

Sentinel Editorial

Smaller UCSC Campus

The proposal to scale down the ultimate development of the University of California campus at Santa Cruz will probably meet with fairly strong community approval.

Chancellor Dean McHenry's proposal of a campus in the 10,000 to 15,000 student range was unanimously approved by the Regents' Committee on Buildings and Grounds

At the moment it would appear that the action by the Regents is more philosophical than decisive as the State's fiscal structure limits most campus development in the next few years.

The University, like plane builders, faces a long lead time in the construction of new colleges and while College VI, Kresge, may be funded this year, it is questionable if future projects are going to get off the drawing boards for a while.

Santa Cruz has fared relatively well during the past few years in the funding of new facilities but the future isn't nearly as bright.

As a result one could assume a fairly rapid slowdown of growth at the campus in the next few years, perhaps, even slower than the 500 or so student enrollment increases on an annual rate since the campus was opened in the fall of 1965.

Initially the campus was scheduled to handle 27,500 students, the proposed

maximum size for all UC general campuses. However, changes in higher education policies in recent years have raised serious questions regarding the development of more large campuses.

Under the present circumstances we would imagine that the idea of a smaller campus is going to become more and more attractive for a variety of reasons.

While, generally speaking, the proposed long range plan for campus development meets with approval, there are a couple of questions which deserve more prominence than has been presented.

One is the question of parking.

The campus has been designed to discourage student use of automobiles. With the residential college concept and the improvement of on-campus bus service, the lack of parking has not become a total issue yet.

But the parking problem is going to be far more acute as the years go by. It is almost impossible to find a parking place at the administration headquarters. To find a parking place near the central library is a lost cause.

For visitors to find parking for a popular public event at one of the colleges is a challenging task on the best days and virtually impossible on occasions.

As the university enrollment grows and as more and more staff and students

live off campus, the parking situation is going to be far more acute.

While the cooperative program with the Santa Cruz Transit District is working exceedingly well, it isn't going to be possible to serve commuting students with the service they will require in the future. The parking fees are high, the off campus parking facilities are nil, and the campus requires far better parking facilities than are currently planned.

What happens when the performing arts facility is finished should be the test of an improved concept.

The lack of visitor parking currently rates as one of the more severe handicaps to better campus-community relations.

The second question in the planning project to deserve more intensive study relates to the plan for higher off-campus student residential demands, a related issue to the parking problem.

Competition for available housing already has become a problem in the community and it is clearly obvious that more and more students will seek off-campus living quarters.

The chances are that the students will spread out in a wide area rather than seeking close to campus facilities, now virtually non-existent. This problem will be a challenge to get more housing as well as the transportation issue.