



# Access road must be built for research center traffic

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By Jim Holbrook

An access road, complete with a stop light, must be built for Highway 9 to mitigate traffic from UC Santa Cruz's proposed research and development center, according to a recently released report.

As much as half of the traffic using the access would course through Felton; 85 percent would travel along the southern part of the highway from Highway 1 and Santa Cruz.

The report made no estimate of how much traffic would travel through Scotts Valley and from Highway 17.

Meanwhile, recently released results of a telephone poll of 295 north-county residents revealed that they were worried that the center would increase growth, traffic and pollution while decreasing the open-space areas of the county.

The university is proposing the phased construction of a 76-acre center that could be leased out to private electronics firms. The project, which would be built at the northern, forested part of the campus, could include the construction of 400 townhouses to partially mitigate any population growth impacts.

The county and city of Santa Cruz, supported by Santa Cruz voters in a recent referendum, are pressuring the university to submit plans for the center for local government review. The university is legally exempt from local government control, and the university has resisted the local pressure.

The traffic-assessment report

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recommends that the university build the eastern access on Highway 9 near the Rincon railroad crossing, about 2.2 miles north of Highway 1.

The access would require the widening of Highway 9 to include a left-hand turn lane and the installation of a traffic light; the work would cost about \$100,000, according to the report.

No estimates were made regarding the access road itself.

Prepared by Bill Dietrich of DKS Associates of Oakland, the report was released last month.

In addition to the access, the report recommends that improvements also be made at the intersection of highways 9 and 1, where traffic jams already cause excessive delays during peak traffic hours.

Caltrans is slated to make short-range improvements to the intersection this year, pointed out the report.

The report considered the possibility of Caltrans's elevating Highway 1 with a bridge at the intersection at an estimated cost of \$5.85 million.

Another possibility for mitigating traffic impacts would be the construction of a light rail system that would connect downtown Santa Cruz and the Boardwalk

to Felton, added the report.

Traffic conditions at the intersection, even without the construction of the proposed center, will reach unacceptable levels by 1993 without any long-range improvements, the study forecasted.

Unless the eastern access is built, the center would cause overcrowding on all of the campus's western accesses by 1993, it added.

Based on 1983 statistics, there were 2,374 students attending the university: 28 from Boulder Creek, 28 from Ben Lomond, 52 from Felton, 16 from Graham Hill Road and 48 from Scotts Valley, the report said.

According to the poll that was conducted through consulting firm Applied Survey Research of Santa Cruz last October, 21 percent of those surveyed said someone in the household had a current or past connection with the university.

The poll and the traffic-assessment report will be considered by consultant Environmental Assessment Group in order to prepare an environmental impact report for the proposed center.

The report and poll is available for review at public libraries in the county and at three UC Santa Cruz libraries.