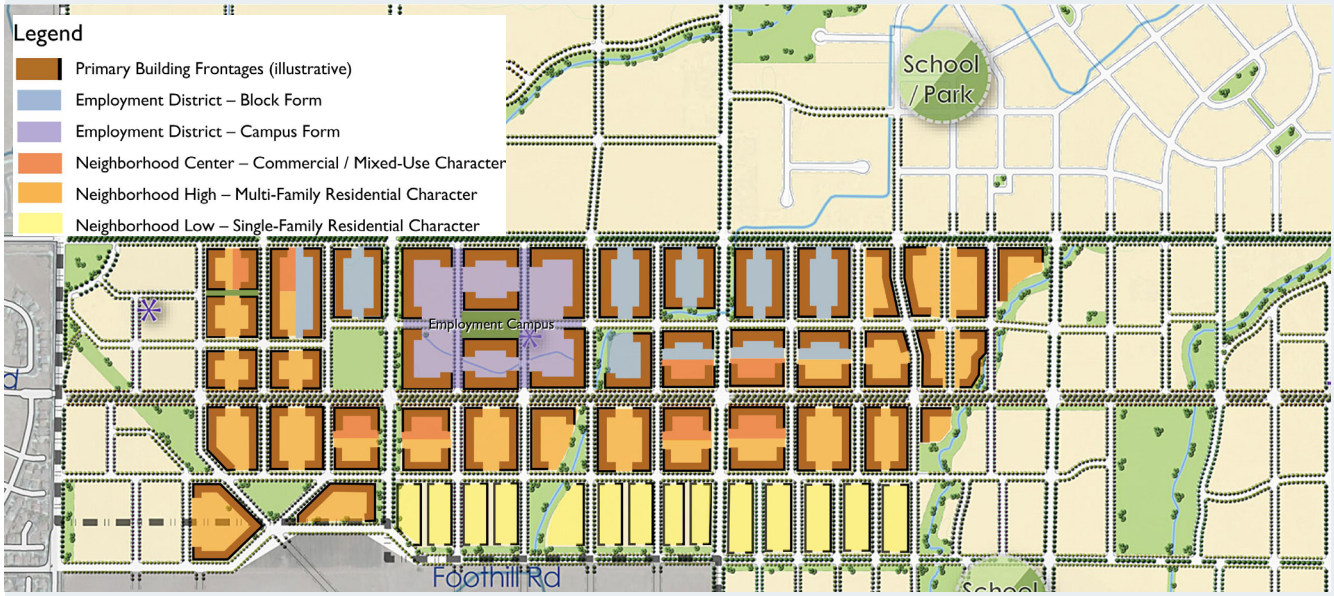
Diagram 2 illustrates a more modest amount of R&D development, which although not currently the preferred scenario could nonetheless be dictated by future demand for such products. In this case, mixed-density neighborhoods multi-family neighborhood development and single-family neighborhood development could expand northward to fill in.

Note that in each case the transition from R&D to mixed-density to single-family neighborhood character occurs systematically across multiple blocks to avoid an incompatible patchwork of R&D development and low-intensity housing. Note also that these transitions are accomplished by changing development character at major streets, greenways and back to back within blocks, so that all development can be oriented to the streets. As opposed to backing up to streets with sound walls and screen walls, which would be contrary to the core Plan goals of walkability and transit-orientation.

Sample Block Configuration- Diagram 1



Sample Block Configuration- Diagram 2



Mixed-Use T.O.D. development is characterized by a mix of uses in generally equal proportions ranging from multi-family residential to community retail to office and R&D, with some elements of entertainment and assembly.

