

November 4, 2004

Alison Galloway, Chair
Academic Senate Office

Re: CPB's Comments on the LRDP

Dear Alison,

CPB has reviewed the LRDP for 2005-2020 and appreciates the great effort that went into creating this document. We have also taken the opportunity to review supplementary information offered by the Office of Physical Planning and Construction (OPPC). We recognize that the LRDP represents a plan for the physical development of the UCSC campus, and is expected to show land use, landscape and open space, circulation and transportation, and utilities (including guidelines for implementation). [1] Accordingly, we first discuss these issues for the proposed enrollment of 21,000 students in 2020.

Our chief concerns about the draft LRDP can be summarized as follows:

- 1) We have reservations about the wisdom of extensive expansion of the campus to the north, based on concerns about campus sprawl and environmental impacts.
- 2) The LRDP does not adequately consider the impacts of off-campus development, such as at 2300 Delaware and Long Marine Lab, from a land use or traffic perspective.
- 3) Even if northern expansion were available, we are doubtful it will ever occur for academic buildings, given the availability of infill in the existing core, expansion of programs off-campus, and higher infrastructural costs in the north. However, under the draft LRDP, it may become imperative to build housing there.
- 4) The amount of employee housing appears inadequate, and its placement in the north renders it contingent on academic core expansion in this region, which may not occur. New employee housing should be located as close as possible to existing units or be situated in town.
- 5) The draft is too vague on the serious traffic issues both on campus and in the community to provide confidence that growth to 21,000 students is plausible. There should also be consideration of what a feasible traffic plan would be if northern expansion and the North Loop Road are built late in this LRDP, or never built.
- 6) The definition of CRL lands is too vague, and the amount of space devoted to CRL lands is too great.

Thereafter, we raise several questions with regard to the implementation of the plan, which are important to the ultimate success of the LRDP and to the campus's assessment of the enrollment target that it is based on. In our conversations about the LRDP, CPB repeatedly returns to the importance of our having a coherent campuswide academic plan to guide growth decisions. [2] Despite various reassurances that physical planning will never have precedence over academic planning, we are acutely aware of the absence of an appropriately robust academic plan as we grapple with LRDP issues. CPB cautions that the existence of this plan should not be used as a document to justify as a *fait accompli* the university having to grow to the proposed enrollment target.

1. Issues directly related to the LRDP:

The subsections here approximately correspond to the specific questions raised by EVC Delaney in her letter to you.

a) Land use plan: First, CPB recognizes the many uncertainties that constrain the level of specificity that can at this time go into the LRDP, and the desirability of maintaining flexibility. However, we are concerned that the report has little to say about off-campus properties, such as ongoing expansion at Long Marine Lab and 2100 and 2300 Delaware, let alone other projected space in Silicon Valley, which must factor into land use on campus. To assume that *all* growth necessary to support the target student population will occur on campus is so implausible - even in 2004 - that it makes the LRDP unrealistic. We strongly recommend that off-campus properties, and planned growth, be discussed in the report and explicitly integrated into the plan for campus land use.

Second, CPB is also concerned about the lack of clarity for the huge area designated Campus Resource Land (CRL). Although this designation existed even in the 1988 LRDP [3], its meaning has broadened substantially. Such a catch-all designation, covering such a large expanse, makes land use planning almost meaningless. Many of these spaces are located on areas of the campus that, if developed or built on in any way (e.g., roadways, water storage tanks) would have a major impact on university life, and the aesthetics of the campus (e.g., the space located in the Meadow and East Meadow). The report should concretely address CRL, with more details given about how each of the six designated CRLs may, or may not, be used. Explicit information about what events would "trigger" the development of CRL would be especially helpful. [4] We also recommend that Site Option E be removed from CRL, since it is acknowledged [5] as being "not a viable site", and Site Option F because of the substantial negative aesthetic impact.

Third, in the present draft of the LRDP, the calculations of Academic Core space required are based on 100% of the CPEC standards (and an enrollment target of 21,000). The plan assumes [5] that 80% of the additional space required will come from infill of the existing Core, which is equivalent to 90% of the CPEC standards for the 21,000 enrollment target. Our campus currently is at approximately 70% of the CPEC standard, and thus achieving 90% represents significant growth. Assuming that academic buildings will move north only after infill is complete, we have a very real possibility of *no* academic buildings in the north campus. Such a scenario represents a problem, because employee housing, which will be essential, is (along with some student housing) slated to be built in the north campus, with no good alternatives in the draft LRDP. [6] Building housing in the north campus without academic buildings will be unattractive on grounds of contiguity, and probably financially impossible. Therefore, CPB strongly recommends that, with academic buildings as planned in this draft, essential housing for employees and students should be moved south. (A natural location for new employee housing would be the present corporation yard.) If this is not possible, a redistribution of the new

academic buildings should be considered; the current plan which has essential housing and improbable academic buildings in the north campus, is unworkable.

