

# ✓ The pressure behind Santa Cruz' lawsuit against UCSC

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**SANTA CRUZ** — Like star-crossed lovers, the city of Santa Cruz and the University of California find themselves at odds because of events bigger than the both of them.

The university system is under pressure to grow by huge numbers of new students demanding access, and a mandate to provide an education to qualified applicants.

The city of Santa Cruz finds itself desperately trying to halt growth because it can no longer afford to provide new citizens with enough water, sewage services, homes or driveable streets.

City Councilwoman Mardi Wormhoudt and UCSC spokesmen Bill Robinson, Bruce Moore and Steve Reed discussed Thursday a recent lawsuit by city against UCSC. Speaking at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon, they all agreed it may be time for both parties to look to the

state Legislature for part of the solution.

The city lawsuit charges the university with preparing an incomplete environmental impact report for the proposed construction of new facilities for College Eight. The suit claims that the report should take into account the cumulative impact of all university building projects scheduled for the next 18 years.

The university plans to increase enrollment from the current 9,000 students to 12,000 students by 2005.

"The financing changes of the Jarvis-Gann (property tax bill) in the late '70s means local government can no longer support the kind of growth that UC demands from small communities," said Wormhoudt. "The real cost of providing a statewide benefit is being borne by the people of Santa Cruz, and it's not equitable."

Among the costs:

- Expanding sewer lines to accom-

modate UCSC growth will cost local taxpayers \$750,000.

- The local share of the proposed widening of Mission Street will cost \$600,000.

- New city water sources could cost millions of dollars, Wormhoudt said.

Rising housing costs caused by student demand also cost residents dearly, she said, affecting low-income renters the most severely.

The university spokesmen agreed with many of Wormhoudt's statements, saying problems of growth and housing are of real concern to small communities.

But Robinson, executive assistant to UCSC's chancellor, took issue with the reasoning behind the city's lawsuit.

"We feel that College Eight is the kind of project that would allow us to address both of our needs," said Robinson. "It is a mitigation to the kinds of needs Mardi cited."

The College Eight project would house students already enrolled at UCSC, he said, and more on-campus housing would help reduce city problems with traffic and housing.

Robinson is a member of the university negotiating team trying to settle the suit out of court. Wormhoudt stressed that the city believes the College Eight plan will cause more growth.

Robinson said that the university has agreed to "phase in" growth, limiting enrollment increases to 109 new students a year until the 12,000-student enrollment goal is met. Such phasing would allow the university to "catch up" with providing student housing and classroom facilities. And, the university will also involve city planners more than it has in the past, he said.

Moore, UCSC's vice chancellor for student affairs, pointed out that all UC campuses are now full.

Legislative action could be sought to help ease the campus housing crunch by providing low-interest loans for dormitory construction, said Robinson. Student housing at

UC campuses must be paid for out of student fees, and under current interest rates, new campus housing often costs as much or more than housing in town.