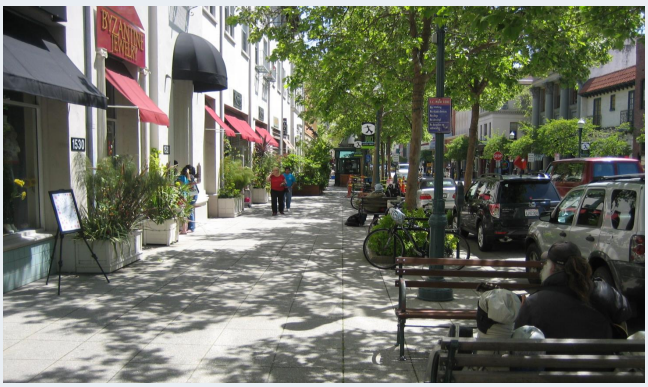
MIXED-USE TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

The Mixed-use Transit Oriented Development (T.O.D.) is the most intense urban environment anticipated in the BCP. By placing a T.O.D. directly next to the UC Merced campus, it will serve a variety of needs for students, professors, other UC employees, and campus visitors. Mixed-Use T.O.D. development is characterized by a mix of uses, generally in equal proportion, ranging from multi-family residential to community retail to office, and small to moderate scale R&D, with some elements of entertainment and assembly. Buildings generally range between 3 and 5 stories in height, are set close to the street with shallow front yards at residential or office ground floors and shop-fronts set right on the sidewalk for retail and entertainment uses. Initially, an identity distinct from Downtown Merced will need to be fostered by the City to develop a separate and non-competing center in the Mixed-Use T.O.D.

Initially parking is expected to be surface parking with shared parking encouraged. A minimal number of spaces should be dedicated for residential uses, typically one per dwelling. Curbside parking is provided on all streets in Mixed-use T.O.D. areas, in some cases angled in at retail frontages. Over time, parking could transition to structured facilities and should be managed to generate revenue for the City (or a parking district) and to reduce development costs. Another benefit of a compact, transit-oriented environment is a lower car ownership rate and lower household costs.

Examples of Mixed-Use / T.O.D. Centers

Examples of Pedestrian Features in Mixed-Use / T.O.D. Centers



R&D EMPLOYMENT DISTRICT

The R&D Employment District provides an opportunity to attract and incubate new businesses that will benefit from the presence of the intellectual capital and research of UC Merced while providing job opportunities for local residents. Offices and light manufacturing are the primary uses envisioned in this Place Type. This Place Type is similar in character and scale to business and research "parks", characterized by one and two (or three) story larger office buildings, each usually with its own parking lot. This Place Type is inherently automobile-oriented, as it was developed for places like the Silicon Valley and Irvine, CA that are designed for auto access almost exclusively. The variation intended for the BCP provides large blocks (comparable to those in Irvine and the Silicon Valley) but framed by complete streets for use by pedestrians, bicyclists and transit. Typical R&D site plans should include street facing buildings with on-street front entries, major parking lots located beside or behind buildings, and limited visitor parking near front entries. Some amount of commercial and office uses associated with the Research and Development Employment District and its workforce population are encouraged to locate within this character area, for example, along Gardner

Typical R&D site plans should place buildings facing streets with front entries, and major parking lots typically beside or behind buildings, and limited visitor parking in front near entries.

Figure 39. Illustration of a R&D Employment District

Road between Bellevue Road and Mandeville Avenue, or other nearby urban setting. Limited retail, financial, personal service, dining, entertainment, recreation, and similar uses in mixed-use buildings that support the research and light manufacturing functions of this Place Type should be encouraged between other place types to the east, south and west.

Examples of R&D Employment Centers

R&D Centers with Bike Access and Sustainable Parking Lots

Neighborhood Centers are the places that can provide certain daily necessities and amenities within comfortable walking or biking distance of many residences.

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

Neighborhood Centers are the places that can provide certain daily necessities and amenities within comfortable walking or biking distance of many residences. Neighborhood Centers should be designed to primarily serve adjacent neighborhoods and the north east corner of the City. The scale and program of such centers must be calibrated to the location, the intensity of surrounding neighborhoods, the presence of other nearby options for such goods or services, and generally to the market. Neighborhood centers are typically located at the edge of a neighborhood, preferably at the junction of multiple neighborhoods, on a street with relatively high traffic volumes to help support the businesses. Minor arterials or major collector roads are suitable locations for neighborhood centers and should be configured for convenient access from major as well as smaller local neighborhood streets. In addition to providing local access to goods and services, neighborhood centers also act as social gathering places and provide opportunity for new businesses. Such centers are also ideal locations for important transit stops, allowing transit riders access to a range of good and services, easily incorporated into their daily activity and travel patterns. The BCP anticipates three types of neighborhood centers: Major Neighborhood Center, Mixed-use Neighborhood Center, and Rural/Small Neighborhood Center. Mixed-use Neighborhood Centers are identified on Figure 38, however exact locations for the Major Neighborhood Center and Rural/Small Neighborhood Centers are not provided and locations may vary.