The report also does not presently provide sufficient information as to how much of the growth in the Academic Core will be used to "catch-up" with existing and still developing academic and research programs, and how much will be used to accommodate new and expanding academic functions. A more realistic discussion of Academic Core growth (and support space) in terms of declining CPEC standards would be useful.

Fourth, the report plans for an additional 131 units of employee housing, at a proposed density of 9.4 units per acre. We understand that this is grossly inadequate according to the estimate of the Committee on Faculty Welfare, and that the density is substantially higher than that in existing and imminent employee housing (6-7 units/acre). In view of the "upper bound" estimates used elsewhere in the LRDP, it would be appropriate to plan a greater area of land for employee housing in the report.

Fifth, we feel the student housing in Colleges 11 and 12 should be integrated with academic space to maintain the academic role that our colleges have at present. For instance, the academic buildings planned to the north of Engineering could be mingled with Colleges 11 and 12. If large classrooms are planned in this (or any other northern academic area), careful consideration should be given to the traffic impact of students moving across campus from one class to another.

Sixth, CPB recognizes that the LRDP is organized around the assumption that the campus will grow to 21,000 students by 2020. But what if this level of growth did not occur? How would the plan look if only 50% or 70% of the growth were realized? What areas now currently listed on the plan would not be developed if the projected growth did not occur? For example, would certain roadways not be built? Would Employee Housing no longer be built up near the Cave Gulch neighborhood, and if not, where would it then go? Of course, future uncertainties make it difficult to answer these questions now. Nevertheless, CPB believes it is essential to have some sense of how the LRDP would generally unfold both as it progresses to 21,000 students, and in case the campus never reaches that size.

b) Infrastructure: Perhaps the most severe constraints that the campus infrastructure will face will be in the area of transportation, traffic circulation, and parking. In view of this, we have concerns about the lack of clarity on this topic.

First, what will the impact of the inevitable increase in traffic be on the neighborhoods adjoining the campus, and on the difficulty in getting on and off campus? Since there are no plans to increase the number of roads to campus, this can become a critical issue. In the supplementary information provided by OPPC, CPB has been provided with preliminary studies that address this question. We are pleased that the conclusion of these studies is better than one might estimate. However, we have not had time to scrutinize

these carefully, and will also need to see their detailed follow-up before we can reach any conclusion.

Second, what will the impact of growth be on traffic inside the campus? Even if the number of cars on campus is somehow restricted, interactions between cars and people at intersections can, and already have, created gridlock. How will this be dealt with for 21,000 students, especially at the known choke points on campus? How will the impact on Heller Drive (which will still handle the bulk of the traffic on the west side of campus) be managed? The plan talks about "innovative solutions" being required on McLaughlin Drive, and how Meyer Drive may or may not have restricted access. More detail about how the traffic *could* be managed - if not how it will be managed- is needed.

Third, the plan effectively proposes to move all commuter parking to the periphery of the Academic Core area. This will require an efficient transit and shuttle system. The plan does not provide any examples of how this might be organized.

We understand that some of these questions may be more appropriately answered in the Environmental Impact Report; we hope to be provided information while this report is being developed, before it is ready for public comment. However, with the information we have at present, we are unable to reach a conclusion about whether the LRDP adequately addresses infrastructure issues.

c) Campus aesthetics: The maps that have been provided to us, that show how the additional OGSF in the Academic Core and other parts of campus might be accommodated, show a high density of buildings along a swathe running from Engineering down to the Arts area, a comparable density in the Bookstore area, and a slightly lower density around College 9/10. CPB is somewhat divided in its reactions to this: the high density may be inevitable, in view of the desirability to have contiguous academic buildings. However, it should be clear that the current "feel" of the campus will be changed when buildings are so close to each other.

CPB is also concerned about the impact of new graduate student housing and family student housing on the north and south end of Porter Meadow. From the report, it is not clear to us that this will not degrade the experience of this region unacceptably.

