

Erika Carpenter
Senior Environmental Planner
Physical Planning, Development, and Operations
University of California, Santa Cruz 1156 High Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95064
Email: eircomment@ucsc.edu

RE: COMMENTS ON UCSC 2021 LRDP DRAFT EIR

Dear Erika Carpenter:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2021 Draft Long Range Development Plan's (LRDP) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).

Unfortunately, while the DEIR contains useful and relevant analysis regarding the potentially significant impacts of the LRDP, it is not adequate under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and requires extensive revision and recirculation in order to meet its requirements. As is documented below, in numerous cases the potentially significant impacts are understated, inadequate mitigation measures are proposed, feasible mitigation measures and alternatives are missing, and important, available data and evidence are not provided.

Among the many DEIR inadequacies, at least three are critical:

1. The DEIR's entire analysis of potentially significant impacts is based on the LRDP achieving its objective of housing 100% of the new student enrollment and up to 25% of new faculty and staff on campus. Yet, there is no evidence provided to justify this assumption and, further, the mitigation measures proposed for reducing its impacts to a less than significant level are inadequate under CEQA's requirements for such measures. As recommended below, these mitigation measures must be revised to require, as a feasible mitigation measure, the University to provide the planned on-campus housing and to tie the provision of this housing to enrollment increases.
2. The analysis of the potentially significant impacts of development in the north campus subarea is deeply flawed. The LRDP proposes to locate housing for 3,700 of the 8,500 additional students (43%) as well as 200,000 assignable square feet (asf) (8%) of additional academic support facilities in a State designated high-risk fire hazard area with no new road access provided (page 3.17-30-32). Yet, the DEIR finds that neither the campus Emergency Operations Plan, nor the Campus Evacuation Plan need to be revised in response to this proposal. Further, the potential impact for wildfires is found, without supporting evidence, to be less than significant. The DEIR asserts that simply adopting a vegetation management plan would reduce the potentially significant impact to less than significant. Finally, while the DEIR does consider the potential impacts of not locating development in this area, this option is not considered as a potentially feasible alternative.
3. While the DEIR recognizes six direct impacts and many cumulative impacts of the LRDP as significant and unavoidable, it inadequately fails to identify 21 others that should have been included.

Executive Summary

- ES-1 – The DEIR states that the 2021 LRDP “embraces a compact academic core with housing around the periphery.” This is incorrect and misleading. The 2021 LRDP proposes significant development, including academic facilities, in the north campus area outside the core. The Final EIR needs to correct this misinformation especially since many readers may only read the Executive Summary.

- ES-2 – The DEIR indicates that the LRDP “plans to accommodate” 100% of the new enrollment of about 9,500 students and up to 25% of the additional 2,200 FTE faculty and staff. There is no mention of the need to tie this housing commitment to enrollment growth in order to mitigate the potentially significant impacts of this growth.

- The DEIR repeats the LRDP objectives of housing students, faculty, and staff with no enforceable language or connection to enrollment growth.

- The last sentence of page ES-4 identifies Alternative 3 as the environmentally superior alternative. Yet the second paragraph on page ES-5 states that Alternative 2 “would result in greater impact reductions and is thus considered superior to Alternative 3. These contradictory statements are confusing to the public and need to be corrected.

Introduction

- 1-1 – The LRDP is defined in State law as a “plan,” not a guide, that is subject to CEQA: “a “physical development and land use plan to meet the academic and institutional objectives for a particular campus or medical center of public higher education.” The DEIR needs to clarify that the LRDP is legally binding document and any proposed increases to enrollment levels or significant policy amendments that could impact the environment are subject to review under CEQA prior to approval by the Regents.

- 1-2 – The DEIR is inadequate for not including the Santa Cruz Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) as a State responsible agency, since it must approve the extension of water and sewer services beyond the City boundaries, which includes the north campus subarea. Its role is considered in the Utilities and Service Systems chapter but should be described here.

- 1-3 – The LRDP proposes to “accommodate,” not house, 100% of the new students and up to 25% of the new FTE employees by designating land on the Land Use Map where that amount of housing could be built. Simply identifying areas on a map where housing would be allowed is not a meaningful commitment to providing this housing.

- The DEIR recognizes that its LRDP has the same requirements as a city or County general plan – i.e., it is legally binding: “Much like a city or county general plan, the 2021 LRDP does not mandate growth or the provision of new facilities.” While adopting the LRDP is not a “commitment” to any specific project, its adoption allows for any development consistent with it. The EIR should clarify the LRDP’s legal status.

- 1-5 – UCSC’s 10-year Capital Financial Plan should explicitly identify the infrastructure needed at different enrollment thresholds to support the additional growth, and enrollment should not increase beyond these thresholds without the necessary infrastructure. The LRDP is inadequate by not considering the need and potentially significant impacts of proposed infrastructure at different enrollment levels.

- 1-7 – CSA – “The Comprehensive Settlement Agreement (CSA) also required UC Santa Cruz to apply to the Santa Cruz County Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) for water and sewer services for the north campus subarea, which UC Santa Cruz did in 2008, ...”. This requirement needs further

discussion in the DEIR and, also, indicates the DEIR's inadequacy for not identifying LAFCO as a responsible state agency.

Project Description

- 2-1 – The DEIR states that the LRDP “provides for” 8,500 student housing beds and approximately 550 employee housing units. While the plan identifies where those resources could be developed, there is no inclusion of a meaningful commitment to provide this housing.

- 2-4 – The DEIR indicates that 53% of the campus' 2,000 acres are in the City of Santa Cruz. The DEIR should specify that 940 acres are not within the City and, under state law, development outside the City is subject to regulation by LAFCO.

- The north campus subarea is characterized as follows: “extends from the developed central campus subarea to the northern property line;” “The north campus subarea is largely undeveloped at this time except for recreational trails, unpaved service roads, and infrastructure related to water storage. This subarea is characterized by a mix of evergreen forests and some grasslands and includes the sites of long-term outdoor research projects.” The DEIR should specify in the Project Description the amount of development proposed for this subarea – housing for 3,700 students and 200,000 asf of support facilities.

- 2-8 – While the Community Advisory Group (CAG) is mentioned, its adopted Guiding Principles are not. Since they directly relate to potentially significant impacts of the LRDP, they should be listed in the DEIR.

- The DEIR identifies the LRDP objective of “housing 100 percent of the additional FTE students” above 19,500 is stated. The DEIR should explain that nothing in CEQA or other state laws requires the University to meet this objective.

- 2-9 – The DEIR states: “However, the 2021 LRDP does not commit UC Santa Cruz to any specific enrollment level, campus population, or development.” “UC Santa Cruz plans to provide on-campus housing for 100 percent of the increase in student enrollment beyond 19,500 FTE students and up to 25 percent of the additional anticipated 2,200 FTE faculty/staff members.” These statements are further evidence that, while the DEIR analysis of impacts assumes that the housing objectives will be met, the DEIR is clear that the University is not required to meet them. Without this commitment, the DEIR must analyze the potential impacts of the LRDP assuming that no on-campus housing will be provided.

- 2-10 – The net new campus population is projected to be 12,830 compared to the existing population of 22,344 (a 57% increase to 35,230 people). The Santa Cruz City population in 2019 was 64,522. The campus population, then represented about 35%. The AMBAG projections show a total City population of about 79,000 in 2040. Based on this estimate, the campus population will be about 45% of the City's. The DEIR should provide these figures as they provide evidence of the University's impact on the surrounding community.

- “An increase of about 9,482 students over the 2018-2019 baseline equates to an average addition of 431 students each year.” This projection of annual student enrollment provides the basis for the DEIR to include a feasible mitigation measure that would tie the provision of on-campus housing to these growth increases. No annual increase in needed faculty and staff housing is projected but should be provided.

- 2-11 – Table 2-2 of the DEIR shows the amount of assignable square feet (asf) for existing and new academic, support, and residential space. However, this is significantly less than the gross square feet (gsf) which “reflects the sum of all building space with a building.” This distinction is important because,

while the total asf of existing and new buildings would be about 9.4 million, the gsf would be 14.1 million (a 50% increase).

To understand the number of acres the new buildings would require, the gsf numbers need to be used. Therefore, the approximately 3.1 million asf of new academic and support space would total about 4.1 million gsf. The new housing space required would be about 3.8 million. The total new building space needed would be about 8.4 million gsf. The EIR needs to provide these gsf projections in order carry out adequate impact analysis and adequately inform the public of the total extent of construction of the proposed project.

Moreover, the DEIR doesn't consistently use the gsf space requirements in later sections when analyzing potentially significant LRDP development impacts. Not using gsf may significantly understates LRDP impacts.

- The DEIR states: "As currently envisioned, development under the 2021 LRDP would occur primarily within the central and lower campus subareas, as shown in Figure 2-4." This isn't clear in the Figure because it doesn't define the north campus subarea, though it does show significant colleges and academic space there. The DEIR should state here the number of acres in each subarea. The Figure should also include the City of Santa Cruz boundary.

- 2-13 – The LRDP designates the total space for Academic and Support Space as approximately 170 acres and for Residential Space as approximately 359 acres. The number of acres for new construction do not seem to be provided as ~~are not given~~ and it isn't clear whether these projections are for buildings only. The EIR should clarify this.

- 2-15 – Land use designations in acreage:

Land Use Designations	Acreage Under the 2005 LRDP, as Amended1	2021 LRDP Acreage	Net Change
Academic Land Use Designation			
Academic & Support (Academic Core in the 2005 LRDP)	132	163	31 (23.5%)
Residential Land Use Designations			
Colleges and Student Housing	245	277	32 (13.1%)
Employee Housing	75	823	7 (9.3%)

- The 8,500 new student housing beds, then, would average about 266 beds per acre.

- Given that the new student housing (8,500 beds) will approximately double the number of beds on campus now of 9,283 (about a 91% increase) and the new beds will be constructed on about 13% of the area of the current housing, it's clear that the new housing will need to be much taller than the existing housing. Page 2-18 states that ~~they~~ the housing will be in buildings ~~will be~~ between 4 and 8 stories. This seems to contradict the statement on page 3.1-40 that "new buildings would range from two to four stories in height." The EIR needs to ensure that the height limits indicated in the Project Description are analyzed accurately throughout the document and this discrepancy should be clarified in the EIR.

- 2-16 – The EIR needs to indicate the number of new academic developments in each of the subareas to document that new development will occur "primarily" in the central campus.

- 2-17 – The DEIR states that the new colleges will be on the periphery of the academic core with one in the northeast corner and one in the northwest corner. It is unclear how many acres in the north campus subarea will be developed for these colleges and this should be provided.

- 2-21 – The DEIR indicates that 11 acres of mixed use are designated in the Westside Research Park that could include housing, academic and support facilities. How can a meaningful impact analysis be conducted without a more precise designation of the uses that would be allowed there?

Aesthetics

- 3.1-2 – Cowell Lime Works District - The DEIR states that “[f]uture projects located adjacent to the historic district would be evaluated for consistency with the management plan.” However, this plan is currently under revision. Therefore, the public is unable to know exactly what the criteria is that future projects outlined in this document will be evaluated to be consistent with, and therefore are unable to evaluate their adequacy to mitigate the impact.

- 3.1-3 – Physical Design Framework – The DEIR states that the purpose of the design guidelines is to ensure designs are “true to the vision” of UCSC, ~~but no requirement to follow~~. However, there is no requirement included that would make guidelines binding.

-3.1-4 - Meadow Areas – The DEIR includes the Physical Design Framework which provides: “Preserve the integrity of meadows by maintaining a clear meadow boundary. Site development so as not to encroach on the meadow open space.” The EIR should clarify the legal status of this Framework. If the University proposed to develop in the meadow area, would an amendment of the LRDP be required? This is necessary in the EIR in order for it to contain an accurate identification of potentially significant impacts.

- Forests – “Build no taller than the surrounding tree canopy.” Does this mean that any proposed development that would violate this policy would be prohibited under the LRDP? Again, this is necessary to adequately analyze potentially significant impacts. In addition, given that some of the campus redwood trees are as tall as 380 feet, the EIR should include mitigations specifying a maximum height limit and/or mitigations should this limit be exceeded.