Figure 40. Illustration of a Typical Neighborhood Center

MAJOR NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Depending on market analysis at the time of development, a Community Center at Bellevue Road east of G Street might function as the neighborhood center for rural residential neighborhoods to the north and east, and for mixed-density neighborhoods to the south of Bellevue Road. These larger centers would have a more auto-oriented character than the other Neighborhood Center types.

Examples of Major Neighborhood Centers

While the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* encourages commercial sites to be located at the corner of an arterial and collector street, there is flexibility in the General Plan (Land Use Policy 2.7.a) to consider high-quality projects commercial development at the corners of two arterials. According to the policy, such projects would follow these criteria:

- Strict access and land use restrictions in proximity to the intersection;
- Strong connectivity from the adjacent neighborhood;
- No freestanding pads with multiple curb cuts to arterial streets;
- A mix of uses and residential densities throughout the project;
- Access to a wide range of mobility options including transit, bikeways, and sidewalks;
- High-quality architecture, landscaping, site design, and signage; and
- Significant public improvements.

MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

This type of center has shops and service businesses that are oriented to a major multi-modal street, such that customers arrive on foot, by bike, by car, and by transit. Retail shops, restaurants, and service businesses in this type of neighborhood centers are usually less than 5,000 square feet in size, although with careful design – and the market supporting – could include a small supermarket up to 20,000 square feet. The BCP envisions such a mixed-use neighborhood center transitioning to multi-family residential and finally single family residential several blocks away.

While some of the buildings are likely one-story retail buildings, multi-story mixed- use office and residential buildings are allowed and encouraged. Shared parking arrangements are also encouraged, as provided in the larger neighborhood centers described above.

Examples of Mixed-use Neighborhood Centers

RURAL/SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

In some of the lower density rural residential neighborhoods along Lake Road or north of Bellevue Road, small neighborhood centers are still an option and can act as valued meeting places. Small neighborhood centers are compatible in scale and in character with their surroundings. In the context of the BCP, this would likely take the form of a single building such as a country store or roadside restaurant at a crossroads. Outdoor dining areas, hitching posts, big shade trees, and other rural design elements can make a small commercial business a very welcome neighbor and unique amenity.

Examples of Rural Neighborhood Center

Multi-family neighborhoods are predominantly residential in use and that include multi-family housing at a range of densities mixed with smaller amounts of single family housing.

MULTI-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD

Adjoining the "Mixed Use T.O.D." and allowed in the "Flexible Mixed Use Neighborhood" area, Multi-Family Neighborhoods are predominantly residential and include multi-family housing at a range of densities combined with some single family housing. Commercial uses are generally limited to one or two buildings scaled to serve the surrounding neighborhoods and customers passing by on adjacent arterial or collector streets, not including mixed-use neighborhood centers or major neighborhood centers. The residential and commercial composition is expected to shift from street-to-street and block to block. Facing buildings within a block will be similar in scale and character; however, scale and use may change for non-facing buildings, particularly those separated by an alleyway (See Figure 41).

This traditional pattern for mixing various uses and densities allows, for instance, apartment buildings and neighborhood-serving shops to face each other at a key intersection, while allowing houses and duplexes behind or a block away. It will be critically important in implementing such patterns that each neighborhood area (quarter section) be master planned at one time, rather than allowing an apartment builder to build "an apartment project" in one quadrant, a "patio-home builder" to fill up another quadrant with that product, and then fill the rest with houses. As evidenced by a great deal of local, regional, and national experience in recent decades, that invariably generates places that are not connected, walkable, or transit-ready.

