

UCSC ^{ucsc-growth} growing too fast, city says

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SANTA CRUZ — Venting their frustrations over the housing-squeeze on the city caused by increasing enrolment at UCSC, City Council members unanimously voted to ask university Chancellor Robert Sinsheimer to accept no more students until campus housing is available for the students.

The city has no jurisdiction over the University of California's growth plans.

Council members also took a stand opposing the buying or leasing of city residences or apartments by the university, because existing residents would be

displaced from their homes.

The council directed Mayor Jane Weed to relay these sentiments to the chancellor in a letter, with copies to UC Regents, the office of the UC President and UCSC Academic Senate.

They took the vote just after Councilman Michael Rotkin, a university lecturer, read them an excerpt from a letter written by Sinsheimer that peeved the council members.

In a letter dated Jan. 12 to Paul Hall, President of the UCSC Alumni Association, Sinsheimer had written that the university must "preserve its legal autonomy," because the university is supported by "the people of

the entire state of California; it must consider their needs as well as local interests."

Added the chancellor: "It is often unclear what Santa Cruz community should be supported. As you know (it) is badly split, even polarized, on many issues, including growth."

Since the current majorities on the council and the board of supervisors "are in office only because of the student vote" and since university officials consult with the students, Sinsheimer said "consultation with elected officials tends to be redundant and to exclude another whole sector of the community."

Added Sinsheimer, "Consultation with the Santa Cruz community tends to be a one-way process. The

'community' never consulted the university when it (illegally) voted to include university land in a 'green-belt.'

"The community frequently forgets that it specifically invited the university to locate a campus (of 27,500 students!) here and promised to provide certain utilities and roads (which have yet to be realized.)"

Rotkin called the letter "insulting" and "outrageous." He was particularly offended by the "student vote" passage.

The letter, said Rotkin, suggests Sinsheimer "doesn't have to take seriously the comments made by the City Council.

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"It may be the council doesn't represent everyone in town, but democracy is the best we've got."

Councilwoman Mardi Wormhoudt said she has attended "dozens and dozens" of meetings about UCSC's long-range growth plan, called the Long Range Development Plan or LRDP.

"While everyone is talking, the university is growing at a rate that it may have already doubled in size," said Wormhoudt.

She said about 1,000 students were added in the past year, and more than 300 new students are projected for next year, but no housing is to be ready for them.

"This is a matter of really serious concern for next fall. I think it's time the council send a letter to the university, telling them that whatever they do with the

LRDP, don't take any new students unless they can house them."

Councilwoman Katy Sears-Williams said the goals of the university plans are laudable enough, "but they're as substantive as Jello, soft Jello.

"There is no indication from the university that any goals are being met or are being attempted to be met."

Added Rotkin: "The university is just growing. It's neither following its old LRDP plan or its new one."

Concerned about the costs of providing utilities to service expansion of the campus, council members ordered a report from city and county staff on what the cost projections are.

They established a city review process for the LRDP and directed the planning commission to testify at a March 9 hearing on the growth plans.