

High-tech center a concern to Patton

SANTA CRUZ — The county Board of Supervisors has been asked to follow the lead of the city over the proposed UCSC research and development park.

In a letter to other board members, Third District Supervisor Gary Patton suggested the board advise UCSC Chancellor Robert Sinsheimer over its concerns for county review of the proposed high-tech center.

It would be similar to a letter Mayor John Laird recently sent to the campus. Laird's letter was the first step in implementing Measure A, overwhelmingly passed by city voters in November.

That initiative, although not legally binding, urges the campus to cooperate with city fathers in pushing the project through the city planning process before construction can begin.

Patton says that similar concerns should be expressed by county supervisors.

He said the proposed center could have tremendous impacts on the county's housing availability and its roads.

One of the two roads leading to the planned high-tech center is Glen Coolidge Road, which the county technically owns.

According to Patton, the university has suggested the county pay for improvements to that street. In exchange, the university may be willing to pay for construction of another access road.

Nothing has been decided for sure, but Patton feels it's imperative to have county make its presence known in the process.

Also, with the 2,000 possible jobs that could be created by the high-tech center, Patton says many of those workers would undoubtedly be living in the unincorporated area of the county. That would affect the availability of housing, as well as services in those areas.

Patton has suggested the board adopt his proposal to write Sinsheimer about its concerns. Supervisors are expected to do that at their first January meeting.