Figure 41. Illustration of Multi-Family Neighborhood Character Area

Examples of Multi-Family Residential

RURAL RESIDENTIAL AND SINGLE FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS

A great deal of the BCP area is expected to be made up of low-density residences, which typically means single-family homes with or without accessory dwellings and duplexes. Triplexes and four-plexes, designed to be compatible in scale and appearance with single-family homes can be located along collector roads or along the single-loaded roads delineated in the plan. Pedestrian-oriented, walkable blocks can form a seamless part of a transit-ready community. Neighborhood streets of the type illustrated in Figure 42 can connect directly to the streets of any of the other place types, allowing residents to live in a quiet residential environment that is a convenient and safe 2, 5, or 10 minute walk or bike ride from a bus stop, a shop, a job, a park, or a school.

Figure 42. Illustration of Single Family Residential

Some blocks would not have alleys, and in such cases driveways would connect to the street. In this case, residential lots should be wide with narrow paved driveways to prevent visual domination of the front yard, the sidewalk, and the parkway strip by pavement and cars. Homes that front major arterials or collectors should be equipped with alleys. A small amount of locally serving retail should be encouraged within or near these neighborhoods, provided they are designed at a compatible scale with residential heights, setbacks, building materials and operation.

FLEX-MIXED USE NEIGHBORHOOD:

Because the BCP is expected to be developed over the course of many decades, it is not reasonable to expect that the ultimate mix of uses within each area can be predicted at this time. Accordingly, this designation will allow neighborhood planning areas (typically quarter mile square areas) to be developed as any one of the other Place Types above. Neighborhood Master Planning outlines procedures for assigning one or a combination of the Place Types when development is timely, providing for appropriate transitions between each Place Type.

Examples of Neighborhood Development and Street Types

Rural Residential

Single-Family Residential

NEIGHBORHOOD MASTER PLANNING

In order to create compatible adjacent land uses, the BCP encourages Neighborhood Master Plans to be prepared prior to subdividing any land and that no zone changes be approved without a concurrent neighborhood subdivision and block structure. This process acts as the fundamental tool to ensure that the overall physical community structure meets the requirements of Transit Priority Projects and connects adequately with any adjacent subdivisions. Subdivisions proposed within the BCP should also have block structures that connect adequately to adjacent subdivisions outside of the plan area to promote future transit routes. Neighborhood Master Plans create the manner in which the community character Place Types interact and establish how the BCP functions. The Neighborhood Master Plans will incorporate the broad set of parameters identified in this Chapter to carry forward the vision of the BCP and inform zoning decisions which implement this vision on a daily basis. Neighborhood Master Plans should also include appropriate performance standards in order to further encourage compatibility of adjacent uses.

After the adoption of the BCP the City will need to establish a Neighborhood Master Plan review process. The BCP recommends the use of the following key review parameters to guide this process. Even though development projects may be smaller, the minimum size of a Neighborhood Master Plan should be 160 acres. The objectives of the master planning process are to:

- Create a dynamic "Neighborhood Master Plan" process to ensure that each new increment of development is well-connected to existing and future adjacent development, while responding to market.
- Focus near-term investments in transit and utility infrastructure to support the development of complete centers, districts and neighborhoods.
- Collaborate with the University and other nearby growth areas to ensure the orderly and fiscally sustainable expansion of urban infrastructure.
- Ensure that development standards deliver the performance of an interconnected transit-oriented development pattern, clarity of urban character and flexibility of use to respond to changing markets.
- Organize new development in the form of complete neighborhoods and districts, oriented to pedestrians and transit.
- Establish a clear and interconnected – yet flexible – network of complete, green streets and community open spaces as the framework for new development.
- Provide for a mix of uses within each neighborhood and district, with flexibility to respond to future market conditions.
- Concentrate higher intensity development and activities near planned BRT stops.
- Define the general scale and urban character of key centers, flexible in size, with appropriate transitions to adjoining neighborhoods.

