Orchard and Solano Park FAQ's

- **Why are Orchard and Solano Park closing?** Orchard and Solano are old, antiquated buildings that are in need of many improvements due to life cycle such as: structural improvements due to dry rot, waste water plumbing line replacement, water supply line replacement, window replacement, roof replacement, appliance replacement, furnace replacement, and electrical upgrades. The renovation costs made it cost prohibitive to renovate the property.

- **Is there a need for affordable family and graduate student apartments on campus?** Demand for Orchard and Solano Park is greatly reduced. Both complexes have had long waiting lists for many years, which demonstrated a need for affordable family and graduate housing. In the last couple of years, more housing options have become available in Davis to graduate students and students with families. This has been demonstrated with the waiting lists being short or exhausted, and with several vacant units at both properties. Another likely reason why the apartments are not in such high demand is because of their age, their size, and the lack of newer amenities, such as microwaves and in apartment washers and dryers. These items are more frequently the standard in apartments off campus.

- **When will these complexes close?** Orchard Park is scheduled to close July 31, 2014. Solano Park is scheduled to close July 31, 2016.

- **When will the new graduate and family housing open?** The “Castilian Redevelopment Project” is scheduled to open in fall 2014. The “Orchard Park Redevelopment Project” is scheduled to open in fall 2016.

- **What is the “Castilian Redevelopment Project”?** The Castilian residence halls, located at 1440-1460 Wake Forest Drive, were closed in June 2011. Student Housing worked with the Design and Construction Management and Real Estate Services departments to identify a third party developer that will build and manage a new apartment complex on this site for single graduate students. The project has broken ground and is projected to open in fall 2014 for approximately 250 single graduate students. To maintain affordability, the project is estimating that the cost per room will be 85% of the market rate for like properties in Davis.

- **What is the “Orchard Park Redevelopment Project”?** Once Orchard Park is closed, this site will also be redeveloped with new family and graduate student housing. Student Housing has similar plans to find a third party developer to build, own and manage an apartment complex at this site. This project is being called the “Orchard Park Redevelopment Project” and is scheduled to open in fall 2016. Approximately 200 graduate students and their families will be living at this location.

- **Why is Student Housing closing Orchard Park before Solano Park?** New graduate student housing will be built on the existing Orchard Park site. In order to facilitate a transition for existing graduate students living on campus, Solano Park is remaining open until the new housing at Orchard Park is open.

- **What will happen to the Solano Park apartments after they close?** At this time the plan is to demolish the buildings and return the land over to campus for a new use.

- **Why are current Orchard Park residents being encouraged to move to Solano Park before Orchard Park closes?** Student Housing is recommending that current Orchard Park residents who intend to live on campus after July 2014 move to Solano Park as soon as is convenient. Why is this being advised? Student Housing is continuing to offer apartments to perspective students at Solano Park, and historically there is a high demand to move on campus during the summer months. Current Orchard Park residents are encouraged to move before the summer season to allow more flexibility in choosing from available units.

- **Why doesn’t Student Housing try to repair Orchard and Solano Park instead of replacing them?** While Orchard and Solano Park provide comfortable housing for our families and graduate students, the apartments are small, the amenities are dated, and given the age there would be additional improvements needed if they were to remain open much longer than 2016. Specifically, needed improvements include replacing appliances nearing the end of their useful life, painting the exterior of the buildings, fixing widespread plumbing issues (at OP), updating floor coverings at the end of their life cycle, creating ADA accessible units, adding sprinklers, etc.

Over the past ten years, the rent increases at Orchard and Solano Park have ranged from 3-6% each year. During this time the residence hall reserves have subsidized Orchard and Solano Park capital improvements and projects to balance

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affordability for the residents living there. For example, in 2008 the air conditioning units in all the apartments needed to be replaced. The cost to do this would have significantly impacted the rent at the Parks. Instead of raising the rent by 10-15% that year, residence hall reserves were used to cover the cost upfront with the expectation that overtime Orchard and Solano Park would reimburse the residence hall fund. Here is a list of similar large projects that have been completed:

- In 2004-2009, white steel fencing was installed at all patios. This was especially expensive at the buildings with courtyards, where the landscape was dug up, new drain systems were installed, concrete patios were poured and new vegetation planted.
- In 2008, all AC units were replaced.
- All the roofs were replaced over several years, ending in 2009.
- In 2007–2008 deteriorating structural elements of the wooden decks, stairs, rails, and support pillars were replaced and repainted.

- **Will Student Housing provide Park residents with other housing alternatives?** Student Housing will work with the current residents of Orchard and Solano Park to find alternative housing. This will include a priority at Russell Park (third party owned and operated family housing on the UC Davis campus); moving to Solano Park before Orchard Park closes, priority at the graduate housing at the Castilian location, and housing information at West Village and in the City of Davis.

Students looking for affordable housing options can contact Student Housing ATTN: Pat Rott for a list of properties.

Student interested in living at Russell Park, should contact the Russell Park office at (530)753-7322 and identify themselves as current Orchard or Solano Park residents.

- **Will the new graduate apartment housing be more expensive?** Student Housing has worked with Real Estate Services to negotiate a ground lease with a third party developer that will require the initial rents be set at 85% of current (2012) market rents for like properties in Davis. This will result in a higher cost per unit as compared to the Parks, but it will be less expensive than if the property were built and operated by the University of California.

- **The Parks have provided affordable housing to many students. What are the options for students who cannot afford the rents at the new graduate apartments?** Students who have a demonstrated financial need are encouraged to apply for Financial Aid. Please see [http://financialaid.ucdavis.edu/](http://financialaid.ucdavis.edu/) for more information.

Additional financial support options for graduate students can be found on the Office of Graduate Studies site: [http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/ssupport/](http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/ssupport/)

Graduate Studies Researcher or Teaching Assistants with children may qualify for a childcare stipend. Students can get more information below.


- **Who can I contact if I have additional questions or concerns?** If you have additional questions, please email studenthousing@ucdavis.edu

The Solano Park apartment complex is located on 15 acres on the southeast corner of campus. This complex consists of 276 unfurnished apartments in 26 buildings. There are 9 three-story buildings with one-bedroom apartments and 17 two-story buildings with two-bedroom apartments. Additionally there are 8 single-story buildings, which house storage space and laundry facilities. The complex also has an office and community center. First occupied in 1962, the buildings are wood-frame construction with stucco exteriors and composition-shingle roofs.

The Orchard Park apartment complex is located on 12 acres on the northwest corner of campus. This complex is comprised of 200 unfurnished two-bedroom apartments in 22 two-story buildings. There are 10 residential buildings that have 8 apartments and 12 that have 10 apartments. 5 single-story buildings house laundry facilities and storage space. The complex also has an office and community center. First occupied in 1963, the buildings are wood-frame construction with stucco exteriors and composition-shingle roofs.

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