



**ECOS**  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
♦ COUNCIL ♦  
OF SACRAMENTO

Post Office Box 1526 • Sacramento, CA • 95812 • (916) 444-0022

March 10, 2020

Matt Dulcich, AICP  
Director of Environmental Planning  
University of California Davis  
environreview@ucdavis.edu

Dear Mr. Dulcich,

**RE: NOP of a DEIR for UCD's Sacramento Campus 2020 LRDP Update**

This letter provides comments from the Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS) on the Notice of Preparation of a Draft (NOP) Environmental Impact Report for the University of California Davis Sacramento Campus 2020 Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) Update.

ECOS is a 501(c)(3) public benefit nonprofit corporation dedicated to protecting the natural resources of the greater Sacramento region while building healthier, more equitable, economically thriving communities. ECOS member organizations include: 350 Sacramento; Breathe California Sacramento Region; Friends of Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge; International Dark-Sky Association; Los Rios College Federation of Teachers; Physicians for Social Responsibility, Sacramento Chapter, Sacramento Citizens' Climate Lobby, Sacramento Electric Vehicle Association, Sacramento Environmental Democrats, Sacramento Housing Alliance, Sacramento Natural Foods Coop, Sacramento Audubon Society; California Native Plant Society, Sacramento Valley Chapter; Sacramento Vegetarian Society; Save Our Sandhill Cranes; Save the American River Association; Sierra Club, Sacramento Group; Friends of Swainson's Hawk; and Sacramento Area Creeks Council.

Our primary concern is that the planned expansion of UCD's Sacramento Campus, including Aggie Square, does not cause displacement of low-income residents in the surrounding neighborhoods. The NOP states that a projected increase of 5,572 in Campus population (enrollment and employment) is expected, while only 200 housing units are planned. An excess of 5000 enrolled or employed on campus will inevitably either have an adverse impact on housing in proximity to campus, or an adverse impact on local and regional transportation if that population is not living in proximity to Campus.

The potential risks of displacement, housing impact, and vehicle miles travelled (VMT) impacts must be analyzed and mitigated appropriately. These concerns and potential mitigations are explained in greater detail by separately submitted comments on this NOP

by our member organization, Sacramento Housing Alliance (SHA). ECOS incorporates SHA's comments here by reference.

There are currently multiple overlapping planning efforts on the Stockton Boulevard corridor, including both land use and transportation development. UC Davis's LRDP EIR should demonstrate coordination with these other planning efforts. On transportation VMT impacts specifically, mitigations to consider include:

- 1) no-cost transit passes for your lowest paid staff who will utilize the development so as to encourage use of light rail, as well as electric shuttles for commuting staff to use -- to minimize additional vehicle miles traveled and the concomitant greenhouse gases.
- 2) funding to the Sacramento Regional Transit Authority (RT) to operate more frequent transit around the times shifts usually change.
- 3) funding to allow RT to build Bus-Rapid-Transit (BRT) along Stockton Boulevard.

As to the physical construction of the campus itself, we are concerned that the project be built not only in compliance with existing codes, but also with even more Earth-friendly materials in an Earth-friendly manner when there is not an appreciable cost increase for so doing. Light pollution should be considered and mitigated by use of downward focused, wildlife (and human) friendly lighting. We believe all landscaping should be done with California Native Plants. It is best for the Earth and building inhabitants if there is much foliage involved, but there need not be grass. Shade trees are likewise extremely important, with multiple co-benefits to individual and community health.

Since the development will inevitably affect residents of the surrounding neighborhoods, ECOS would like you to consider entering into a Community Benefits Agreement that could, among all discussed above, also increase the percentage of Medi-Cal patients you serve and perhaps provide funds for improvements to the surrounding neighborhoods. Other community benefits should include (a) inclusive economic development: supporting local businesses and hiring local workers, and (b) workforce development and education: vocational training and mentoring local workers, helping them with transportation, childcare, regular work schedules, and career-ladder programs for entry-level workers.

UC Davis has an opportunity to *lift up* rather than *disrupt* the Sacramento Campus's surrounding community. Investment alone is not enough; these major investments must be coupled with anti-displacement strategies to ensure that existing residents will equitably reap the benefits of these improvement. We hope you seize this opportunity to demonstrate what a true relationship between the University and the community can bring.

Yours very truly,



Ralph Propper, ECOS President