

Panel OKs UCSC growth

UCSC-Growth
DESPITE CITY COUNCIL
OPPOSITION, REGENTS
EXPECTED TO APPROVE

By Lisa Krieger SJMN

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A University of California regents panel gave the go-ahead for plans to expand the student body of the Santa Cruz campus Tuesday, paving the way to expected approval by the full board of regents later this week.

SANTA CRUZ

In a unanimous vote, the Committee on Grounds and Buildings certified UCSC's long-range development plan and an accompanying environmental impact report, which during the next 14 years could increase the size of the student body by 30 percent, boost building square-footage by 66 percent and add three new professional schools.

The plan is opposed by the Santa Cruz City Council and officials with the city's water department, who say that expansion will worsen water, traffic and housing woes. They asked the regents to reject or delay approval.

Ballot plays role

Two measures have been placed on the November ballot to halt expansion. One requires the university to pay "the full cost" of growth; the other blocks municipal services if growth proceeds.

"We're disappointed that they did not take seriously the constraints that we presented," Santa Cruz Mayor Cynthia Mathews said after the vote.

Many local residents also voiced opposition, including members of the Bonny Doon Association and the Coalition to Limit UCSC Growth.

But an eclectic group of university supporters stepped up to the microphone to support expansion during a public comment period Tuesday.

One Santa Cruz resident, Donald Steiny, criticized opponents of expansion. "Their real concern is to stop change," he said. "They want to maintain a time capsule of their glory days."

"I speak for young people," said Paul Marcelin-Sampson, 31. "The campus is not a nuisance, but an economic opportunity."

Representatives of the UCSC Foundation urged adoption of the plan. Former San Jose Mayor Susan Hammer, a foundation trustee, said, "I believe the university enhances the city."

The university has sued to block the anti-growth measures, and its revised plan, presented Tuesday, represents a reduction in the scope originally proposed.

"We're very gratified that the regents took a responsible approach, which they are obliged to do, as a state agency," said UCSC acting Chancellor George Blumenthal. "I take seriously their recommendation to continue working with the city."

Expanding education

The university aims to become a world-class research facility, seeks to enlarge its population of graduate students and add schools of management, public policy and public health.

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Expanding education

The university aims to become a world-class research facility, seeks to enlarge its population of graduate students and add schools of management, public policy and public media. But to expand, it needed consent of the regents, its governing body.

Regent Judith Hopkinson supported the plan, but urged UCSC to work with the city and expand student housing.

Regent Fred Ruiz expressed concern that the university had reduced the proposed student population from 21,000 to 19,500 to appease the city.

"We have a huge investment in UCSC. There's a great gift there," he said. "We're not maximizing our abilities."

Blumenthal responded that additional growth would be an option, but a new or amended plan would first be required.

"This is not a statement that this will be all. This is not a statement of forever, but for a specific period of time."

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