

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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W17b

6-22-1034 (UCSD Ridge Walk Living and Learning Neighborhood)

May 10, 2023

CORRESPONDENCE



CAMPUS PLANNING

9500 GILMAN DR, # 0982
LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA 92093-0982

May 1, 2023

California Coastal Commission
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108

Subject: UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project – Community Support Letters

California Coastal Commission:

The UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project would provide new affordable housing options on campus and expand the living-learning model to reach more students. The project is widely supported by campus groups, the community, elected officials, and local and regional agencies. Please refer to the enclosed memorandum that outlines the public outreach and community engagement process the university undertook for the project. Also included are seven support letters sent to the UC Regents by the San Diego Chamber of Commerce, City of San Diego District 5 Council Member, City of San Diego, San Diego Association of Governments, Chancellor's Community Advisory Board, UC San Diego Associated Students, and community member.

We appreciate your consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Clossin".

Robert Clossin
Director, Campus Planning
UC San Diego

Enclosed:

UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Public Outreach and Community Engagement Summary, including attachments (community support letters)

**UC SAN DIEGO – RIDGE WALK NORTH LIVING AND LEARNING NEIGHBORHOOD (RWNLLN)
PUBLIC OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY**

Document Contents:

- 1) Overview of Project Public Outreach and Community Engagement
- 2) Attachment A – RWNLLN Project Support Letters (7 Total)

1) Overview of Project Public Outreach and Community Engagement

Community engagement is an integral part of UC San Diego’s project development process. The following summarizes the outreach and engagement efforts for the RWNLLN project and includes project support letters for this critical housing project.

BACKGROUND: Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) outreach efforts date back to fall 2016 and community engagement was provided through the formation of the Community Advisory Group (CAG). In addition, informational materials and updates were regularly shared with the local and broader San Diego community. The University hosted several community open houses, and provided updates and presentations to various communities, local groups and neighbors in La Jolla and University City.

The RWNLLN project was envisioned and planned for in the 2018 LRDP, for which extensive internal and external outreach was conducted. Section 1.5 of the 2018 LRDP EIR includes a summary of the community and campus outreach effort conducted for the 2018 LRDP, of which the Project is, in part, implementing. In addition, the university regularly works closely with the local community and civic groups to provide updates on campus programs as well as implementation of the 2018 LRDP.

PROJECT OUTREACH: Information on the Project has been shared with the local community including the La Jolla Community Association and the University Community Planning Group, as well as the Chancellor’s Community Advisory Board, local elected officials and various other community leaders and external facing campus groups. On February 3, 2023, UC San Diego hosted an open house for elected officials at the UC San Diego’s Epstein Family Amphitheater during which current and upcoming campus development projects, including the proposed Project, were presented to various elected officials and public agency staff of the San Diego region. In addition, on February 27, 2023, UC San Diego held a Community Open House event wherein the Chancellor provided a comprehensive campus presentation that showcased amongst other items the status of the campus’ capital improvements program, including the proposed Project. Members of the surrounding communities were invited to learn about the campus and interact with UC San Diego staff.

A Project website was also developed and shared with the community. The website includes project information and a robust Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page

<https://plandesignbuild.ucsd.edu/projects/current.html#Ridge-Walk-North-Living-and-Lea>.

Overall, the 2018 LRDP and RWNLLN project have received broad support from the larger community, students, local agencies and organizations, university neighbors, American Medical Response, elected officials and the City of San Diego who acknowledge the university’s efforts to provide additional on-campus housing while balancing community/campus interests (see attached support letters).

2) Attachment A: RWNLLN Project Support Letters

1. Jerry Sanders San Diego Chamber of Commerce
2. Kent Lee – City of San Diego District 6 Council Member
3. Chris Nielsen – University City resident and CCAB Member
4. Heidi Vonblum – City of San Diego
5. Coleen Clementson – SANDAG
6. Cristina Chiriboga Hahn – Chancellors Community Advisory Board
7. Sky Yang – Associated Students at UC San Diego



402 West Broadway, Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92101-3585
p: 619.544.1300

www.sdchamber.org

March 6, 2023

Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff to the Regents
1111 Franklin St, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

RE: Support for UC San Diego's Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood

Dear University of California Board of Regents,

On behalf of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, I am writing in support of UC San Diego's Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project. This project will improve the higher education experience for UC San Diego students and will provide them with greater housing accessibility and options.

