File #: 23-102, **Version:** 1

Planning Commission Staff Report

Report Prepared by: Kim Espinosa, Planning Manager, Development Services Department

SUBJECT: Annexation and Prezoning Application #22-01, initiated by the City of Merced, on behalf of the Regents of the University of California, property owners. The application would involve the annexation of the University of California, Merced Main Campus as described in the University of California, Merced 2020 Long-Range Development Plan (dated March 2020) consisting of approximately 1,125 acres to the City of Merced and prezoning of the property to "Public Facility" (P-F) as well as the annexation of the 2-mile long section of Bellevue Road right-of-way from the current Merced City Limits at G Street to Lake Road (approximately 14 acres) for a total of 1,139 acres, as allowed by Assembly Bill 3312 (enacted in 2020) for a total annexation area of 1,139 acres. The UC Campus is generally located at the northeast and southeast corners of Bellevue and Lake Roads with a General Plan designation of "School."**PUBLIC HEARING**

ACTION   PLANNING COMMISSION:

Recommendation to City Council

1)   Environmental Review #22-15 *(Addendum to Merced Vision 2030 General Plan EIR)*
2)   Annexation #22-01
3)   Prezoning #22-01

CITY COUNCIL:

Approve/Disapprove/Modify

1)   Environmental Review #22-15 *(Addendum to Merced Vision 2030 General Plan EIR)*
2)   Annexation #22-01
3)   Prezoning #22-01

SUMMARY

The application includes the annexation of the approximately 1,125-acre University of California Merced Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) area as well as the 2-mile-long right-of-way for Bellevue Road from G Street to Lake Road (approximately 14 acres) (Attachment B). The UC Campus land would be prezoned "Public Facility" (P-F). The UC and the City are in agreement on this annexation. Staff is recommending the Planning Commission recommend approval of this annexation to the City Council.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval to the City Council of Environmental Review #22-15 [Addendum to the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan Environmental Impact Report*] and Annexation and Prezoning Applications #22-01 (including the adoption of the Draft Resolution at Attachment A) subject to the findings/ considerations in Exhibit A of the Draft Resolution at Attachment A.

DISCUSSION

Project Description

The application includes the annexation of the approximately 1,125-acre University of California Merced Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) area as well as the 2-mile-long right-of-way for Bellevue Road from G Street to Lake Road (approximately 14 acres) for a total annexation area of 1,139 acres. The UC Campus land will be prezoned "Public Facility" (P-F).

Surrounding uses for UC Merced Campus as noted in Attachment B.

Surrounding Land	Existing Use of Land	City Zoning Designation	City General Plan Land Use Designation
North	Lake Yosemite & Conservation Land	County	County (Outside City Sphere of Influence)
South	Farmland (Proposed Virginia Smith Trust development)	County	UC Community Plan
East	Farmland	County	County (Outside City Sphere of Influence)
West	Vacant & Rural Residential Homes	County	Bellevue Community Plan & Rural Residential

Background-UC Agreements

In 2003, the City entered into an Urban Services Agreement with the University of California to provide wastewater and water services to the UC Merced Campus, which opened in Fall 2005. Such an agreement was necessary since the UC Campus was located outside the Merced City Limits. As part of that Agreement, UC also signed an Annexation Agreement agreeing to annex Phase 1 of the Campus to the City of Merced at the time that the City Council deemed it was appropriate. The Urban Services Agreement was subsequently amended twice in 2016 and 2019 to reflect the expansion of the Campus with the 2020 Project. A new Annexation Agreement was signed in 2016 to reflect the expansion of the Campus.

Also in 2016, UC Merced and the City entered into a Transportation Funding Agreement for the 2020 Project. This Transportation Agreement included provisions relating to: 1) truck routes and roadway construction impacts during construction of the 2020 Project; 2) UC's funding obligations for Phase I of the Campus Parkway; 3) UC funding obligations for Campus Parkway Phase II and the portion north of Yosemite Avenue; 4) UC's funding and construction obligations for improvements to Bellevue

Road; 5) UC's funding and construction obligations for improvements to Lake Road, including the intersections of Lake Road and Bellevue Road and Lake Road and Yosemite Avenue; 6) reimbursement provisions for University Community properties; and, 7) Transit Service improvements and bus stop locations for UC's bus service within the City.

Background--AB 3312

During 2020, AB 3312 was introduced in the California Legislature by District 21 Assembly Member Adam Gray. AB 3312 passed both the House and Senate unanimously and was signed into law by the Governor on September 9, 2020. The final text of AB 3312 can be found at Attachment C. In summary, AB 3312 allows the City to annex the main UC Merced Campus through a "road strip" annexation and places certain restrictions on future annexations along the "road strip."

Background-Previous City Council Action

At the February 16, 2021, City Council meeting, City staff presented information regarding the advantages and disadvantages of annexing the UC Merced Campus along with information on the annexation application process. The City Council, by unanimous vote, subsequently directed City staff to initiate the annexation of the UC Merced Campus and begin the environmental review process. On October 18, 2021, Ascent Environmental was awarded the contract to prepare the environmental review document.

Findings/Considerations
Please refer to Exhibit A of the Draft Planning Commission Resolution at Attachment A.

ATTACHMENTS
    A) Draft Planning Commission Resolution
    B) Location Map
    C) AB 3312
    D) Environmental Review #22-15 (Addendum to *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan EIR)*