- 3.1-36ff – Under the heading “Issues Not Evaluated Further” the DEIR includes a series of campus development policies. There is no heading to this list and it is unclear why they are located there and their relation to the aesthetic analysis. This needs to be clarified.

- 3.1-38ff – Impacts and Mitigation – Impact 3.1-1 - On a Scenic Vista – The DEIR determines that the impact here will be less than significant because development will be adjacent to existing development and will follow design guidelines. This analysis of the impact on scenic vistas is misleading and inadequate for the following reasons:

- The photos don’t identify the height of the proposed development and the draft LRDP proposes residential buildings **generally** 4-6 stories tall (although the Project Description indicates they can go as high as 8 stories – page 2-18) and the height of the buildings in the simulations isn’t stated.
- The draft LRDP does not limit building height for most new developments or how much development will occur in the areas proposed for development. Therefore, it’s impossible to determine what the impact of the Plan will be on scenic resources.

Unless the EIR simulations assume the maximum development and tallest structures allowed at each site in a scenic vista, the impact should be considered **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.1-3 – The DEIR insufficiently evaluates the project’s potential to degrade existing visual character or quality in a non-urbanized area by only considering the impact of the 2021 LRDP from roadways and not from all publicly accessible vantage points. There is no analysis or evaluation of the impact of the 2021 LRDP on visual resources or existing visual character or quality of public views of the site from publicly accessible vantage points from paved and unpaved trails and fire roads. These are valuable community assets, publicly accessible, and routinely trafficked by pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians. These trails can be referenced from figure 3.15.1-1, bike trails can be referenced in figure 4.12 of the LRDP. Aesthetic impacts from these public locations need to be evaluated in the EIR.

Additionally, more detailed information can be found on these upper campus trail map¹. Therefore, without this analysis and proposed mitigation(s), this section of the EIR is inadequate and an updated version should be recirculated that includes a detailed analysis of the visual impacts of the 2021 LRDP on the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site from publicly accessible trails, fire-roads, and all other publicly accessible space and vantage points. Because the trails are specifically used for pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians to access undisturbed natural space, the impact on these cherished visual resources on the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site could not be mitigated by adherence to planning documents that guide development in urbanized areas. UCSC must propose feasible mitigations to prevent the degradation of visual resources in North Campus. If none are available, this impact should be changed to **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.1-43ff – Impact 3.1-3 – Degrade Existing Visual Character or Quality – The DEIR states: “land use changes would **generally** be visually consistent with existing development under the 2021 LRDP. However, development is also planned for more remote areas of the campus, including areas proximate to Empire Grade to the west of the Santa Cruz city limits.” The DEIR is inadequate in the vagueness of its analysis. To what extent would the proposed land use changes be consistent with existing on-campus development?

- “The area in the northern portion of campus is valued for its scenic quality because the visual landscape and attractiveness of redwood trees and forest within the foreground along Empire Grade. Therefore, it is possible that the introduction of new buildings and structures could damage the scenic value of the redwood forested area.” The DEIR should clarify here that there is no height limit in this subarea as stated later that “To the north within forested areas, buildings may be as tall as six or more floors, as dictated by their programs.” The EIR must analyze the potential impacts of tall building on the visual character of the area.

--3.1-3 - Despite the numerous impacts regarding development in north campus, such as, “The northeast portion of the main residential campus contains redwood forests that are valued for their scenic nature. Additionally, the existing redwood trees in this area provides a visual continuity of forested area and a natural screening feature for future development. New development that extends beyond the height of existing redwood trees or otherwise alters the scenic nature within the forested area, including publicly accessible vantage points along Empire Grade north of the city limits, could damage or degrade the visual character and quality of the area,” there are no mitigation measures proposed that address these identified impacts. With 43% of the additional housing proposed in North Campus, there will be significant population changes to a previously unpopulated area. This will inevitably impact the visual resource of North Campus, which was previously an un-urbanized, and (relative to the proposed population growth) unpopulated area. With significant development as well as construction, this will inevitably impact the scenic quality of the space and therefore must be mitigated to a less than significant level. If no feasible mitigations are possible, this impact should be changed to **significant and unavoidable**.

¹ <https://ucscampusreserve.ucsc.edu/documents/ucsc-upper-campus-map>,
<https://ucscampusreserve.ucsc.edu/documents/cnr-sector-map-pdf>

- 3.1-3 - There is no evidence provided to support the statement made on page 3.1-44 that, “While new development in these areas may change the visual quality, these changes are more likely to be perceived as an improvement, rather than an adverse impact, by providing a more congruous visual condition, consistent with a higher-education institution.” In fact, there are numerous examples of significant public opposition to the development of the north campus and for the preservation of that area for its scenic value and biotic importance. It is unclear how this conclusion is determined and either information should be provided to substantiate this claim or it should be removed from the final EIR.

- 3.1-44 – The DEIR states: “As described in Chapter 2, “Project Description, “future buildings for academic and support under the 2021 LRDP would generally be similar to those already existing in the academic core, ranging in height between four and six stories.” This statement essentially provides no maximum height to development and contradicts the 8-story height limit on page 2-18). The DEIR needs to clarify the maximum heights used in determining the impact level here and provide evidence to support this finding.

- The DEIR states: “However, development activities within areas of campus that are highly regarded for their scenic and visual qualities could degrade or damage the character or quality of surrounding uses and landscapes. The northeast portion of the main residential campus contains redwood forests that are valued for their scenic nature. Additionally, the existing redwood trees in this area provides a visual continuity of forested area and a natural screening feature for future development. New development that extends beyond the height of existing redwood trees or otherwise alters the scenic nature within the forested area, including publicly accessible vantage points along Empire Grade north of the city limits, could damage or degrade the visual character and quality of the area. As a result, this impact would be potentially significant.” The DEIR is correct in its finding that development under the LRDP could significantly degrade the visual character of the campus.

- 3.1.45 – Mitigation Measure 3.1-3 – Protection of View within Scenic Areas – While the impact analysis largely focuses on potential impacts on the north campus, the mitigation measure only refers to viewsheds in central and south campus subareas, not the north campus subarea. This is inadequate and needs to be corrected in the EIR.

- Significance after Mitigation – The DEIR finds that “Implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.1-3a, 3.1-3b, and 3.1-3c would reduce impacts to less than significant by requiring building limitations and development requirements as well as distancing and screening requirements, that would provide for development that is consistent with and complementary of the landscaped and existing built conditions, thereby minimizing adverse effects on existing visual character of the LRDP area. Additionally, implementation of these mitigation measures would ensure cohesive development and consistency with the natural landscapes present within these areas of campus. In addition, future projects would be required to undergo review by the Campus Design Advisory Board and incorporate design recommendations as part of the development project.”

- The Campus Design Advisory Board is referenced four times in various mitigation measures in this section. According to documents released in a CPRA request labeled [Herken 04/02/2018 CPRA Request](#), the Board was unanimously, “...opposed to the selection of [the] site for the FSH (Family Student Housing) development. They questioned what alternative sites had been evaluated and expressed concerns that the low-density program, located at such an iconic gateway intersection, undermines the careful approach and purposefulness of campus planning, and were alarmed by the potentially inhospitable interruption to the visual character of the open meadow in that specific location.” Despite the objections, the FSH project was approved and has been included in this EIR as already existing and assumed development. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Campus Design Advisory Board does not

have the authority to change specific project details or require changes to projects. Without performance standards strengthening the role of the Campus Advisory Board's ability to 1) enforce design standards, 2) reject project proposals that don't meet the various campus planning documents, and 3) enforce compliance with the above mitigations that rely on their "review", the determination of this impact being brought to a less-than-significant impact just by their review is inadequate.

- The mitigation measures are also inadequate because they do not specifically correspond to the impact on the scenic visual quality of development in the north campus subarea. The DEIR provides no mitigations for the potentially significant impacts of converting a currently scenic area into academic, support and residential development with buildings potentially over six stories and with no height limits.

- The analysis of this impact is reminiscent of bait and switch tactics. The analysis of the draft LRDP's impact on visual character and quality adequately focuses on the north campus subarea and its important scenic character and quality are recognized. However, the mitigations ignore the potentially significant impacts of development in this subarea, except for the area adjacent to Empire Grade, and focus on the visual quality in the lower campus. The EIR must provide mitigation measures for the aesthetic impacts of development in the north campus subarea and determine the subsequent impact level with the imposition of these mitigations. The impact after mitigation should be **significant and unavoidable** without these revisions.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

- 3.2-11 – Impact 3.2-2 – Loss of Forest Land – The DEIR indicates 64 acres of forest land would be lost in the north campus subarea, which contains 750 acres (8%) (page 3.2-7). One of the significance criteria quoted on page 3.2-9 states that a significant impact would: "result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to a non-forest use." The significance criterion, therefore, contains a zero threshold for the amount of forest land that would need to be lost in order for the impact to be considered significant. The loss of 123 acres of forest land (over 10% of the existing forest land), with 64 acres lost to new development in the north campus subarea should be considered a **significant and unavoidable** impact despite the fact that CalFire timber harvesting requirements must be met.

- The FEIR should analyze the potential loss of forest land that could result from the increased risk of wildfire that will result from the 2021 LRDP and outline mitigation measures that replicate lost forest resources should an event occur.

Air Quality

- 3.3-17 – The DEIR states: "Based on the overall building program, as shown in Chapter 2, "Project Description," annual and maximum daily construction emissions are based on the combined results of CalEEMod and RCEM runs for the construction of approximately 312,700 assignable square feet (asf) (approximately 481,100 gross square feet [gsf]) of various land uses per year (not including parking lots), amortized over 18 years to estimate average annual construction activity, associated annual emissions, and maximum daily emissions that may occur within a year of construction."

- 3.3-22 – Impact 3.3-1 – Construction-Generated Emissions – The DEIR's summary description of the quantitative analysis performed to estimate emissions includes roadway and bridge construction. However, no information is presented regarding how these would increase total emissions. The EIR should include a table with the assumptions used to estimate construction emissions from the various sources. Table 3.3-4 on page 3.3-19 should provide this information.

- The DEIR states: "This average sf value was estimated based on 18 years of construction, from 2022 to 2040, assuming that construction activities would be relatively similar from year to year." This statement

essentially assumes that housing and academic construction will occur in sync with enrollment since the LRDP assumes student enrollment will increase at the same annual level. However, there is no binding commitment in either the LRDP or the DEIR that ties enrollment growth to the construction activity, either for housing or other infrastructure. Without this commitment, the annual assumptions for construction emissions represent a best-case analysis and understate potentially the higher levels of emissions if construction is not tied to enrollment. The EIR should be corrected to either include a mitigation measure tying enrollment to development or provide a worst-case analysis.

- Mitigation Measure 3.3-2 The DEIR states: “UC Santa Cruz has little direct control over fugitive PM emissions from roadway dust nor the use of zero-emissions vehicles from non-university mobile sources. Further PM reductions would require mitigation of these sources of PM10 emissions. Therefore, this impact would be significant and unavoidable”. Further, the DEIR states, “Table 3.3-9 shows the modeled emissions after mitigation, quantifying all proposed measures within Mitigation Measure 3.3-2 that are under UC Santa Cruz’s direct control.” However, the DEIR does not consider on-campus policy changes that would reduce these occurrences substantially, such as traffic reduction efforts that, for instance, could prohibit all future UCSC students, faculty, and staff from having vehicles on-campus or limiting on-campus vehicles to only those that are zero-emissions. The FEIR should include analysis of the PM10 emissions after on-campus policy changes are considered and should include potentially feasible mitigations.

- Mitigation Measure 3.3-2 The DEIR is misleading when it states: “While such modeling may be warranted when considering extremely large projects that exceed thresholds by multiples, they are of questionable value, and are, in fact, often misleading when considering projects such as the 2021 LRDP, which exceed the significance standard by a very small margin.” The 2021 LRDP will exceed MBARD’s threshold by 11%. CEQA does not require the evaluation of the 2021 LRDP in relation to other projects, just in relation to the applicable air quality standards. Therefore, the contrast between UCSC and “extremely large projects” is irrelevant and should not be included in the FEIR.

Archeology, Historical, and Tribal

- 3.4 – 23 – Mitigation Measure 3.4-4a: Cowell Lime Works – The mitigation measure component to require at least a 200-foot buffer between the Historic District and new buildings “to the greatest extent feasible,” is inadequate. The EIR needs to include performance standards for determining feasibility.