As the largest local chamber on the west coast representing approximately 2,500 members and an estimated 300,000 jobs across the region, we are committed to making San Diego the best place to work and live. The Chamber strives to help make the San Diego region among the nation's best for students to study, live, and contribute to the regional economy.

This project will provide 2,444 beds for undergraduate students, thereby enabling the university to house more students on campus and meet its undergraduate 4-year housing guarantee. Furthermore, the construction of the Ridge Walk project will free up housing units in the San Diego region as students move onto campus. As you know, San Diego is experiencing a major housing shortage that has driven up prices drastically. Therefore, the Ridge Walk project will significantly benefit both students and the surrounding area.

The San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce encourages the UC Board of Regents to vote in favor of this project and encourages other UC campuses to follow suit. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Evan Strawn, Policy and Economic Research Assistant, at estrawn@sdchamber.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Sanders', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jerry Sanders
President & CEO
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
COUNCILMEMBER KENT LEE
SIXTH DISTRICT

March 6, 2023

Dear University of California Regents,

I am writing this letter in support of UC San Diego's Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project. This project provides 2,444 beds for undergraduate students enabling the campus to house more students on campus and meet its undergraduate 4-year housing guarantee.

This project will improve the higher education experience for UC San Diego students and will provide them with a full college experience.

I would love to see the UC Regents vote in favor of this project and encourage other UC campuses to follow suit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kent Lee".

Chris Nielsen
4225 Caminito Cassis
San Diego CA 92122

March 4, 2023

Dear Regents of the University of California

*Subject: UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood
Project Support Letter*

As a long time, local community member and a member of the UC San Diego Chancellor's Community Advisory Board and the UC San Diego Community Advisory Group, a UC San Diego alumnus (BA, 1974, MA 1977), and a former UC San Diego Staff member, I write in support of the UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project.

This Project includes the following elements that are especially important both for the continued growth of UC San Diego and the student experience:

- Undergraduate housing consisting of 2,444 beds at a central location on the west campus.
- New academic space and housing gives a small college feel.
- Designed for students without cars: a 15-minute walk to the Central Campus Trolley Station and very frequent bus service.
- Convenient retail and dining amenities.
- Recreation and open space are close by.

No issue is more important to both the University and the community than housing for students. Students who cannot be accommodated in campus housing must find it in a community where housing is scarce and expensive, competing with others who desire rental housing. The University City community is one of the largest employment centers in the City of San Diego. An increase of 2,444 beds that enables students to live in on-campus housing directly relieves housing pressure on the surrounding community.

Approval of this project by the Regents is an important element in helping UC San Diego achieve a four-year housing guarantee for undergraduates and meeting its goal of providing on-campus housing for approximately 65% of all students by 2030.

Sincerely,



Chris Nielsen
858-663-0186
cn@adsc-xray.com



Planning Department

March 9, 2023

Heidi Vonblum
Planning Department
9485 Aero Dr, M.S. 413
San Diego, CA 92123

Subject: City of San Diego Support of the University of California San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project

Dear University of California Board of Regents,

On behalf of the City of San Diego Planning Department, I submit this letter of support for the UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project, which will be before the UC Board of Regents for review and approval at their March hearing.

The City of San Diego and UC San Diego have a history of strong collaboration. The City's General Plan growth strategy focuses new development into areas of housing and employment, served by high frequency transit. UC San Diego students are pressed to find housing option in the University Community area and adjacent communities due to the high housing demand and rents. As such, this project is beneficial to both the campus and the community by providing quality housing for students on campus.

The City of San Diego supports the UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood smart growth project which will provide housing for over 2,400 undergraduate students in proximity to the Central Campus Trolley Station. The project also provides much needed academic space, classrooms and student support facilities in a mixed-use development. The project aligns with the City of San Diego's vision for a more sustainable region. By developing below-market rate student housing on the UC San Diego campus near transit, student services, on-campus dining and other amenities, the number of students commuting to and from the campus by car will decrease. The project will be accessible by transit, meaning students that commute to campus can also arrive without a car. This reduces local and regional traffic, as well as resulting greenhouse gas emissions. UC San Diego's implementation of its 2018 Long Range Development plan through exemplary smart growth projects like the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood is continuing to provide solutions to the lack of housing and traffic congestion in the region, while also helping to address climate action goals.