2. General issues:

We wish to emphasize that CPB does not necessarily endorse the idea that the university can or should grow to 21,000 students. Apart from the physical plan itself, which we have discussed so far, our more general concerns are in two areas:

a) Financing: Although the LRDP does not discuss how the proposed growth will be financed, it is necessary to look into this question before the feasibility - let alone the desirability - of a 21,000 enrollment target can be determined. The points to address are:

i) How much state funding will this growth require? Is there any reason to expect that such levels of state funding will be obtained? In view of the inevitable uncertainty in this regard, it is essential that even the physical plan contained in the LRDP should state what physical infrastructure is needed as we *evolve* towards a final enrollment target, rather than only for the final figure (see end of Section 1a). Furthermore, the expectations for state funding should be clearly discussed with UCOP before the LRDP is implemented.[7]

ii) What fraction of the infrastructure costs will be borne by auxiliary enterprises, such as housing and transportation, where the funding is from user fees? Since the university has not had clear principles about items that are admissible in the auxiliary budgets, the temptation under financial pressure to pass on more costs to user fees is inevitable.

iii) How will the rents charged to students increase if so much additional housing is built for them on campus? Rents are already, especially for graduate students, almost unaffordable. There is no point in building housing on campus for 50% of the students if these will remain unoccupied due to high rents. And if this calculation indicates that less student housing should be built on campus, is it reasonable to expect housing in town to absorb the rest of the demand? Is it more cost-effective to create partnerships with private developers to build student housing in town (admittedly with possible traffic impacts), than for the university to build this on campus?

iv) Will the new employee housing be affordable by assistant professors and by staff employees? The housing that the university is planning to build at present (in Ranch View Terrace) is already beyond the reach of many employees. As with student housing, it is misleading for the LRDP to plan adequate employee housing unless it can also be affordable.

v) What will the construction costs for parking structures, and the growth in the general TAPS enterprise, do to parking fees? Again, will the plans in the LRDP be impossible to implement because of their impact on these user fees? Our preliminary calculations suggest that it is quite possible that parking fees could nearly double (in today's dollars) if the LRDP is fully implemented. If there is a lower target for increased parking, will it be practical to expect everyone else to use alternative transportation?

b) Academic planning: As CPB's response to the Strategic Futures Committee [6] explains, it is not clear that the enrollment target is either necessary or sufficient to achieve the academic goals of the university. Further, without careful academic planning, an increase in enrollment can actually hurt our progress towards our goals. Beyond the minimal conditions proposed by CPB earlier, [7] that growth should be conditional on available infrastructure and on the graduate/undergraduate ratio evolving appropriately. We believe that growth will only be useful if it is part of a comprehensive academic plan.

In conclusion, CPB commends the considerable effort that has been expended in creating the draft LRDP. We have carefully reviewed the document, and our concerns are discussed above. Apart from the physical plan contained in the LRDP, we believe it is essential to conduct financial analyses to assess the feasibility of the physical plan before the enrollment target of 21,000 can be determined to be feasible. It is also essential for academic planning to precede growth, without which growth can be detrimental to the campus. Accordingly, we have also discussed academic and financial issues in this letter.

[1] As per the UCOP Facilities Manual.

[2] CPB report AS/SCP/1430-1, Report on the Strategic Futures Committee/ Long Range Development Plan Process and the Future of Enrollment Growth at UCSC.

[3] See <http://ppc.ucsc.edu/cp/planning/lrdp/graphical/lrdp/principles.html>:

“Campus Resource Land... may be developed in the future but is to be maintained almost entirely in its natural state under this LRDP.”

[4] We understand from our discussions with OPPC that this land is intended to be used for student or employee housing, to be used in case the need for housing exceeds what can be accommodated in the land identified for this purpose by the LRDP.

[5] <http://planning.ucsc.edu/lrdp/cmtc/Mtgs/04-10-19/sitecapacity.pdf>

[6] CRL Site Options A and B are in the coastal zone, D is too far from campus, and we have already discussed E and F. Site Option C is where employee housing is located in the draft LRDP.

[7] See CPB report AS/SCP/1373 on Campus Enrollment Growth and Infrastructure, including Appendix I.

Sincerely,



Paul Koch, Chair
Committee on Planning and Budget

cc: CAAD Chair Pandey
CAFA Chair Coe
CEP Chair Hughey
CFW Chair Anderson
COR Chair Aissen
COT Chair McDowell
GC Chair Schumm