Biological Resources

3.5-3 – Coastal Zone – The DEIR states: “Portions of the LRDP area, including the Westside Research Park and the area west of Empire Grade within the Main Residential Campus, fall within the coastal zone. As described in Section 3.11, “Land Use and Planning,” although campus lands are not included in any Local Coastal Program (LCP), UC Santa Cruz must comply independently with the requirements of the CCA.” The statement that campus lands are not included in any LCP is incorrect. The area west of Empire Grade is within the County’s approved LCP.

- 3.5-4 – Ranch View Terrace HCP – The EIR should identify Inclusion Area A as located in the Coastal Zone.

- 3.5-4ff – Santa Cruz County General Plan – The DEIR is seriously inadequate in not identifying all the County General Plan policies cited as also being Local Coastal Program policies as well. This error is compounded when the DEIR states that the University “is not bound” by the County’s LCP. Once the Coastal Commission approves a jurisdiction’s LCP, its policies must be followed for any State agency

development with the jurisdiction's Coastal Zone boundary. The EIR must clarify the role of the County's General Plan/Local Coastal Program policies for the portion of the campus west of Empire Grade.

- 3.5-11 – The DEIR finds that Dwarf redwoods “may warrant additional consideration” due to their potential rarity. How many acres of Dwarf Redwoods are located on campus?

- 3.5-31 – Critical Habitat – The first paragraph on this page of the DEIR is unclear. On the one hand, it indicates that the University is not required to consult with USFWS as part of the implementation in critical habitats. However, it also states that the USFWS must consult with itself before approving an HCP or incidental take permit. Would the University need an HCP or take permit for construction in critical habitats? If so, how would it acquire these without consulting with the USFWS? The role of the USFWS needs to be clarified.

- 3.5-32 – Redwood Forest Sensitive Community – The DEIR indicates that much of the 860.4 acres of redwood forest would not meet the qualifications of the redwood forest sensitive natural community. The portion of the redwood forest that does qualify should be mapped.

- 3.5-37 – Figure 3.5-6 – Development Areas Overlay Vegetation Communities. From the figure, it appears as if a new road is proposed connecting the two areas proposed for development in the north campus subarea. Is this a proposal in the LRDP?

- 3.5-40ff – Mitigation for Special Status Plants – The mitigation measure in the DEIR only requires replacement of lost vegetation on a 1 for 1 basis. Given the sensitivity of these species, elimination of their natural habitat should require replacement at least on a 2 for 1 basis in order for the mitigation to be adequate. Requiring a 2 for 1 replacement of vegetation in critical habitat is a common and feasible option.

- 3.5-42 – Significance after Mitigation – While the mitigation measure requires meaningful actions to replace sensitive vegetation removed from LRDP development sites, there is no evidence that such actions will be successful. Therefore, it isn't possible to adequately determine that the impacts will be less than significant. In fact, given the failure to transplant sensitive species in other projects, there can be no assurance of successful replacement. Given this uncertainty of success and the lack of substantial evidence, the potential impact should be **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.5-46 – Red-legged Frog – The DEIR is unclear regarding the requirements under the federal Endangered Species Act if an LRDP might “take” red-legged frogs or reduce their habitat. The DEIR indicates that the University “may” pursue incidental take coverage by getting a biological opinion or a Habitat Conservation Plan. Is the University required to do one or the other, or may it do neither? The USFWS role needs to be clarified.

- The DEIR determined that the significance of potential impacts on red-legged frogs after mitigation is less than significant. This is inadequate. While USFWS may give the University permission to take red-legged frogs and/or their habitat when LRDP development results in unavoidable impacts, that doesn't mean, under CEQA, that the impact is less than significant. Moreover, there are no performance standards to ensure that the potentially significant will be reduced to a less than significant level. Therefore, the potential impacts to the species would be **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.5-52 – Mitigation Measure 3.5-2e – Burrowing Owls – While the DEIR requires off-site mitigation to include “measures of success,” there are no requirements imposed should the measures not be successful. Simply measuring whether a mitigation achieves its objective does not sufficiently reduce the impact to a

less than significant level. Moreover, these measures of success are not specifically identified so it is impossible for the public to evaluate their potential to succeed. Absent measurable performance standards the potential impact should be determined as **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.5-3 – The DEIR states: “This impact evaluation is based on review of existing databases that address biological resources in the vicinity of the LRDP area, aerial photographs, and reports regarding biological resource surveys in the LRDP area, as described above.” Additionally, the DEIR states, “Due to the programmatic nature of this impact evaluation and the fact that focused surveys of future development sites under the 2021 LRDP would be required to verify habitat conditions in subsequent years during implementation of the 2021 LRDP, the envisioned impact acreages for each vegetation community are used as a proxy to assess potential impacts on wildlife and plant species associated with these communities.” The DEIR should identify which projects will be required to have additional analysis and which will be tiered to the 2021 LRDP EIR.

- 3.5-56ff – Ohlone Tiger Beetle - The DEIR considers the potential impact of development on Ohlone Tiger Beetle habitat and seems to require acceptance of USFWS mitigation measures. Mitigation Measure 3.5-2i is inadequate because there is no evidence that the USFWS measures, the biological goals and objectives, adaptive management, or monitoring will reduce the impact to a less than significant level. The impact determination should be **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.5-67 – Sensitive Communities Mitigation Measure 3.5-3b – While the DEIR includes specific success criteria for the mitigation measure, it doesn’t discuss the consequences if these criteria not being met. This should be included.

- 3.5-68 – Significance after Mitigation – The finding of a less than significant level is not supported by substantial evidence that the impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level despite the implementation of the mitigation measures. Therefore, the impact after mitigation should be determined as **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.5-70ff – Impact 3.5-5 – Wildlife Movement Corridors – The DEIR focuses on **construction** related impacts on wildlife movement corridors and nursery habitat and the proposed mitigations only respond to these potential impacts.

- While the DEIR does mention the danger of fencing on wildlife, it does not consider the reduction of wildlife movement corridors by the permanent development in the north campus subarea where the total subarea was identified as part of a larger wildlife movement area (page 3.5-33). Not only will the new buildings reduce the wildlife corridor but the influx of students, faculty and staff will have impacts on movement of wildlife currently using the area. Particularly, with regards to Mountain Lions, recent [UCSC studies](#) have proven that mountain lions will abandon killed prey upon hearing human voices. An adequate EIR analysis must consider the potential impacts of the new structures and their population within the wildlife movement corridor.

- Destruction of nesting habitat will have a devastating effect on birds when they return to destroyed nesting sites during the next breeding season. It is essential to permanently protect already existing habitat for special status bird species, as well as common birds. Because the nests of small birds are difficult to find, habitat suitable for these species within the LRDP should be protected. Habitat is crucial not only for nesting but also for foraging (ex. Black Swift may forage within the LRDP area).

- In general, the impacts and proposed mitigations described in the LRDP do not take into account the overall destruction of habitat for all species in the described area. Construction activities and the resulting

permanent changes to the landscape will affect all natural areas and wildlife therein, not just species of special interest. Additional analysis of these issues should be provided in the EIR.

- For wildlife, the LRDP focuses primarily on mitigation efforts during the breeding season. There is little effort/planning for long term protection/preservation of habitat for species outside of the breeding season. Additional analysis of these issues should be provided in the EIR.

Energy

- 3.6-12 – This following sentence in the DEIR is unclear and needs to be revised: “The Campus Up to 4 megawatts (MW) of on-campus solar photovoltaic electricity generation, producing an estimated 5,718 MWh/year assuming a yield of 1,448 kWh/kWdc, is also being considered for the Campus under the CES.”

- 3.6-12ff – Impact 3.6-1 – Unnecessary, Inefficient, and Wasteful Energy Use – The DEIR’s determination that the energy impact of the proposed LRDP would be less than significant is inadequate. This finding is based on the fact that development will conform to Title 24 standards and UC energy policy, and that, in most cases, per capita energy use will decline. However, the increased impact on the environment is not only dependent on per capita use but on the total increase in energy demand. The FEIR must include analysis of the total increase in energy demand and analyze its significance under CEQA significance criteria.

- As shown in Table 3.6-5, on page 3.6-15, net increase in energy use will be about 67% (the per capita increase will be 16%). The net increase in natural gas use will be about 18%, the net increase in transportation use will be 38%, and the total MMBTU net increase will be about 33%.

- The DEIR provides no evidence that these increases are necessary and efficient. For example, Executive Order N-79-20 set a statewide goal of 100% zero emission car and truck vehicles by 2035 yet the UC Sustainable Practices Policy, which is used to justify the DEIR’s determination, only requires that 50% of the campus’ light duty vehicles be either zero emission or hybrid by 2025.

- Moreover, the DEIR doesn’t discuss the relationship of the increase in MMBTUs of about 38% to the AB 32 and AB 197 provisions authorizing the California Air Resources Board to achieve a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 (page 3.6-4).

- In addition, unlike mitigations included in an EIR, there is ~~are~~ no indication that UC policies are legally binding. The EIR should analyze and disclose what would happen if UCSC is unsuccessful in fully implementing these policies. To ensure full implementation and reduce potential energy impacts these policies, unless legally binding, should be added as mitigation measures.

- Finally, there is no evidence in the DEIR for determining that simply applying current UC policies is sufficient to help meet State energy goals and to not represent an inefficient use of energy over the term of the LRDP. The impact determination should be **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.6-16 – Impact 3.6-2 – Conflict with Policies – The determination that there is no inconsistency with applicable policies is not supported by substantial evidence (see comments on Impact 3.6-1). For example, clearly, implementation of the LRDP as proposed will not meet the goal of 100% zero emission vehicles by 2035. The impact determination here should be **significant and unavoidable**.

Geology and Soils

- 3.7-27 – Impact 3.7-5 – Karst Topography Risk - The DEIR determines that the potential impact will be less than significant because each LRDP project will be subject to a structural analysis and will comply with the CBC and UC policies. However, as a programmatic EIR, the DEIR should consider the potential impacts of the LRDP overall.

- In the discussion of Karst Hazard on pages 3.7-17 and 18, the DEIR notes: “One of the principal problems of developing areas underlain by karst is the extreme irregularity of the karst features, and consequently the lack of predictability of subsurface conditions. Because of this unpredictability, some level of risk is inherent in developing in karst regions, as **no amount of site investigation can reveal every detail of the subsurface.**”

In addition, Figure 3.7-8 (page 3.7-20) identifies and rates karst hazard areas on campus. The EIR should include a map that overlays the proposed development areas on the karst hazard areas to determine the risk level for new development areas and, given the environmental damage that could be caused by subsidence, development in high-risk areas should be recognized as a potentially significant impact with mitigation proposed, including avoidance. Without this, the impact should be considered **significant and unavoidable.**

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- 3.8-17 – The DEIR states: “the 2021 LRDP would have a less-than-significant impact if, despite LRDP growth and development, UC Santa Cruz’s 2030 emissions total (including existing and 2021 LRDP sources) are at least 40 percent below 1990 emissions and UC Santa Cruz’s total 2040 emissions are at least 60 percent below 1990 emissions;”

- 3.8-24 – Impact 3.8-1 – Greenhouse Gas Generation - Though this evidence may be in the appendix, the EIR itself should identify the level of reductions due to implementation of the UC policies and from the purchase of carbon credits. It also should discuss why carbon credits aren’t proposed to fully meet the Initiative targets. In addition, the EIR should evaluate the impacts if implementation of the UC policies is not mandatory.

- 3.8-25 – Mitigation Measure 3.8-1 – Reduce Annual Emissions- Since increased annual emissions are not tied to increases in enrollment growth and the provision of the supporting infrastructure, imposing mitigations that might not be implemented until the end of the LRDP period in order to meet the required targets is not sufficient. The EIR needs to directly compare the implementation of the mitigation measures to increases in enrollment levels in order to ensure that the targets are met on an ongoing basis. In other words, the mitigation measures in the EIR need to include a timeline for when each must be implemented.