On behalf of the City of San Diego, I respectfully request that the UC Regents support the efforts of the UC San Diego campus that are evident through the sensitive and thoughtful design of the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heidi Vonblum".

Heidi Vonblum
Planning Director



March 9, 2023

Subject: SANDAG Support of the University of California San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project

Dear University of California Board of Regents:

On behalf of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), I submit this letter of support for the UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project, which will be before the UC Board of Regents for review and approval at their March hearing.

SANDAG and UC San Diego have a history of strong collaboration, including a partnership to work together to plan for and successfully build the \$2 billion Mid-Coast Trolley line, which extended the Trolley service from Downtown San Diego to UC San Diego and other major activity centers. Two of the Trolley line's stations are located on the UC San Diego campus, improving access to growing employment, education, and residential areas, and providing a vast improvement to mobility within the region.

SANDAG supports the UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood smart growth project which will provide housing for over 2,400 undergraduate students in proximity to the Central Campus Trolley Station. The project also provides much needed academic space, classrooms, and student support facilities in a mixed-use development. The project aligns with SANDAG's vision for a more sustainable region. By developing below-market rate student housing on the UC San Diego campus near transit, student services, on-campus dining and other amenities, the number of students commuting to and from the campus by car will decrease. The project will be accessible by transit, meaning students that commute to campus can also arrive without a car. This reduces local and regional traffic, as well as resulting greenhouse gas emissions. UC San Diego's implementation of its 2018 Long Range Development plan through exemplary smart growth projects like the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood is continuing to provide solutions to the lack of housing and traffic congestion in the region, while also helping to address climate action goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this project. If you have any questions, you may contact me at Coleen.Clementson@sandag.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Coleen" followed by a horizontal line.

Coleen Clementson
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

RCL/



Cristina Chiriboga Hahn, MA '73, PhD
Chancellors Community Advisory Board | Executive Committee
2332 Crescent Drive, San Diego, CA 92103-1012

Friday, March 10, 2023

Dear University of California Board of Regents,

As part of the Chancellor's Community Advisory Board (CCAB), the group advises the chancellor concerning the university's leadership and partnership roles in the community and supports the formulation and execution of advocacy plans and programs related to the positive impact UC San Diego has on the region's development and progress.

The group meets on a regular basis and is kept abreast on important matters associated with the UC San Diego campus. The proposed Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood is yet another example of living and learning neighborhood that includes a wholistic approach to the undergraduate students live-learn college experience and promotes a sense of community and belonging that is vital to the physical and emotional growth of young and aspiring students.

The CCAB is in full support of this project and commend UC San Diego and its leadership to their forward-thinking approach of providing on-campus housing with a goal of housing 65% of students in on-campus housing. This project is beneficial to both the campus and the greater community. Given the current housing crisis, it not only provides on-campus housing, but also frees up housing in the local market, helps lighten traffic on adjacent roads and provides students with a live-learn college experience.

The CCAB looks forward to the Regents support of the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood.

Thank you for all you do and your commitment to the University of California System!

Sincerely,

Cristina Chiriboga Hahn

Cristina Chiriboga Hahn, MA '73, PhD
Chair of the Chancellors Community Advisory Board



March 10, 2023

Associated Students of UC San Diego, Office of the President Support of Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project

I am writing to express my strong support for the UC San Diego Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project and to request that the University of California Board of Regents prioritize this important initiative. The project is critical to ensuring our students have access to affordable on-campus housing and positive college experiences.

As you know, off-campus housing can be prohibitively expensive and lacks the same sense of community as on-campus housing. The Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project will provide 2,444 beds for undergraduates, allowing the university to fulfill its 4-year housing guarantee for undergraduates. This project will also create a smaller college community within the larger research university, benefiting undergraduates in numerous ways.

The central location of the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood will be especially beneficial to students without cars, as it is situated on the West Campus and easily accessible from the Central Campus Trolley Station, less than 15 minutes away by foot. Furthermore, this project will help alleviate the housing crisis affecting the entire region, directly benefiting UC San Diego undergraduates who often struggle to find affordable off-campus housing.