The review should occur as part of annexation applications and prior to subdivision, and be acted on by the City Council with a recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Urban Design Framework

1
Organize new development in the form of complete neighborhoods and districts, oriented to pedestrians and transit.

2
Establish a clear and interconnected – yet flexible – network of complete, green streets and community open spaces as the framework for new development.

3
Provide for a mix of uses within each neighborhood and district, with flexibility to respond to future market conditions.

4
Concentrate higher intensity development and activities near planned BRT stops.

5
Define the general scale and urban character of key centers, flexible in size, with appropriate transitions to adjoining neighborhoods.

BCP REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The following Table details the physical characteristics of the character areas. More detailed zoning regulations should be developed to implement the plan

Table 9 BCP Character Area Descriptions and Regulatory Framework

	TOD Center	R&D Employment District	Neighborhood Centers		
			Mixed-Use	Major	Rural/Small
General Descriptions	Regional node with a walkable design and high density, high quality development within a 10-minute walk of a transit station and a wide mixture of uses in close proximity, including residential, office, services, retail, and civic. The transit station should be a prominent feature and the pedestrian is the top priority. Designed to support feeder transit systems and easy use of other non-auto modes of transit. Reduced and/ or managed parking programs.	R&D/business park districts would be research and employment centers that have strong ties to UCM and attract workers from throughout the region. Districts are areas that because of their size or function need to be regulated differently than other centers. These districts are typically located along or near major corridors.	Centers are located to serve adjacent neighborhoods and districts and are typically located along a Corridor. One of three types of Centers is applied to a location along a Corridor or along the edges of a District or Neighborhood. Streets and streetscapes are the most urban of all in the BCP. Three types of centers provide for the expected range of land use activity.		
			Contains retail and service businesses aimed at the greater BCP and City.	Contains retail and service businesses aimed at the greater BCP and residents.	Contains retail and services to serve nearby neighborhoods or businesses.
Physical Description					
Residential Density	12 - 36 du/ac	24 - 36 du/ac	12 - 36 du/ac	12- 24 du/ac	6 - 24 du/ac
Non-Residential Intensity	0.35 - .75 FAR	0.35 - 0.75 FAR	0.35 - 0.50 FAR	0.35 - 0.50 FAR	0.35 FAR
Height	3 - 5 stories	1 - 3 stories	1 - 4 stories	1 - 3 stories	1 - 3 stories
Typical Block Size (Perimeter)	400 ft x 325 ft (1,600 ft)	400 ft x 600 ft (2000 ft)	1,600 - 2,400 sf perimeter		
Other Features	Streetscapes mostly with tree wells but parkway strips in residential areas allowed. Pedestrian amenities, such as wide sidewalks, small parks, and plazas, incorporated.	Streetscapes would be treelined streets with onstreet parking.	Streetscape mostly with tree wells but parkway strips in residential areas allowed. Pedestrian amenities, such as wide sidewalks, small parks, and plazas, incorporated.		
Permitted Uses (Supplemental Retail and Service could be allowed where appropriate)					
Residential	●	◔	○	○	○
Office	◑	●	◑	◑	◑
Retail	●	◔	●	●	●
Restaurants/ Coffee shops	●	◑	●	●	●
Services- personal and business	◑	◑	●	●	●
Hotel/Meeting facilities	◑	◑	○	○	○
Theater/ Entertainment	◑	◔	○	○	○
Light Industrial	○	●	○	○	○
TPP Compatible	**Potential**	**Potential**	**Potential**		**Potential**