- 3.8-25 – Significance after Mitigation – While the DEIR does provide meaningful and enforceable mitigations, it doesn’t provide evidence documenting the reduction in emissions from them. The statement that the mitigations would reduce emission by 6,907 MTCO₂e is conclusory and not adequate under CEQA. Without this evidence, the impact should be considered **significant and unavoidable.**

3.8-26 – Impact 3.8-2 – Conflict with Policies - The DEIR determined that because the 2021 LRDP would achieve the targets in the various plans and policies, the impact would be less than significant. However, this is based on the implementation of the mitigation measures specified under Impact 3.8-1 and this should be specified.

-When considering reductions to wildfire hazards, UCSC proposes the method of prescribed burns to decrease the wildfire risk of the project. The emissions from these burns, as well as the impact on GHG emissions from the reduction in plant life, should be analyzed, disclosed, and mitigated.

- Recent legislation has requested the California Air Resources Board to carry out an independent review of the forestry offset programs that are offered through the CA Carbon Offset Program. 36 forestry projects account for 80% of total offset credits issued by the California Air Resources Board. A UC Berkeley study found that, “82% of these credits likely do not represent true emissions reductions due to the protocol’s use of lenient leakage accounting methods”. California assumes a 20% leakage rate. In a policy brief, UC Berkeley Professor Barbara Haya refers to two studies that found leakage rates can reach as much as 80%. “Using an unsupported low-rate results in over-crediting,” Haya writes. Haya states that, “most forest offset projects begin in greenhouse gas debt; project landowners generate offset credits that allow emitters in California to emit more than the state’s emissions cap today, in exchange for promises that their lands will continue to increase their storage of carbon over 100 years”. But to address climate breakdown, emissions need to be reduced now, not at some hoped for point several decades in the future.²” The DEIR should specify which CARB offsets will be purchased to achieve emission targets, and, if they are forest offsets- should incorporate the findings of these studies in order to determine the amount that will need to be purchased to reduce the impact to a less than significant level. If this cannot be done, the impact should be **significant and unavoidable**, despite the offset purchase.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

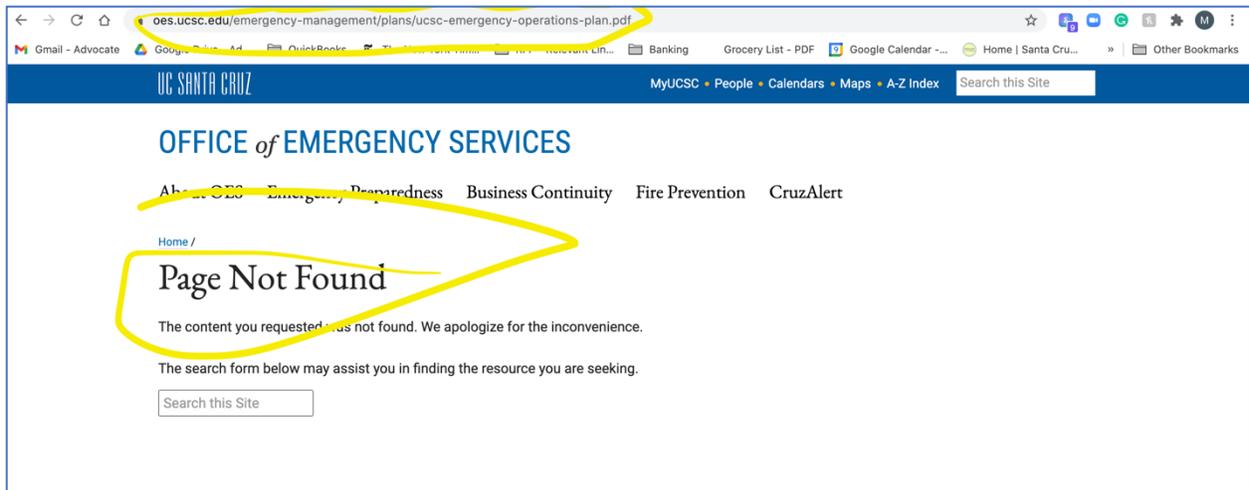
- 3.9-13 – The DEIR indicates that UCSC is “in the process of updating the DTSC’s records to reflect existing conditions at Westside Research Park.”

- 3.9.- 21 – Impact 3.9.2 – Release from Known Site - Since the Westside Research Park required cleanup in the past, the EIR should include a mitigation measure requiring the campus to complete the DTSC filing within a specified time period.

- 3.9-25 – Impact 3.9-4 – Implementation of an Emergency Evacuation Plan - The DEIR only considers short-term, construction related potentially significant impacts of implementation of the draft LRDP on emergency plans. This is inadequate. The draft LRDP proposes at least one new road in the north campus subarea as well as colleges and academic support facilities. Since these developments will occur in a state designated high hazard wildfire area, UCSC’s Emergency Response Plan and Emergency Evacuation Plan need to be revised to reflect the proposed development in this subarea. Simply requiring, as mitigation, site specific but unspecified, traffic management plans is inadequate. A comprehensive review and revision of the plans to reflect the new development is necessary. Without this mitigation, the impact determination after mitigation should be **significant and unavoidable**.

3.9-25- The DEIR states: “The UC Santa Cruz EOP outlines evacuation procedures for building emergencies (stage 1) and for campus-wide emergencies (stage 2).” However, the DEIR does not allow review of these procedures. Contrary to CEQA requirements that material cited in an EIR be available for public review, the document cited in the appendix is not accessible by the link provided. See screenshot image taken on 1-19-2021 below:

² <https://redd-monitor.org/2019/05/09/californias-lenient-leakage-accounting-means-that-emissions-reductions-from-forest-offsets-may-never-happen/>



Because of the importance of the provisions in the EOP, it was possible outside of the DEIR to track it down. The EOP (found by google search and linked [here](#)) does not include any details for procedures during an emergency. It includes management structures and identifies authority during an emergency only. Further, every “Annex” in the plan is currently under revision and no details are provided. The EIR must identify necessary revisions in the EOP in response to LRDP development and should include the policies for campus-wide evacuation.

Hydrology and Water Quality

- 3.10-11 – Moore Creek Watershed – The DEIR refers to the Arboretum Dam as shown on Figure 3.10-1. An east dam, West Dam, and Arboretum pond are also identified. However, the Figure didn’t seem to include the location of these facilities. Please clarify.

- The DEIR indicates that the Arboretum Pond was used as a water source by the City until 1948. If it still exists, could it be used to provide non-potable water for the campus?

- 3.10-33 – Impact 3.10-5 – Impacts on Karst Aquifer -The DEIR lists reasons why development under the draft LRDP could cause potentially significant impacts to the karst aquifer. However, it determines that these impacts would be less than significant in the north and central campus subareas due to existing Post-Construction Requirements. However, no evidence is provided documenting that these requirements successfully achieve their objectives. In fact, the DEIR indicates that UCSC is “considering” better evaluating the effects of these requirements. Given existing uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of the current requirements, a mitigation measure should be added to require the evaluation of the current requirements with performance standards mandating that, if necessary, additional actions be taken to ensure that the standards are met. Without this mitigation, the impact significance should be considered **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.10-36 – Mitigation Measure 3.10-5b – Groundwater Monitoring - The mitigation measure requires the reduction or termination of groundwater extraction if there is a “substantial” decrease in average base flows. This is inadequate. Without a quantitative definition of “substantial,” it will be impossible to determine when the implementation of this mitigation measure would be required. Without providing this definition, the determination of significance after mitigation should be **significant and unavoidable**.

- The DEIR states that UCSC will compare flows to historic spring discharge to determine impact. This is inadequate. Flow variation is significant, and therefore UCSC cannot guarantee that the metric used to determine impact significance is sufficient and captures all impacts.

Land Use and Planning

- 3.11-1 – Coastal Act – The DEIR states: “As UC Santa Cruz is a state agency, campus lands are not included in either of these general plans or LCPs. Nevertheless, UC Santa Cruz must comply independently with the requirements of the Coastal Act.” The EIR needs to clarify the relationship of the LRDP to the Santa Cruz County LCP. The County’s General Plan/LCP Land Use Map includes the Campus lands west of Empire Grade. Generally, once the Coastal Commission approves the LCP for a local jurisdiction these policies are applied to all future applications, including those of state agencies. Is consistency of the LRDP with the County’s adopted LCP required or do only Coastal Act policies apply?

- 3.11-2 – The EIR should make clear that the County of Santa Cruz General Plan is also its Coastal Commission approved LCP.

- 3.11-8 – Impact 3.11-1 – Conflict with Plans, Policies or Zoning - - The DEIR’s determination that the draft LRDP would not be in conflict with any local zoning is incorrect and inadequate.

- 3.11-11 – The DEIR states that the University, as a state entity, is not subject to municipal regulation. However, it is subject to state agency regulation, which the DEIR ignores. State law requires approval by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) before the City of Santa Cruz may provide extraterritorial water and/or sewer outside of its boundaries. The draft LRDP proposal to develop in the north campus subarea without LAFCO approval is in conflict with State law and policy.

- This section of the EIR must be revised to recognize this conflict with local and state requirements. Moreover, this conflict represents a potentially significant environmental impact, and a mitigation measure should be included requiring the University to receive LAFCO approval prior to expanding outside the City’s boundaries in the north campus subarea. Without these revisions the impact should be determined to be **significant and unavoidable**.

Noise

- 3.12-4 – The DEIR states: “Equivalent Continuous Sound Level (Leq): Leq represents an average of the sound energy occurring over a specified period. In effect, Leq is the steady-state sound level containing the same acoustical energy as the time-varying sound level that occurs during the same period.”

- 3.12-17 – Thresholds of Significance – The on-campus construction noise thresholds proposed in the DEIR are the following:

- “Daytime (8 a.m. to 10 p.m.) construction noise levels at or above 80 dB Leq at the on-campus noise-sensitive uses (e.g., student or employee housing).
- Nighttime (10 p.m. to 8 a.m.) construction noise levels at or above 70 dB Leq at on-campus noise-sensitive uses (e.g., student or employee housing).”

- These thresholds seem unreasonable in noise-sensitive areas where students are in class or residing. The EIR needs to provide evidence supporting these thresholds? Table 3.12-1 on page 3.12-2 provide examples of noise levels at these decibels:

- “Diesel truck at 50 feet at 50 miles per hour — 80dB — Food blender at 3 feet, Garbage disposal at 3 feet
- Noisy urban area, daytime, Gas lawn mower at 100 feet — 70dB — Vacuum cleaner at 10 feet, Normal speech at 3 feet”

- The determination that only average noise above these thresholds would constitute a significant noise impact near student housing and classrooms does not seem reasonable. They should each be lowered by at least 10 decibels.

- 3.12-18ff – Impact 3.12-1 – Construction Noise – The DEIR finds that the impacts of construction noise will be significant and proposes a variety of mitigation measures. Despite the implementation of all the proposed measures, the impact is determined to be significant and unavoidable. However, the mitigation measures are not adequate.

- 3.12-21 – Barriers are proposed under specific conditions “if deemed to be feasible and effective.” This measure is too vague to be adequate. Feasibility needs to be defined in terms of the potential reduction in decibel levels.

- In addition, no rationale is provided for allowing “daytime” construction to continue until 10:00 p.m. Most local jurisdictions limit construction activities to no later than 8:00 p.m. No evidence is included in the DEIR justifying daytime construction to 10:00 p.m. or nighttime construction at all. An additional mitigation should be imposed prohibiting daytime or nighttime construction after 8:00 p.m. at least within 440 feet of a sensitive receptor.

-3.12-22 – Significance after mitigation – The DEIR states: “Additionally, short-term lodging would be offered to residents if they would be temporarily exposed to nighttime interior noise levels that exceed the interior noise standard of 45.” The EIR should provide a full analysis of the impact of this mitigation measure that includes, but is not limited to, the impact on available short term housing options, the impact on student education, VMT, campus emissions, etc. Should students choose not to accept the offer of off-campus accommodation, the EIR should fully analyze the impact of exposure to significant noise on their ability to sleep (and the associated health impacts), study and succeed academically, long-term hearing impacts, etc.