Given these factors, I urge the UC Regents to prioritize the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood Project. By expanding opportunities for integration into the academic and social life of the UC San Diego campus, we can attract and retain more students by providing affordable on-campus housing.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sky Yang

President of the Associated Students at UC San Diego



ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR
HOUSING* DINING* HOSPITALITY SERVICES

9500 GILMAN DRIVE DEPT 0383
LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA 92093-0383

April 20, 2023

California Coastal Commission:

I, Hemlata Jhaveri, in my role at UC San Diego lead and manage the UC San Diego campus housing and dining program and write to share background information on our program and the housing of graduate and undergraduate students in campus owned facilities to help provide perspective on the need for additional housing beds proposed with the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning project.

The shortage of available and affordable housing for UC San Diego's students is a matter of urgent concern. At present, UC San Diego has tremendous demand for on-campus housing, exacerbated by its location in one of the highest-priced housing markets in the state. This shortage negatively affects the student experience and challenges the campus's ability to serve its students adequately. Affordable on-campus housing aids in the recruitment and retention of students and supports their success by expanding opportunities for integration into the academic and social life of the UC San Diego campus.

There are three key drivers for the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood project:

1. Provide affordable on-campus housing
2. Campus goal to provide a four-year housing guarantee
3. Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) goal to house 65 percent of students on campus

Provide Affordable On-Campus Housing

The shortage of affordably priced rentals in the surrounding San Diego (private market) community strongly drives the demand for on-campus housing. UC San Diego is located adjacent to La Jolla and University City, where housing costs are higher than the regional average. Nevertheless, significant numbers of students reside in these neighborhoods.

The campus has committed to maintaining rental rates at least 20 percent below the private market rate in greater San Diego and 30 percent below the private market in La Jolla/University City for all new proposed on-campus housing. On-campus rates are uniform across all units; two undergraduate students sharing a bedroom on campus pay the same rate, regardless of which campus housing facility they live in.

Off-campus leases require one-time, upfront fees for rental applications (including a credit check), and rental and utility deposits, increasing the total annual cost for the off-campus rate listed below. Students who live off campus may also choose to own a vehicle and purchase a campus parking permit, further increasing their annual expenses and placing further demand on the campus's limited

parking supply. There are further significant savings since off-campus leases require a 12-month contract, versus on-campus housing, which follows the academic year cycle and offers a nine-month contract. This leads to an additional savings to students who return home for the summer of about \$6,000 annually.

Four-Year Housing Guarantee

In support of UC San Diego's Strategic Plan, the campus seeks to offer all eligible undergraduate, graduate, and professional students a four-year guarantee of on-campus housing. The proposed project would allow progress towards this goal. As of August 2022, 870 undergraduate students remained on the waitlist for campus housing, from a high of 1,116 earlier in the year.

LRDP Goal to House 65 Percent of Eligible Students

The 2018 LRDP includes a goal to provide housing for 65 percent of eligible students (graduate and professional students who are enrolled full-time and have submitted their housing application by the deadline) in University-owned facilities. As of fall 2022, the campus provided housing for approximately 39 percent of all eligible undergraduate students.

The proposed Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood project is part of a strategic plan to provide more housing to all student groups. The campus anticipates that the completion of current and proposed projects, including the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood, will allow the housing of approximately 50 percent of eligible students. The campus will require continued expansion of the student housing inventory through 2027-28 to achieve the 65 percent goal. This expansion is also critical to achieving the goal of a four-year housing guarantee for on-campus student housing.

We appreciate your time in reviewing the Ridge Walk North Living and Learning Neighborhood project application for a Coastal Development Permit, since the project hopes to commence in June 2023. The construction start date is critical to allow this much-needed student housing project to open by Fall 2025, in time to house students for the 2025-26 academic year. Unfortunately, the local rental market is even more expensive for short term rentals if the project is delayed and cannot open by the start of the academic, hence any delays would be a true hardship for the students. You are welcome to contact me regarding any questions you may have about the urgent need for the project at hjhaveri@ucsd.edu.

Sincerely,



Hemlata Jhaveri
Associate Vice Chancellor
Housing*Dining*Hospitality Services
UC San Diego