

UCSC - growth

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Chancellor's parting shot burns city

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He strikes portion of UCSC growth plan

SANTA CRUZ — In a parting shot, outgoing UCSC Chancellor Robert Sinsheimer stunned the Santa Cruz City Council by removing a section from the University's Long Range Development Plan that called for "phasing in" future growth, and by notifying the city council of the changes on Tuesday — his last day in office.

Sinsheimer called for a separate plan to ensure that services provided by the city and county "shall

be adequate to meet the needs of the growing student body." And, he wrote, the extent of the growth should be determined only by "academic considerations" and "the needs of the University ... system."

Sinsheimer said that matching growth to services could be done better in a separate plan or "covenant" between the campus, city and county, rather

than in the long-range plan. That covenant, he said, should be based on university growth projections.

A copy of the letter outlining Sinsheimer's action was received during a closed session of the City Council Tuesday night, and was presented to the public during the regular council meeting.

Plans for "phasing in" increased enrollment at the

university were included in the university's 20-year plan to ease community concerns that a flood of new students at UCSC would overload the housing market and other city services such as streets, sewers, and water.

The university plans to increase enrollment from 8,600 to 15,000 by 2005. The section of the plan on phasing in growth called for the university to freeze enrollment at specified levels until adequate services could be provided.

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Sinsheimer

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"I am very disappointed," said Councilwoman Mardi Wormhoudt. "It (phasing) simply required the University to grow in an orderly manner to preserve the quality of life in Santa Cruz."

Councilman John Laird called Sinsheimer's move "a sad response."

"I wish the chancellor had chosen cooperation (with the city)," said Laird. "He had the chance and I'm sorry he passed it up."

Although conditions included in the long-range plan are not legally binding, the "phasing" was welcomed by the community leaders as an indication the university would be willing to compromise with the city on planning for growth.

"We need to begin thinking of other options to put pressure on the university to prevent distortion of the quality of life here," said Councilman Mike Rotkin.

"We may have to go to the legislature to get some redress of our problems."

"Maybe we can take out ads in papers across California," suggested Councilwoman Katy Sears-Williams, "saying 'Don't send your kids to UCSC, they'll be sleeping under the bridge.'"

Council members agreed to keep working toward cooperation with the university, and expressed hope that the new chancellor, Robert Stevens, will be more responsive than Sinsheimer.

In striking the section from the plan, Sinsheimer noted "the (long-range plan) is, in principle, a land use document. It is not proper to confuse this function (with) policy prescriptions intended to bound the numbers of students for external reasons."

But Wormhoudt charged that the plan is "full of policy statements," and termed Sinsheimer's argument "disingenuous."