- 3.12-22 – Significance after Mitigation – The DEIR states that the proposed mitigation measure “would limit the time periods during which construction activities in the vicinity of nearby noise-sensitive land uses would occur.” This is a misleading statement as nothing in the mitigation measure prevents construction from occurring 24 hours a day. Construction is only limited between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. “when feasible.” (page 3.12-21) The mitigation measures in the DEIR need to be revised and strengthened in order to meet CEQA’s requirements.

- 3.12-22 – Impact 3.12-2 – Construction Vibration – Again, the mitigation measure is inadequate. The operation of “construction activities that may require the use of vibration-generating equipment” should be limited to hours of 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. in addition to the other measures.

-The DEIR should fully analyze the impact of excessive noise on animal species, including but not limited to their migration patterns.

Population and Housing

- 3.13-3 – The DEIR recognizes the City of Santa Cruz code section prohibiting the expansion of water and services beyond its boundaries without the approval of LAFCO. However, this was not identified on page 3.6-16

(Impact 3.6-2 – Conflict with Policies) as a significant inconsistency with a local policy, notwithstanding the contracts signed by the City in the 1960s to provide these services.

- Measure U – The DEIR’s summary of the policies is so incomplete as to make it inadequate as a public information document. Measure U was not only approved by almost 77% of the City electorate but some of the policies directly relate to Objectives included in the Draft LRDP. The following Measure U policies should be included in the EIR and should be included in every section for which they are relevant, not only the population and housing section:

- “a. There shall be no additional enrollment growth at UCSC beyond the 19,500 students allowed by the current 2005 LRDP.
- b. If there is additional enrollment growth at UCSC, UCSC should house the net new growth of students, faculty and staff on campus.
- c. If there is additional enrollment growth, it will only occur when the on-campus and off-campus infrastructure (including on-campus housing) required to support the growth is provided prior to or concurrent with the growth.
- d. The University will legally bind itself to tie the provision of infrastructure to enrollment growth.
- e. A Capital Improvement Program identifying on-campus and off-campus infrastructure needs (including on-campus housing), funding and sources needed to carry out the proposed LRDP, shall be prepared concurrently with the LRDP.”

- 3-13-4 – Regional population growth – The DEIR includes population figures for the Santa Cruz County and its jurisdictions between 1990 and 2020 but doesn’t provide similar figures for UCSC growth. This should be included in the EIR as they would be a useful comparison when analyzing growth proposed under the draft LRDP.

- 3.13-5 – The DEIR recognizes that the extremely tight housing market in Santa Cruz County with available housing vacancy rate of about 1.9%. It also identifies UCSC one of the three major economic drivers “behind the tight housing market.” It summarizes that due to the summer wildfires and despite remote teaching at UCSC “a general housing shortage still exists.”

- 3.13-8 – Growth projections – The DEIR includes AMBAG population growth projections for the City of Santa Cruz and estimates a change from 2015 to 2040 of 29%. For a meaningful analysis of the impacts of proposed UCSC growth on the City, the DEIR should compare UCSC’s growth with the City’s over a similar time period. Based on the AMBAG estimates, the City’s growth between 2020 and 2040 will be about 20%. The EIR needs to provide a direct comparison of this growth with that proposed under the LRDP to adequately analyze the Plan’s significant impacts on Santa Cruz.

- 3.13-9 – Issues Not Evaluated Further – The DEIR argues that implementation of the LRDP would not “displace substantial numbers of existing people.” However, the DEIR only considers the potential displacement from on-campus students. This is inadequate because the DEIR does not consider the possible displacement of people living in the City of Santa Cruz resulting from enrollment growth should the University not meet the LRDP’s housing objectives.

- While an “Objective” of the draft LRDP is to house 100% of the new students and up to 25% of new faculty and staff on campus there is no binding requirement to make this happen. Moreover, there is no requirement that enrollment growth be tied to housing increases. Without mitigation measures requiring the proposed housing additions to occur in sync with enrollment growth, the determination that the draft LRDP will not displace people is unsupported by evidence and inadequate.

- 3.13-10ff – Impact 3.13-1 – Directly or Indirectly Induce Substantial Unplanned Population Growth and Housing Demand – On page 3.13-12 – Regarding the impact of the draft LRDP on off-campus housing demand,

the DEIR states: “Combined with the projected student demand identified above, the 2021 LRDP may result in an off-campus housing demand for 2,190 residential units within Santa Cruz County.” The DEIR doesn’t make clear that this impact assumes that 100% of the new students and up to 25% of the new faculty and staff will live on campus on the land “set aside” for housing. Again, given that there is no assurance such housing will be provided, the EIR needs to analyze the off-campus impacts should this objective not be met.

- The DEIR assumes that 100% of new students and up to 25% of new faculty and staff will be housed on campus by simply stating: “The 2021 LRDP **sets aside** an adequate amount of land for housing to accommodate 100 percent of the increase in student enrollment above 19,500 and for 25 percent of the increase in the number of employees, based on demand.” Again, setting aside land for the development of housing is not adequate justification under CEQA for not considering the impacts of the LRDP should the housing not be provided.

- 3.13-14 – Mitigation Measures – The DEIR states as a mitigation measure: “UC Santa Cruz **is planning** to provide at least 8,500 student housing beds and 558 employee residences under the 2021 LRDP,” and “UC Santa Cruz **anticipates** that it will be able to provide housing to all students projected under the LRDP and the impact associated with student housing demand is expected to be less-than-significant.” These are not adequate mitigation measures under CEQA because they do not change the project to reduce the potential impacts to a less than significant level (see Section 15370 of the CEQA Guidelines where mitigation is defined). And, in past LRDPs (the 1988 LRDP, for example) that contained significant on-campus housing goals without adequate mitigation measures, these goals were not realized.

In order to meet CEQA requirements for an adequate mitigation measure, the mitigation measure should read: “UC Santa Cruz shall provide at least 8,500 student housing beds and 558 employee residences under the 2021 LRDP and shall provide housing to all students projected under the LRDP.”

- The DEIR also recognizes (page 3-10) that enrollment growth will occur over time but doesn’t analyze the potential impacts of not directly relating the production of the on-campus housing to enrollment growth. It merely states: “On-campus student enrollment is projected to increase by an additional 9,482 FTE students by 2040–2041, which would equate to an average annual increase of 431 additional students (assuming student enrollment growth occurred linearly; in actuality annual enrollment growth (could fluctuate from year to year).”

Without a requirement that ties enrollment growth to the provision of on-campus housing, the proposed mitigation measure would not be adequate to reduce the potential impact to a less than significant level. Even with the mitigation measure proposed above, significant off-campus housing demand beyond what the DEIR anticipates would occur if there were long delays between enrollment growth and the provision of housing to serve it.

Therefore, the following mitigation measure should be added in order to reduce the potential impact of the proposed on-campus enrollment growth to a less than significant level: On-campus student housing beds and employee housing units shall be available within four years of enrollment growth in excess of 19,500 students.

There is substantial evidence that these proposed mitigation measures are feasible as based on the fact that the University has successfully complied with essentially the same conditions under the 2005 LRDP’s Comprehensive Settlement Agreement (Section 2).

- If the EIR does not include these (bolded) mitigation measures, the FEIR must include a detailed analysis of the impact that insufficient housing will have on students, including, but not limited to economic and financial

impacts, health (physical and mental) and sanitary impacts, traffic and VMT impacts, etc on additional populations, students, and the environment.

- The chapter on Population and Housing is inadequate because it does not analyze the induced off-campus impacts of the draft LRDP. The increase in campus population of over 12,000 people will, as documented in the Growth Inducing section of the DEIR, have a multiplier effect on jobs, population growth and housing off-campus. The University functions as a basic industry and, as stated earlier in the DEIR, is an important economic driver in the community. The financial impact of spending in the community by new students, faculty and staff will be significant. It will generate new jobs, population growth and housing demand in the community. These will create potentially significant environmental impacts that must be analyzed in the EIR. Additionally, according to the Systemwide Economic and Social Impact Analysis (2021) commissioned by the University of California, “every one job directly supported by General Campuses supports an additional 0.5 indirect and induced jobs”. The EIR needs to take into account the job generating impact of adding new staff at UCSC and the effect on the housing market.

Without this analysis, the DEIR is inadequate.

Public Services

- 3.14 – The DEIR analysis of the potential impact of the LRDP on public services assumes that the on-campus housing commitments will be met. This further supports the importance of the proposed revised mitigation measures in the Population and Housing chapter for the EIR to be adequate.

-3.14-2- Impacts on Police Facilities – The DEIR states, “...implementation of the 2021 LRDP could result in the need for additional sworn officers, dispatchers, and support staff...” To address this, the DEIR states, “Funding and planning for additional staff members is carried out through UC Santa Cruz capital planning process... Capital planning is a continuous and iterative process that evaluates capital needs identified and assess alternatives to meet such needs in the context of anticipated capital resources.” However, according to UCSC PD Chief Nadar Oweis’ comments in a 2016 City on a Hill Press article, “Six hundred fifty [extra] people on this campus is a lot of people. With the additional bodies on campus, UCSC PD has taken measures to maintain its presence, including having two extra officers earning overtime on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. I wish we had an opportunity to hire more officers,” said Oweis. “But I haven’t been given any more money in my budget to hire [them].” This article shows that with additional students present, UCSC has not always increased police presence on campus. But “the campus has also seen an increase in parking citations, thefts, roommate disputes and traffic incidents including hit and runs, said Oweis”. Given the history of inadequate funding, the EIR should include a detailed analysis of the impacts on students and their property should UCSC not allocate funding for additional police officers, as they have not in the past. Since there is substantial evidence that the proposed enrollment increases will generate the need to provide additional police services, the EIR should include a mitigation tying enrollment growth to increases in additional police personnel and all relevant public services.

- 3.14-10 – Mitigation Measure 3.14-1 – Require new fire equipment and construction to meet fire access requirements - This is an example of an adequate mitigation measure. The “shall” initiate operation of a new campus fire station if demand warrants it.

- 3.14-11ff – Impact 3.14.3 – Impacts on School Facilities – The DEIR is inadequate in the analysis of the draft LRDP’s potential impact on school facilities because it only considers the potential impact from faculty and staff school age children. Since many UCSC students also have school age children the potential impact from school age children of the 8,500 additional students living on campus needs to be analyzed.

- The DEIR is inadequate in its analysis of public service impacts of the LRDP by ignoring a potentially significant impact of the LRDP to public services. As a public agency, the academic and support services it provides its students are public services. Moreover, UCSC students are also members of the public. To the extent, then, that the University in implementing the LRDP provides the physical infrastructure to support increased enrollment, it is providing public services.

The DEIR analyzes the potentially significant impacts on the environment of providing this infrastructure necessary to implement the LRDP but does not consider the environmental impacts if the proposed facilities are not provided. The lack of this infrastructure would reduce the direct environmental impacts of the LRDP but it would cause indirect environmental impacts directly related to social and economic impacts for the newly enrolled students. There is a direct nexus between the lack of infrastructure and these social and economic impacts, and they need to be considered in the EIR and, if potentially significant, mitigated.

The 2005-2020 LRDP has constructed less than 7% of the physical infrastructure included in the Plan. As a consequence, there are overcrowded classrooms, inadequate faculty to student ratios, and insufficient staff support. This has caused significant mental health problems for students as well as negatively impacted their economic opportunities. Unless the 2021 LRDP provides the infrastructure included in the Plan, these social and economic impacts will be even more significant.

The EIR needs to analyze these potential impacts and, if it determines that they are potentially significant, propose feasible mitigation measures to reduce them. One such measure would tie enrollment growth to the provision of the infrastructure needed to support it. The language could be similar to the mitigation measures proposed in the Population and Housing chapter.

Recreation

- 3.15-12 – Impact 3.15-2 – Impacts on Off-Campus Recreation Facilities - The DEIR analysis of the potential impact of the LRDP on recreation assumes that the on-campus housing commitments will be met. This further supports the importance of the revised mitigation measures in the Population and Housing chapter for the EIR to be adequate. The DEIR estimates that 982 students will seek housing off-campus. If the “planned” on-campus housing is not provided, the off-campus demand on recreational facilities would increase by thousands of students.

