

# County supervisors call for more on-campus housing

By Anne Ternus-Bellamy From page A4 | June 16, 2017

Yolo County supervisors have thrown their support behind the city's request that UC Davis revise its draft 2017-2027 Long Range Development Plan to ensure that more students are housed on campus over the next decade.

The Board of Supervisors earlier this month voted unanimously in favor of a resolution calling on the university to house all enrollment growth over the next decade and no fewer than 50 percent of Davis-based students on campus.

UC Davis currently houses 29 percent of students on campus, according to county staff. But with housing in short supply in Davis — and affordable housing in even shorter supply — students are forced into cramped conditions or into living farther from campus, impacting the whole county, Supervisor Jim Provenza said.

“It starts with Davis, where the impact on students because of the lack of housing creates a situation where people can't afford to live there, and if they do live there, they're quadrupled up in very small apartments — some legally some not legally. But it's a very desperate situation,” he told colleagues.

“(S)tudents are being pushed further and further from campus. It's an impact on the communities and an impact on the students, as well as the employees of the university.”

Under the draft LRDP unveiled earlier this year, UCD would house 40 percent of students and 90 percent of enrollment growth on campus. But supervisors say those numbers are insufficient given the university's obligation to increase enrollment at the same time under orders from the state.

“My concern at being at 29 percent and setting a goal of up to 40 percent is that with the population growth that's projected, we're going to have more of a problem rather than less,” Provenza said.

“More students seeking housing in total numbers in the city and the outlying communities than now. The 50 percent is a reasonable goal. Most of the other (UC campuses) have set that goal and it's not just a goal ... it's the standard.”

Supervisor Don Saylor, whose district includes UC Davis, agreed with Provenza's assessment.

“I have numerous interactions with students and there's some significant challenges they're facing,” Saylor said. “They're doubling, tripling up, occupying six people in a three-bedroom house or even more. ... Those have impacts on the community around them and the students as well.”

“But that’s just a nicety,” he continued. “Some students can’t afford the prices. We’re pricing some people out of the ability (to attend the university). We have a shared responsibility on this issue.

“I see this resolution as a milepost,” Saylor added. “It’s not the end of the conversation, it’s not the beginning of the conversation, but we need to support the City Council resolution.”

A number of local residents spoke in support of the county resolution when it came before the board earlier this month, including former Davis Planning Commissioner Eileen Samitz, who said UCD’s 40-90 plan “will not resolve the student housing problem that UCD has created.”

“The plan is seriously deficient,” Samitz said. “There is clearly a need for action not only by the city of Davis but also by the county.”

Speaking on behalf of the university were Marj Dickinson and Matt Dulcich, both of whom described the draft LRDP as a work in progress.

“There is a housing crisis in Davis, no question about it,” Dickinson said.

The university is under “very strong encouragement from the Legislature” to grow, she noted, and continues to work on how to accommodate that growth.

“We are still working, still sharpening our pencils to see what we can do to get beyond the (40-90),” Dickinson said, adding that “this housing crisis needs all jurisdictions at the table.”

“We are not here to challenge (the resolution),” said Dulcich, who also described the LRDP as a work in progress and added that the university would be “excited” to work with the county further.

Meanwhile, the city of Davis is undertaking its own study of the LRDP’s potential impacts on Davis, including on traffic corridors.

Dulcich said an environmental impact review for the LRDP will be circulated early next year and a final vote on the plan by the regents is expected next spring.

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