● Primary ◑ Secondary ◔ Limited ○ Not Permitted

	Neighborhoods			Flex Neighborhood
	Multi-Family	Single-Family	Rural	
	Neighborhoods are located between corridors and accommodate a wide range of housing choices with the most intense housing nearer corridors, centers, and Districts. Depending upon location, neighborhoods are composed of at least two and up to three neighborhood residential environments.			This designation will allow neighborhood planning areas (quarter mile square areas, typically) to be developed as a mix of the other place types above. The development code will provide procedures for assigning a combination of these designations to each neighborhood planning area when development is timely, providing for appropriate transitions between each place type.
	Consists of the most intense housing in the neighborhood and between 30 and 62% of the total housing area depending upon location.	Consists primarily of single-family housing and, on average,55 % of the total housing area depending upon location.	Consists primarily of single-family housing on large lots and makes up 13 -35% of the neighborhood, depending upon location.	
Physical Description				
Residential Density	12 - 36 du/ac	6 - 12 du/ac	2 - 6 du/ac	6 - 24 du/ac
Non-Residential Intensity	0.35 - 0.50 FAR	0.35 - 0.50 FAR	0.35 FAR	0.35 - 0.75 FAR
Height	1 - 4 stories	1 - 2 stories	1 - 2 stories	1 - 4 stories
Typical Block Size (Perimeter)	1,600 - 2,400 sf perimeter		TBD	Varies
Other Features	Streetscape mostly with tree wells but parkway strips in residential areas allowed. Pedestrian amenities, such as wide sidewalks, small parks, and plazas, incorporated.			Varies
Permitted Uses (Supplemental Retail and Service could be allowed where appropriate)				
Residential	●	●	●	●
Office	◔	◔	○	◑
Retail	◔	◔	○	●
Restaurants/ Coffee shops	◔	◔	○	●
Services- personal and business	○	○	○	●
Hotel/Meeting facilities	○	○	○	◔
Theater/ Entertainment	○	○	○	◔
Light Industrial	○	○	○	○
TPP Compatible	**Potential**		**Potential**	

● Primary ◑ Secondary ◔ Limited ○ Not Permitted

BELLEVUE COMMUNITY PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES

The goal headings of this BCP chapter are grouped into the same policy topics as the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan*. This approach fosters consistency and builds on the City's broader *General Plan* guidance. In furtherance of consistency with the City's *General Plan*, Appendix C, policies specific to the BCP planning area are described in greater detail and grouped with the goals and policies it shares in common with the City's *General Plan*. In additions to the goals and policies below, Master Plans/projects/permit applications need to take into account the BCP in its entirety and be consistent with the language herein.

Table 10 Community Character Goals and Policies Specific to the Bellevue Community Plan consistent with the City's *General Plan*

Goal Area CC-1: Residential & Neighborhood Design

Policy CC-1.1: Follow Table 9 as a guide to prepare and assess future zoning regulations, master plans, or specific plans within the BCP.

Table 9 describes the range and intensities of land uses that may or may not occur within the character or bubble areas of the BCP, as presented in the BCP Land Use Map. The BCP provides for a wide range of land uses to occur within the character areas, and is based heavily on successful implementation of the form of the urban fabric discussed in the Urban Design Chapter. If this urban form is provided, the flexible nature of permissible land uses can be offered.

Policy CC-1.2: Encourage and support the development of Transit Priority Projects within the Mandeville Transit Corridor.

The Mandeville Transit Corridor, bounded by Bellevue Road, Foothill Road, G Street and Lake Road, should include high-density residential, research and development, and retail land uses within a transportation fabric that emphasizes a pedestrian-scale streetscape. This structure is intended to support a functional transit service, and to create opportunities for qualified transit priority projects.

Policy CC-1.3: Seek to create compatible developments adjacent to existing Rural Residential neighborhoods.

When designing new neighborhoods adjacent to existing rural residential neighborhoods, the new development should incorporate compatibility strategies to minimize impacts on existing neighborhoods, such as: 1) when backing up to existing lots, use similar rear-setbacks, minimum lot area and height standards as the existing neighborhood; (2) when fronting new lots across a street from existing lots, use similar front setbacks, lot width, height standards and road standards as the existing neighborhood.

Policy CC-1.4: Encourage multi-family development to occur within ¼ mile of the Mandeville Transit Corridor.

Multifamily housing is emphasized to occur in the Multi-Family Neighborhood Character Area. Moderate amounts may occur in the Mixed Use TOD Character Area, and the Flexible Mixed Use Neighborhood Character Area. Refer to Table 1 (BCP Character Area Descriptions and Regulatory Framework) for details of relative amounts anticipated to occur throughout the BCP planning area.