- According to the DEIR – “... in recognition of the need for distributed recreational facilities to support increased housing throughout the campus, recreation and athletics facilities have also been included as a supporting use in the Colleges and Student Housing land use designation.” Without the inclusion of specific quantity of additional facilities that will serve additional students, it is impossible to evaluate the adequacy of the additional recreational facilities to serve proposed enrollment growth. All proposed recreation facilities should be specified in the EIR. Without the inclusion of these changes, members of the public are unable to evaluate the adequacy of the recreation infrastructure to support additional students.

- According to the DEIR – “Although on-campus recreation facilities are heavily utilized, substantial deterioration of those facilities is not apparent.” The FEIR should include evidence of this claim, or, if no evidence is available,

it should be removed. Contrary evidence to this statement is provided in a 2016 City on a Hill Press Article³ that says, “Finding money for all necessary maintenance is an issue.”

-3.15-12 - The DEIR states, “The construction of new facilities would occur when warranted by increased demand and when financially feasible.” According to a City on a Hill Press Article, “A lot of our buildings need some really serious repairs,” said Colin Allison (OPERS facilities and operations supervisor). Additionally, the article states, “Even with the Measure 64 and 65, student fees that passed last spring in the campus elections, the sheer amount of people seeking to use Office of Physical Education, Recreation and Sports (OPERS) facilities and services still poses a challenge — and expansion is not in the immediate future.”⁴ The DEIR should reevaluate the impact of additional enrollment on existing recreation resources in consideration of this evidence.

- Moreover, the DEIR inadequately determines, with no substantial evidence, that the imposition of the payment of in-lieu fees on off-campus new development sufficiently “addresses” the potential impacts.

There are two inadequacies with the DEIR analysis. First, students living off-campus in the locally tight housing market could simply crowd into existing units and thus, not generate increased park fees. More important, though, the DEIR does not consider whether existing fees are sufficient to provide the increased facilities needed to adequately meet the increased demand. No evidence is provided justifying the conclusion that in-lieu park fees will be sufficient to develop the additional facilities needed. There is not even an analysis of what additional facilities would be required. The EIR needs to provide a specific analysis of the recreational facilities required to meet additional off-campus demand resulting from LRDP growth and whether the fees generated from housing developments to serve this demand will be sufficient. Without these revisions the impact would be **significant and unavoidable**.

Transportation

- 3.16-30 – Impact 3.16-1 – Conflict with Plan - The DEIR determined that the impact would be less than significant based on the inclusion in draft LRDP of a number of road construction projects – the extension of Meyer Drive, the north entrance at Empire Grade, and the Western Drive Extension. This is inadequate because there is no requirement that these projects will be implemented. In fact, both the Meyer Drive extension and the northern entrance are included in the 2005 LRDP and have not reduced the impacts anticipated in that Plan.

The construction of these projects must be tied to enrollment growth and timelines provided for their completion. Absent these assurances, the EIR must analyze the potential transportation impacts under the assumption that they will not be provided. In addition, the DEIR analysis assumes that on-campus housing will be provided. Without the proposed additional mitigation measures to ensure the provision of this housing, the EIR must analyze the potential transportation impacts assuming that this housing will not be provided.

Without these assurances, the draft LRDP would not be consistent with the local general plans and the impact would be **significant and unavoidable**.

To justify a determination that the impact will be less than significant, the following feasible mitigation measure should be added: **The road construction projects proposed in the LRDP shall be provided in advance of or concurrent with the increased growth they are designed to support.**

- 3.16-33 – Impact 3.16-2 – Conflict related to Vehicle Miles Traveled - The VMT analysis in the DEIR is based on the assumption that the on-campus housing proposed in the draft LRDP will be provided. The DEIR, thereby,

³ <https://www.cityonahillpress.com/2016/10/21/the-overcrowding-problem/>

⁴ <https://www.cityonahillpress.com/2016/10/21/the-overcrowding-problem/>

finds that the residential VMT will be below the significance threshold. However, without the recommended mitigation measures to require the provision of the proposed on-campus housing, the DEIR is inadequate because there is no evidence that the proposed housing will be realized.

- As stated in the DEIR “The reduction in total campus VMT per capita is primarily related to the increase in available housing on campus which would reduce the number of per capita vehicular trips to and from the main residential campus.” The DEIR doesn’t calculate the VMT assuming the proposed housing is not built on-campus, but it is clear, that the VMT would greatly exceed the threshold of significance.

Without the recommended on-campus mitigation measures, there is no evidence that the performance standard of reducing the VMT below the threshold of significance can be met, even with the array of proposed mitigation measures, and the impact will be **significant and unavoidable**.

- 3.16-38 – Significance after Mitigation – The DEIR is also inadequate because it does not analyze the potential VMT increase due to off-campus induced growth based on the economic multiplier effect.

- 3.16-38ff – Impact 3.16-4 – Inadequate Emergency Access - The DEIR is inadequate in its treatment of this impact because it does not analyze the potential need for emergency access to serve the significant new development in the north campus subarea. The LRDP proposes new colleges and academic support facilities in this high hazard wildfire area but the DEIR does not mention the potential impacts on the provision of emergency access as a result of this development and provides no substantial evidence that emergency access will be adequate. The potential impact may be significant and, absent the required analysis and consideration of mitigation measures, the impact should be considered **significant and unavoidable**.

Utilities and Service Systems

- 3.17-5 – Santa Cruz Water Service Agreements - The DEIR discussion of the water services agreements with the City of Santa Cruz is misleading, incomplete, and inadequate. This analysis fails to serve as an adequate public information document.

- For example, the DEIR is misleading when it states: “The City has not confirmed its obligations and has taken the position that it is only required to provide water to areas of the campus within the service boundary unless otherwise approved under state and local law.” This is misleading because the City is prohibited under State law from providing water and service outside its boundaries without the approval of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

- The DEIR provides no information on the State law requirements that are under dispute. The University may not believe it is subject to the state law requirements but CEQA requires that the public be informed regarding the relevant provisions of state law.

- In addition, the DEIR neglects to mention or consider the Comprehensive Settlement Agreement provisions, adopted as part of approval of the 2005-2020 LRDP, that required the University to apply to LAFCO for the extraterritorial water and sewer services. Nor does the DEIR indicate that the University may be in violation of this Agreement by not fulfilling its obligations under its provisions. While the University did initially apply for the extraterritorial service, it never completed the process in good faith and allowed the application to languish at LAFCO for over ten years before LAFCO terminated it for lack of action. Without inclusion of this information in the EIR, the document is inadequate in its description of this issue.

- 3.17- 12 – According to the DEIR the City’s water demand in 2035 will exceed the water supply in 2035 by 40 million gallons a year (mgy) assuming a UCSC demand of 308 mgy. On page 3.17-15, the DEIR indicates that in

2018, the per capita water usage was 8,904.88 gallons per year for a total of 167.1 mgy, a slight per capita increase over 2017. On page 3.17-16, the DEIR indicates that the campus policy is to reduce water consumption 20% by 2020 and 36% by 2025 over the earlier average of 13,924 gallons per capita. This translates into a per capita of 11,139.8 gallons per capita in 2020 and 8,911.36 by 2025. If the campus consumption stays at the 2018 rate or decreases further, it will meet the 2025 goal.

- 3.17-19ff – Projected Water Demand - There appears to be an inconsistency in the demand figures in the DEIR that needs to be clarified. The total campus demand in 2018 (calendar year) is stated as 167.1 mgy. However, the table on page 3.17-21 showing 2017/18 demand lists the total as 154.5 mgy.

- In addition, the basis for the Projected 2040 Annual Demand on campus of 289.1 mgy is unclear. From page 2-10 the total campus population in 2040 under the LRDP is projected to be 35,174. Assuming the campus continues the per capita demand achieved in 2018 of 8,904.88 gallons per year this demand would be about 313 mgy, which is about 24 mgy more than projected. This totals a net increase in annual demand of 158.6 mgy. The DEIR provides no evidence supporting the 289.1 mgy estimate. The figures in the DEIR either need to be justified or revised as the difference of about 8% is not inconsequential.

- 3.17-22 – Impact 3.17-1 – Impacts on Water Supply - 3.17-23 Sufficiency of Supply – The DEIR uses its unsupported projection of increased water demand under the LRDP of 137.5 mgy in its analysis of the sufficiency of the City’s water supply.

- 3.17-23 – Table 3.17-10 – City projected supply and demand – The DEIR indicates that even in normal years in the City systems’ 2035 demand will exceed supply by 40 mgy. If this deficit carries over until 2040 and the UCSC demand is 24 mgy greater than stated in the DEIR, the water supply deficit in normal years will be about 64 mgy or 60% greater than projected. Again, the DEIR needs to provide evidence to support its analysis.

- 3.17-24 – The DEIR asserts that the 2021 LRDP water demand would be less than the UCSC projected demand in the UWMP. Without documentation, this finding isn’t supported by the evidence. The UWMP projects a UCSC water demand of 308 mgy by 2035. The analysis above, using 2018 per capita demand figures, indicates that the total demand in 2040 would be 313 mgy not counting the Coastal Marine Campus. UCSC demand, therefore, may exceed the City’s UWMP projection. The impact of LRDP growth on the City’s water supply may be more significant than indicated in the DEIR and, if true, the EIR should reflect this.

- The DEIR discusses the “dispute” with the City of Santa Cruz regarding provision of water and sewer service in the north campus subarea without discussing the State law requirements on the City to receive LAFCO approval in order to provide this service. Since the DEIR recognizes a “remote” possibility that the City will have to follow state law, it indicates that a number of alternatives will be analyzed, including the option of “curtailing” proposed LRDP development. Given the importance of the state law requirements, this DEIR decision is prudent.

-The EIR should include a full analysis of the impact of exposure to drought conditions, water scarcity, and rationing, including but not limited to health impacts, recreational risks, infectious disease, diseases transmitted to animals, food and nutrition, economic impacts, air quality, and hygiene⁵, etc., on the additional students, faculty, staff, and the entire population that exist within the City’s municipal services district.

⁵ Information taken from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/drought/implications.htm>

- 3.17-25ff – Alternative Water Supplies – The analysis of alternative water supplies is inadequate because it doesn't quantitative projections of the amount of water each of the options would supply and how these would impact future demand. For example, the discussion of the water recycling doesn't make clear that the project with the greatest potential to increase supply, which is under development by the Soquel Creek County Water District, would not directly increase the water supply to City customers.

- Also, while conservation has played the major role in reducing the threat of droughts to City water customers, it is questionable how much additional reduction in demand is possible through conservation.

- 3.17-30 – The DEIR states that “Because many (alternatives) of them are common supplemental supply sources (such as recycled water and more conservation), there is a reasonably high probability that the City will be able to successfully supplement its water sources.” The DEIR provides no quantitative evidence to justify this conclusion. And, given that, as stated above, neither recycling at this time or conservation in the future are likely to prove adequate. The EIR needs to provide data to support its determination.

- 3.17-30 – The draft LRDP and the Project Description chapter of the DEIR state repeatedly that development under the 2021 LRDP will occur “primarily” in the central campus subarea. Here, finally, the DEIR provides the data related to this: “Approximately **43 percent of housing and 8 percent of academic and support space** under the 2021 LRDP is estimated to be located outside the service boundary.” (i.e., the north campus subarea). This mean that 3,655 student beds are proposed in the north campus subarea. With 43% of the housing beds planned in the north campus subarea, it is incorrect and inadequate for the DEIR to assert that the central campus subarea will be the primary location of increased UCSC growth. This misstatement needs to be corrected.

- The DEIR considers groundwater as one alternative to supply water for development in the north campus subarea. The DEIR reviews a number of potential impacts of such a project but does not make clear that this analysis is presented on a programmatic level. No detailed project is described or potentially significant impacts on the hydrology of downstream springs identified. The EIR should clarify that any proposal to develop this alternative would not only be subject to “additional study” but to full environmental review.

- 3.17-32 – Air Quality with no north campus development – The DEIR states: “Thus, construction-related air quality impacts would be reduced compared to those under the 2021 LRDP.” Despite this finding the DEIR concludes that the impact will be “similar” to the draft LRDP. Why isn't it “Less impact”?

- 3.17-33ff – Population and Housing with no north campus development – The DEIR assumes that, although enrollment will be reduced, 100% of the additional students will be housed on campus and, thus, the impact will be less than significant. However, this will only be the case with the mitigation measures stating that the on-campus housing **shall** be provided and that it **shall** be tied to increases in enrollment.

