$23 million science building planned for UC-Santa Cruz

A $22.7 million science building, the largest state capital expenditure for a single project in the history of UC-Santa Cruz, will be built on campus and be completed by late 1988.

The building, to be known as Natural Sciences III, is designed to foster multidisciplinary science instruction and research.

The disciplines of biology, biophysics, and biochemistry, will be housed in the building to be located near the Thimann Laboratories Building in the campus core.

Public information officer Joan Ward said the new building would free much-needed space in the university's applied sciences buildings for programs such as astronomy, physics, marine sciences and earth sciences.

Ward said the new building will be used mainly as a research facility.

Designed by the architectural firm ED-2 International of San Francisco, Natural Sciences III will be a four-story structure with 56,000 square feet of floor space. State-of-the-art research laboratories will be spread out on the wings of the building, and offices will be located in the central area.

"Everything is carefully planned to have interactive elements," Ward said. "The offices are in the central portion so that people see each other."

Even the use of stairs over elevators is encouraged with the design of the building.

The large, open stairway system in the core of the building offers "quick and inviting" communication between floors. The elevators, deemed sterile cubicles, are at the end of each wing.

Also, much of the lab space is "open," allowing an easy flow of people, material, and ideas to develop between traditionally isolated research teams.

Stephen M. Reed, UC-Santa Cruz director of community and legislative relations, said the state's approval of funding for the new building "is the first time in the history of the state that the legislature has approved a science facility with interactive space."

Professor Charles Daniel, who chaired the Natural Sciences III Building Committee, called the building a "prototype."

"It is the first state-funded science facility to incorporate features of design that encourage creativity and productivity through increased communication," he said. "It is an innovative building, not stamped to the pattern of others in the UC system."

Groundbreaking for the new building is scheduled for early 1987.