Policy CC-1.5: Provide opportunities for the development of housing types to meet the special needs of students and others attracted to a University environment.

Housing types related to the needs of a university may include co-housing, higher density units, group quarters, etc. This may include areas set aside for the development of experimental or housing prototypes provided they are compatible with adjacent uses.

Goal Area CC-2: Economic and Business Development

Policy CC-2.1: Emphasize the key role of the BCP as a tool to identify and set-aside lands for future opportunities for research and development sites near UC Merced.

The designation of sites for future research and development land uses need to be highlighted in the community and fixed at specific locations but flexible to grow and shift. Fixed R&D sites are essential to both anchor the BCP and to reserve areas as other land uses develop around the R&D sites.

Policy CC-2.2: Emphasize commercial development within the plan's Neighborhood Commercial centers.

The Plan's neighborhood commercial centers within the Mandeville Corridor contribute significant value to the livability of the future community. The variety of land-uses provided in close proximity to housing and employment supports the function of the transit corridor, the complete-street infrastructure improvements and the level of pedestrian and bicycle travel.

Policy CC-2.3: Consider the development of commercial center, appropriately-scaled to the adjacent neighborhood and consistent with the design parameters of General Plan Policy L-2.7.a, at the corner of G and Bellevue Road.

A market study to determine the impact to existing and planned commercial sites in the area shall be required, and be a significant part of the City Council's decision to zone the property for commercial uses. If permitted, design of the center will need to be based on minimizing traffic congestion; developing a center that is scaled to the surrounding neighborhoods and to avoid big-box stores.

Policy CC-2.4: Work to implement the mobility chapter of the plan, especially its bikeway and transit corridor features.

The BCP provides important bikeway and transit links between Downtown, Merced College and UC Merced. Mandeville Avenue is the extension of the main transit corridor to downtown. G Street and Gardner/Parsons are important roadway linkages. Bikeways will extend from Cottonwood Creek and the PG&E transmission line corridor. This integrated system will help to ensure Downtown is connected to the City as it expands toward UC Merced.

Policy CC-2.5: Focus a Research and Development center in the vicinity of Bellevue Road and Gardner Road, and allow it to expand with market demand.

Research and Development uses should be developed as an integrated campus connected by public spaces with an urban pedestrian-oriented scale. Surface parking lots may be permitted in the near-term, but the site should be designed to allow conversion to parking structures in the long-term. R&D uses should be supported by nearby compatible land uses to create a live, work, play environment, and may include varied uses including restaurants, retail, daycares and gyms in a dense urban setting that emphasizes mobility by transit, bikes and pedestrians.

Goal Area CC-3: Urban Growth and Design

Policy CC-3.1: Create a mixed-use, transit ready corridor along Mandeville Road.

A carefully designed urban environment with appropriate paired land uses and circulation options can well serve a large population and associated commercial service market. The Mandeville Corridor is such a place. The synergy created by the paring of mixed-use with transit and other mobility options will help to attract research and development firms to the BCP.

Policy CC-3.2: Balance the ability to permit a range of land uses with the need to emphasize particular types in specific areas of the BCP.

While the BCP enables a variety of land uses to occur in the most of the Character Areas (see Table 1), this should not be interpreted as any use can go anywhere in any amount. The following tools have been crafted to explain the function of the character areas, and should be used to guide land use decisions in the BCP: 1) written narrative of Character Areas; 2) Table 9; and 3) the assumed land use amounts in the BCP traffic assessment.

Policy CC-3.3: Implement the Pedestrian Plan as an essential component of the BCP's Circulation Plan.

The City's standard designs for roadways allow for pedestrian and bicycle use. Such use can be enhanced through a variety of other features, as noted in Implementing Action L-3.3.b, however. The BCP's use of an interconnected grid street, mainly occurring along the Mandeville Avenue transit-corridor and the Mixed-Use TOD is one such feature. Figure 12 of the BCP depicts where other mobility-enhancing features are encouraged to occur.