- 3.17-34 – Transportation with no north campus development – The campus enrollment level would decline from 28,000 students by 3,700 to 24,300 students (over 13%) with a concomitant reduction in faculty and staff, as well as in induced growth. These reductions would all lead to decreases in VMT and it, therefore, incorrect for the DEIR to find that the impact would be “similar.” The evidence indicates that the impact will be less.

- 3.17-35 – Mitigation Measure 3.17-1b – Water Conservation - While the mitigation measure requires an audit that will include “top priority” measures for implementation within five years, there is no

requirement to implement these recommendations, only that “measures determined in cooperation with the City” be implemented. The EIR needs to explain why the mitigation measure shouldn’t require that the top priority conservation measures identified by the audit be implemented. As written, the mitigation measure is unclear regarding whether the cooperation with the City will lead to the implementation of the top priority conservation measures or simply that they be “addressed.” The performance standards for this deferred mitigation are inadequate and need to be revised.

- The potential impacts of not developing in the north campus subarea compared to the development under the draft LRDP is quite useful. This analysis should also be included in the Alternatives chapter as an additional feasible alternative to the draft LRDP. Though the analysis in the DEIR understates the number of impact areas where not developing in the north campus subarea would reduce the impacts, it determined that impacts overall would be less than if the area was developed as proposed.

Wildfire

- The determination that Wildfire impacts with no development in the north campus subarea will be similar to those with development in that subarea is incorrect and inadequate. 3,700 student beds are proposed in the north campus subarea which is part of a high hazard fire danger area. Eliminating development in the area that is most subject wildfire would clearly reduce the potential wildfire impacts of the LRDP. While the implementation of wildfire risk reduction and evacuation procedures would reduce the potential impact of wildfires somewhat, there is no evidence provided that this reduction would be similar to that of not building in this high hazard danger area.

- The 2021 LRDP EIR estimates that approximately 43% of the additional housing and 8% of the additional academic and support infrastructure will be located in a CALFire designated HFHSZ. This increases the risk of fire ignition, and, as a result, raises the risk of exposing residents, employees, and visitors to catastrophic wildfires.⁶ The FEIR must include a detailed analysis that quantifies the most serious health, air quality, greenhouse gas emission consequences of exposure of additional students, faculty, staff, and the entire population of the region to increased risk of wildfire.

- 3.18-6 – Regional Setting – Since the LRDP proposes significant development in the north campus subarea, which is located in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County, the EIR must include consideration of the provisions of the County’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

- 3.18-7 – Human Influence on Wildfire – The DEIR provides a strong rationale for avoiding development in areas prone to wildfire. It recognizes “increased development in the WUI” (Wildland Urban Interface) can influence wildfire.” In addition, the DEIR notes that humans are responsible for starting an estimated 95% of wildfires and, “Consequently, areas near human development generate fires at a more frequent rate than very remote or urban areas.” Also, the DEIR provides evidence that climate change has significantly increased the risk of wildfires.

3-18-8 – The DEIR identifies the following approaches for reducing wildfire risk: “some combination of hazardous fuel reduction projects, fire prevention planning, and fire prevention education.” However, the DEIR analysis is inadequate because it doesn’t consider an avoidance approach of not building in areas with a high risk of wildfires. Particularly, since the north campus subarea is located in such an area, the DEIR must consider the potential impacts of avoidance along with the others. The 2020 Lightning Complex fires were an example of the limitations of these other strategies. In addition, the proposed

⁶ [AG’s Office Motion and comments](#) (above)

approaches are inadequately vague and non-specific so it is impossible to evaluate the extent to which they would reduce the wildfire risk.

3-18-9 – The DEIR in its description of wildfire risks on campus states: “the northern portion of the campus is largely rated high wildfire severity” and Figure 3.18-1 shows the entire north campus subarea which is proposed to house 3,700 students as well as academic facilities is located in the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

- 3.18-13 – Impact 3.18-1 – Compatibility with Emergency Response and Evacuation Plans

- The DEIR’s analysis of the potential compatibility the LRDP on UCSC’s emergency plans focuses solely on short term construction and states: “there are no elements in the 2021 LRDP that would interfere with the emergency response and evacuation procedures set forth in the EOP (Emergency Operations Plan).” This finding is inadequate.

- Implementation of the LRDP will result in between 4,000 and 5,000 people, with 3,700 residents, occupying the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the north campus subarea. Unlike the 2005-2020 LRDP that proposed a loop road to serve proposed development in this area, the 2021 LRDP includes no additional new road access to the area. Moreover, the new roads proposed in the LRDP do not directly serve this area. If the adopted EOP and Emergency Evacuation Plan don’t specifically consider the need to respond to the increased fire danger to the occupants of this area, they must be revised and the LRDP is incompatible with them.

- 3.18-14 – Mitigation Measures - The DEIR only proposes a traffic management plan to reduce the short-term impacts. Unless the two plans include adequate consideration of the LRDP’s proposed development in the north campus subarea, the potential impact would be **significant and unavoidable**. Moreover, they would need to be revised even if, as mitigations, the revised plans would not reduce the risk to a less than significant level.

- 3-18-14 – Impact 3.18-2 – Wildfire Risk of New Development

- The DEIR finds that: “However, in the absence of an adopted Vegetation Management Plan, the wildfire risk associated with placing new development in close proximity to an HFHSZ and proposed changes in land use under the 2021 LRDP would be significant.” This determination is partially incorrect, incomplete, and inadequate.

- Proposed development in the north campus subarea would not be “in close proximity to an HFHSZ,” it would be located primarily within an HFHSZ.
- No evidence is presented to document that adoption of the Vegetation Management Plan by itself would adequately reduce the wildfire risk in the subarea.
- The DEIR fails to recognize that locating the development proposed in the LRDP in an HFHSZ by itself significantly increases wildfire risk.
- As documented in the DEIR: “the prevailing trend in California indicates an increase in the severity and frequency of wildfires over time as a result of climate change, modified vegetation regimes, and increasing human influence. Such trends are expected to continue and will pose an increasing threat to wildland areas... regardless of the actions that UC Santa Cruz takes in terms of the adoption and implementation of the 2021 LRDP.” These trends need to be recognized and included as important contributors causes of significant impacts of new development in the north campus subarea.

- While the DEIR recognizes that all the increased development proposed by the LRDP would increase the risk of wildfire, it doesn’t differentiate the degree of risk in the different risk zones or the implications

for public safety or wildfire danger of differences in these risks. This analysis should be included in the DEIR for it to be adequate.

- 3.18-16 – The DEIR argues that with the implementation of vegetation management measures in the north campus area “would likely result in reduced wildfire risk on the newly developed land.” However, no evidence is presented to support this “likely” conclusion.

- Moreover, the DEIR recognizes that “However, urban encroachment, especially in the northern portion of the campus, could lead to exposure of new development to increased wildfire risks.” This conclusion is disingenuous at best. How could housing 3,700 students and constructing academic facilities in a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone not result in an increased wildfire risk?

-According to the 2021 LRDP Draft EIR: “The increase in the campus population associated with the implementation of the 2021 LRDP, and the development of buildings to accommodate population growth, by the sheer probability of adding more people to the area, would increase the risk of wildfire on or near the main residential campus and Westside Research Park. Human-caused wildfires tend to be generated by activities such as debris and brush-clearing fires, electrical equipment malfunctions, campfire escapes, smoking, fire play (e.g., fireworks), vehicles, and arson.” Accordingly, from a wildfire analysis perspective, it is critical to analyze whether the Project itself—in its location and with its land uses, density, topography, etc.—increases the risk of wildfire ignition and spread. The EIR recognizes that “...[T]he wildfire risk associated with placing new development in close proximity to an HFHSZ and proposed changes in land use under the 2021 LRDP would be significant”.

However, the proposed mitigation measure does not include the necessary mechanisms that would reduce the risk of wildfire **caused** by the Project. The DEIR’s reliance on a Vegetation Management Plan does not fill this deficit. It provides a range of wildfire prevention and response strategies (or, mitigation measures) focused on reducing wildfire impacts **on** the Project. But this again skips the central requirement of CEQA— to analyze, disclose, and propose feasible mitigations of the **2021 LRDP’s impact** on wildfire risk.

- 3.18-17 – Mitigation Measure 3.18-2 – Vegetation Plan

- - The DEIR requires that a campus-wide vegetation plan be adopted that meets the requirements of State law within two years. The DEIR asserts that adoption of the plan the wildfire risk will be less than significant. However, no evidence is provided to document that such a plan would reduce the risk, especially in the north campus subarea, to a less than significant level and the performance standards for the Plan are inadequately vague. To what extent have such plans worked elsewhere? What is the factual basis for the conclusion reached? Without this documentation the potential impact should be considered to be **significant and unavoidable**.

Moreover, the DEIR is inadequate because it does not consider a potentially feasible mitigation measure of not developing in the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the north campus subarea. The Utilities and Service Systems chapter analyzed this option and found that in most environmental impact areas not building in the north campus subarea would reduce the impacts. It is likely that a more detailed analysis will show that, even with a vegetation management plan the wildfire risk to development in the north campus subarea will be significant. Not developing in that area clearly would reduce this risk to a less than significant level.

Cumulative Effects Analysis

- 4-40 – Transportation – Vehicle Miles Traveled – The analysis here is a clear example of the importance of the proposed mitigation measures in the Population and Housing chapter that would effectuate the LRDP commitment to house 100% of the additional enrollment on campus and tying this increased growth to the provision of housing. As documented in Table 4-4, Cumulative VMT in 2040 is projected to be 12.3 VMT per capita. Cumulative conditions with the 2021 LRDP will be 12.1 VMT per capita. This reduction in VMT from the LRDP results from the campus successfully meeting its housing commitment. Without the proposed mitigation measures the cumulative impact here and in other environmental areas would be **significant and unavoidable**.

Other CEQA Sections

- 5-1 – Significant and Unavoidable Impacts – the list of impacts in this section is incomplete. The comments contained in this letter provide substantial evidence documenting the need to include an increased number of significant and unavoidable impacts that will result from the implementation of the LRDP.

- 5-4ff – Growth Inducing Impacts – The DEIR recognizes that the campus growth proposed under the LRDP will induce economic and population growth off-campus and employs job multiplier, based on a 2019 UCSC study, of 1.23 to project that the 2021 LRDP could result in the indirect increase of an additional 3,568 job in the region (mostly in the City of Santa Cruz but also in the rest of Santa Cruz County).

- The DEIR finds that “the environmental impacts of that growth are not reasonably foreseeable and will be addressed in future environmental review under CEQA.” This is not correct or adequate. It is reasonably foreseeable for the DEIR to provide estimates of increased population growth and housing demand based on the projected induced growth in employment. In fact, the EIR analyzing the impacts of the 2005-2020 LRDP carried out such an analysis.

While the Growth Inducing Impacts section of the DEIR may not be the most appropriate place to analyze these potential impacts of this employment growth, CEQA requires that these indirect impacts be considered. The appropriate chapter to analyze these indirect impacts is in the Population and Housing chapter and it is not speculative to estimate the likely increase in population and housing demand resulting from this increase.

- There is substantial evidence in this DEIR that the 2021 LRDP is indirectly likely to result in an increase of 3,568 new jobs in the County. These jobs will create additional housing demand, which should be analyzed in the Population and Housing Chapter. The EIR will be inadequate without such an analysis.

Alternatives

- 6-1 – The DEIR quotes the CEQA Guidelines requirements for the analysis of alternatives, which includes: “a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain **most of the basic objectives** of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” The alternatives do not need to meet all the basic objectives.

- A related CEQA Guidelines provision includes: “the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of

the project objectives or would be more costly.” This provision is particularly important in considering the comments below.

- 6-2 – 6.5.2 - Alternative 2: Reduced UCSC Enrollment

- 5-13 - This alternative would reduce enrollment under the 2021 LRDP to 26,400 students with the same land use plan as proposed. The DEIR asserts that “this alternative would not provide the full additional capacity for 28,000 students, which is based on the state’s 2040 college enrollment projections; therefore, Alternative 2 would only partially meet Project Objective 1 which involves the accommodation of projected increases in student enrollment through 2040 based on statewide public educational needs.”

