

Regents approve UCSC growth

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SAN FRANCISCO — The University of California's governing Board of Regents approved a plan Thursday allowing UC Santa Cruz to grow by 4,500 students by 2020, despite strong opposition from city and county leaders.

UCSC acting Chancellor George Blumenthal said the school's Long-Range Development Plan 2005-2020, "allows the university to develop new graduate programs, professional schools and new areas that we might not be currently strong in that will allow us to keep up in modern society."

"Last but not least, it will allow us to meet our obligation to the students of California."

But Santa Cruz Mayor Cynthia Mathews asked the regents on Thursday to delay action. The city feels it will have to shoulder the burden of most of the impacts of UCSC's plan to grow from 15,000 to 19,500 students.

Mathews said her constituents are angry over a "cavalier disregard for the city's legitimate concerns," when on Tuesday a regents subcommittee went silent in response to protests by Mathews and county Supervisor Mardi Wormhoudt.

"We've had no indication that our concerns were being heard," Mathews told the regents. "At the university, indi-



MATHEWS

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BLUMENTHAL

The plan 'will allow us to meet our obligation to the students of California'

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UCSC

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vidual people do wonderful and creative things, but up until now the institution has had an arrogant posture towards the host community. This is exactly why we have two local ballot measure on the November ballot."

Blumenthal said he is ready to continue discussions on campus and with government leaders to map out exactly how specific expansion projects on the hill will unfold.

Thursday's unanimous vote at the UC San Francisco Mission Bay campus concludes a course of action first spelled out in 2003. But it does not resolve the long-running dispute over growth that already has sparked one lawsuit.

The idea of several thousand new residents moving to town by 2020 has city officials worried that Santa Cruz — mostly built out and not generally welcoming of new growth — can't sustain a major increase in population, especially if UCSC doesn't help pay for new water, sewer and other services required to accommodate the growth.

It's impossible for city officials to judge impacts because UCSC's growth plan doesn't disclose what the building projects will be.

Two measures on the November ballot, written by Wormhoudt, are designed to force UCSC to pay the expected costs for improving city infrastructure to accommodate growth. In private talks over the summer, the city rejected a university offer to offset such costs by putting \$500,000 into an escrow account, Blumenthal disclosed Thursday.

Mathews called UCSC's offer too little too late.

Mathews and Blumenthal said Thursday that they're willing to resume negotiations. No meetings have been scheduled.

UC has filed a lawsuit claiming the city violated the California Environmental Quality Act by not studying potential environmental consequences of the ballot measures. The City Council

Campus plan for 2020

UC Santa Cruz has 4.8 million square feet of academic space serving 14,800 students and 4,300 employees. The city of Santa Cruz has a population of 55,000.

The Long-Range Development Plan, approved Thursday, sets a goal of housing 50 percent of students, 25 percent of graduate students and 3 percent of faculty and staff on campus.

The plan also allows for:

- 4,500 additional students, raising the total to 19,500.

- 3.2 million square feet of new space. Housing and classrooms each claim one-third of the new space.

- One new residential college housing roughly 1,500 students.

- A new campus entrance on Empire Grade Road just below Waldorf School.

- Redeveloping the aging Family Student Housing by the West Entrance.

- A new athletic facility on 15 acres north of existing campus, including playing fields and swimming pool.

recently agreed to spend \$100,000 to challenge the growth plan's environmental review and join a lawsuit with the Coalition For Limiting University Expansion, a citizen's group. A lawsuit could be filed as early as next month, accord to the city attorney.

UC Berkeley's 15-year plan to expand the campus sparked a lawsuit by the city of Berkeley in February 2005, a move watched closely by Santa Cruz officials.

Berkeley sought to invalidate the plan, similarly arguing that the impacts of growth were understated and the added burdens were unduly placed onto the city's shoulders. UC settled out of court, agreeing to pay the city \$1.2 million per year for services.

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