The DEIR provides no evidence to support the statement that enrollment growth to 28,000 students is based on the state’s 2040 college enrollment projections. None of the references listed in the DEIR seem to relate to this statement. Moreover, if the objective of meeting the referenced state projected need, the DEIR should have included the 28,000 number in the objective language.

Finally, there is no evidence in the DEIR documenting that the LRDP could not meet state’s projected enrollment levels in 2040 with a lower enrollment at the UCSC campus. It is not accurate or adequate, therefore, for the DEIR to assert that a lower student enrollment would only partially meet Objective 1.

- 6-17ff – 6.5.3 Alternative 3: Reduced Development Footprint - While this alternative would eliminate development in the north campus, it would not fully reduce the enrollment proposed to be served by development in that subarea and as in Alternative 2 enrollment would total 26,400 students.

- 6-19 – Ability to Meet Project Objectives – As with Alternative 2, the DEIR finds that the alternative would meet most of the project objectives but would not serve the project state projected enrollment needs and, thereby, would not meet objective 1. The objections to this determination are the same as listed above for Alternative 2.

- In addition, the DEIR finds that Alternative 3 would not meet Objective 3 which is to provide 2 additional college pairs.

- The DEIR determined that many of the impacts of this alternative would be similar to those resulting from the proposed project, some would be less, and one would be greater as a result of locating more development on the central campus.

- 6-33 – Comparison of Alternatives – The DEIR is inadequate in its comparison of alternatives. The CEQA Guidelines require that the alternatives to the proposed project meet most of the basic objectives and **substantially** reduce the significant environmental impacts of the project. The DEIR in comparing the alternatives merely states whether the impacts are lesser, similar or greater than the project. The EIR needs to indicate which impacts the alternatives would reduce substantially.

While the DEIR mentions, on page 6-34, that the impacts of Alternative 2 would be less than those in the 2021 LRDP, “it would not altogether avoid the significant and unavoidable with respect to” a number of impact areas. This is unclear and inadequate. To what extent would significant and unavoidable impacts be reduced to a less than significant level, even if they were not totally avoided.

The EIR should contain a chart comparing the alternatives that includes impacts after mitigation for each environmental factor.

- Additional Feasible Alternative - The DEIR is also deficient in its consideration of alternatives because it does not include the alternative discussed in Utilities and Service Systems chapter that is similar to Alternative 3 by not developing in the north campus subarea but eliminates the enrollment growth that would be served in that subarea. This is a potentially feasible alternative and should be evaluated.

Under this alternative, total enrollment growth would be reduced by 3,700 students for a total enrollment of 24,300 students rather than 26,400. By not forcing additional growth in the central campus subarea, as would occur under Alternative 3, the impact to the Historic District would be the same as with the 2021 LRDP. Further, the impacts in all the environmental areas would be similar or less than the 2021 LRDP and all the other alternatives except the No Project Alternative. While it might not meet Objective 1, CEQA only requires that an alternative meet “most” of the objectives and, also, as mentioned above, the DEIR provides no evidence that reduced enrollment at the UCSC campus wouldn’t meet state projections for enrollment growth. This alternative would also not meet Objective 3 to provide two sets of new colleges, but this objective is based on the assumption that enrollment would reach 28,000 students. With reduced enrollment, there may not be the same need for the additional college.

It clearly would be the environmentally superior alternative and as a reasonable alternative with substantially fewer impacts, it should be included in the EIR.

In conclusion, while the DEIR includes a great deal of important and relevant regarding the LRDP, as documented in this letter it is currently inadequate in meeting CEQA’s requirements.

Thank you for your consideration.

Morgan Bostic

*Advocate, Santa Cruz City-County Task Force on UCSC Growth Plans
101 Cooper Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
morgan.bostic@actonucscgrowth.org*

EIR Water Quality Comment - North Campus

Given the increased development and population proposed for North Campus, and the direct implications that these changes have on increasing the risk of wildfire, the 2021 LRDP EIR must evaluate the potentially significant indirect impact on water quality that could potentially occur as a result of wildfire in the subarea, which will be increased by the development and inhabitation of North Campus.

The draft 2021 LRDP proposes to develop 43% of the student housing and 8% of the academic and support space in North Campus, which is in a designated high fire hazard severity zone by the State. Because human beings are a primary cause of wildfire, the addition of a minimum of 3,700 people to this vulnerable area will dramatically increase the risk of wildfire in a region that was previously unpopulated. The EIR should also include an analysis and propose mitigations for reducing the impact of wildfire on the campus' water resources, particularly the San Lorenzo Valley Watershed.

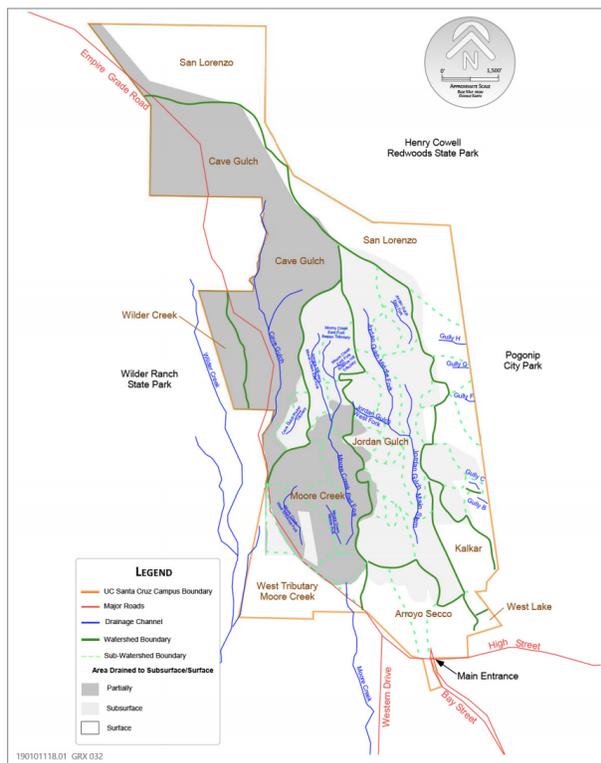


Figure 3.10-1 Watersheds and Sub-Basins on UC Santa Cruz Campus

3.10-8

UC Santa Cruz
2021 Long Range Development Plan EIR

As Figure 3.10-1 Watersheds and Sub-Basins on UC Santa Cruz Campus shows, the “...northeastern and eastern boundary of the main residential campus is drained mainly by a series of hillslope drainages within the San Lorenzo River watershed. In general, the San Lorenzo – Pogonip watershed drains much of the eastern portion of the main residential campus east of Hagar Drive from north of the Crown-Merrill Apartments south to the southern boundary of the campus and borders the City of Santa Cruz’ Pogonip Park to the east of campus.”

Additionally, “Eight sub-watersheds comprise the larger area that are associated with a number of west-east trending gullies (Gullies A through H) that drain to the east (see Figure 3.10-1).”

“ Gully H is located in the northeastern corner of the campus with an on-campus drainage area of approximately 40 acres. Existing UC Santa Cruz development that contributes runoff to this gully includes Crown Merrill Apartments, Crown College and three large parking lots. The erosion conditions previously documented in this Hydrology and Water Quality UC Santa Cruz 3.10-14 2021 Long Range Development Plan

EIR Water Quality Comment - North Campus

EIR gully include actively migrating knickpoints, incised channel, and eroding slope gullies. Concentrated runoff is the primary cause of these conditions (Kennedy/Jenks Consultants 2004).” Channel conditions in the San Lorenzo–Pogonip watershed vary from location to location but are in general fair to poor.”

After rains drenched the areas where the CZU Fire occurred, Boulder Creek residents experienced “their water running black for a few days and “ [f]or weeks, residents in Boulder Creek, Ben Lomond, and Felton were without drinking water. In some areas — particularly those close to Big Basin Redwoods State Park, and served by the smaller Big Basin Water District — residents didn’t get water back until early January.”

Fires leave behind, “an array of incinerated plastics, lead, pesticides and other toxic particles that have the potential to contaminate water supplies.” Additionally, “[b]urnt piping and equipment, as well as potentially contaminated supplies, were largely to blame for the water shortage.” Scorched landscapes, “ add to the risk of mudslides, blocking access for water district workers.”

In conclusion, the DEIR documents that the north campus subarea is in a State designated High Hazard Severe Fire Zone, that human activities in a high hazard fire zone increases the risk of wildfires, that 3,700 new student housing beds are proposed to be constructed in that subarea. The substantial evidence provided above documents that the north campus subarea is within the San Lorenzo River watershed and drains into the river and that wildfires in water supply watersheds potentially have significant water quality impacts. Therefore, the EIR must analyze these impacts and incorporate feasible mitigations, including not locating new structures in the subarea.

All information for this section is taken from the 2021 LRDP EIR and <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-02-13/wildfire-santa-cruz-boulder-creek-residents-fear-water-quality>

EIR Air Quality Comment - North Campus

Given the increased development and population proposed for North Campus, and the direct implications that these changes have on increasing the risk of wildfire, the 2021 LRDP EIR must evaluate the potentially significant indirect impact on air quality that could potentially occur as a result of wildfire in the subarea, which will be increased by the development and inhabitation of North Campus.

The draft 2021 LRDP proposes to develop 43% of the student housing and 8% of the academic and support space in North Campus, which is in a designated high fire hazard severity zone by the State. Because human beings are a primary cause of wildfire, the addition of a minimum of 3,700 people to this vulnerable area will dramatically increase the risk of wildfire in a region that was previously unpopulated. The EIR should also include an analysis and propose mitigations for reducing the impact of wildfire on the campus' air quality.

According to the California Air Resources Board, "Extreme fires are a growing threat to public health and safety, to homes, to air quality and climate goals, and to our forests. California is seeing fires that burn larger and hotter on average than ever before... Smoke from extreme fires can occur with little warning, and travel long distances and into urban areas many miles from the flames, negatively impacting public health and degrading quality of life."

Additionally, "Air pollution from fine particles, known as PM_{2.5}s, was already known to take four months off the lifespan of the average American." However, "After California's residents endured a month of orange-brown air filled with dangerous tiny particles, another set of Stanford researchers tracked dramatic increases in hospitalizations for conditions including strokes, heart attacks, and asthma. Bibek Paudel, a postdoctoral researcher at Stanford's asthma clinic, found that hospitalizations for strokes and related conditions increased by 60% in the five weeks after fires caused by lightning strikes began sending smoke around northern California last August. The number of pregnancies lost also doubled in the weeks after the fires – a startling finding that the researchers are still interpreting. Paudel also found significant increases in heart attacks and youth hospitalization for respiratory illness. "I don't think that people are aware of the long-term health effects of wildfire smoke," said Mary Prunicki, the director of research for Stanford's Sean N Parker Center for Allergy & Asthma Research."

Specifically, "[W]hen air pollution of tiny particles called PM 2.5 — for particulate matter 2.5 microns or smaller, so small that 30 of them can line up along the width of a human hair — increased modestly, the number of people admitted to hospitals for respiratory ailments like asthma increased by 1% on average. But when PM 2.5 levels from wildfire smoke went up by the same amount, or 10 micrograms per cubic meter, there was a 10% increase in those hospital admissions.

EIR Air Quality Comment - North Campus

The tiny particles can penetrate deep into people's lungs, enter the bloodstream and increase the risk of heart attacks, strokes and other serious health issues.”

In conclusion, the DEIR documents that the north campus subarea is in a State designated High Hazard Severe Fire Zone, that human activities in a high hazard fire zone increases the risk of wildfires, that 3,700 new student housing beds are proposed to be constructed in that subarea. The substantial evidence provided above documents that wildfires have substantial public health and air quality impacts. Therefore, the EIR must analyze these impacts and incorporate feasible mitigations, including not locating new structures in the subarea.

All information for this section is taken from the 2021 LRDP EIR and

<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/wildfires>,

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/19/wildfires-air-pollution-western-us#:~:text=Scientists%20from%20Stanford%20University%20and,gains%20in%20cutting%20air%20pollution.&text=Air%20pollution%20from%20fine%20particles%2C%20known%20as%20PM2>,

<https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2021/03/06/wildfire-smoke-up-to-10-times-more-harmful-than-other-air-pollution-new-study-finds/>