

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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# W11a & W12a

**DATE:** April 23, 2026  
**TO:** Commissioners and Interested Persons  
**FROM:** South Central Coast District Staff  
**SUBJECT:** **Proposed Major Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 to the University of California Santa Barbara Certified Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) and Notice of Impending Development (NOID) UCS-NOID-0002-26** for the East Campus Housing Project, for Public Hearing and Commission Action at the May 13, 2026 Commission Meeting in San Pedro.

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## SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff is recommending that the Commission, after public hearing, **approve** Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 to the certified Long Range Development Plan, as submitted, and **approve** Notice of Impending Development (NOID) UCS-NOID-0002-26, as conditioned. Staff is recommending eight (8) special conditions for the subject NOID to assure consistency with the policies and provisions of the Long Range Development Plan (LRDP), as amended.

The proposed amendment is project-driven and has been submitted in conjunction with a related Notice of Impending Development (NOID) for the construction of the “East Campus Housing Project.” The project site is designated for housing and is located within the East Side Residence Halls site on the southeastern portion of Main Campus. The proposed residential complex would replace the existing two-story Santa Rosa Hall, which has a design capacity of 412 beds. The new residential complex would have a design capacity of 1,688 beds resulting in a net increase of 1,276 on-campus student beds. When the 2010 LRDP was certified in 2014, it was anticipated that these residence halls, which were built in the late 1950’s or early 1960’s, would be replaced. Thus, Policy LU-16 was included in the LRDP to provide site-specific development standards for redevelopment of the East Side Residence Halls site. Specifically, Policy LU-16 requires a maximum height limit of 65 ft. and requires parking for the site to be provided in specific parking lots, among other build-out provisions. The proposed project, however, would include one 85 ft. tall building and one 75 ft. tall building, as well as require all residential parking for the project to be located offsite and in locations not previously contemplated in the LRDP. To accommodate the proposed project, the University proposes to modify Policy LU-16 to increase the maximum building height from 65 ft. to 85 ft. at the project site and modify the site-specific parking requirements and amend LRDP Figures D. 4 (Height Limits) and E.1

(Vehicular Circulation and Parking) in order to depict the maximum allowable heights and new parking configuration associated with the project.

Generally, the LRDP directs Main Campus buildings to be developed in concentric zones consistent with 35-foot, 45-foot, 65-foot and 85-foot maximum height profiles. Higher profile buildings are designated to the core of the Main Campus with lower height buildings maintained along the perimeter, providing “stepped-levels” of development which sets back the larger campus buildings from surrounding areas and reduces the impact of new structures on scenic and visual qualities. The subject site is directly adjacent to the 85-foot height zone on Main Campus, and the University proposes to site the four residential buildings in a similar stepped fashion with the tallest (85 ft.) building sited adjacent to the 85-foot zone, the 75 ft. tall building sited adjacent to and just south of the 85 ft. building, and the two 65 ft. tall buildings sited south and east of the taller buildings. Additionally, the project site is surrounded by other mid-rise campus buildings including the Library Tower, which is 92 ft. tall, and San Nicholas and San Miguel residence halls which are 72 ft. and 75 ft. tall respectively.

The University also submitted photo simulations of the proposed development from various public viewpoints, which show that due to the site’s location on Main Campus, the proposed development would not impact public views to or along the ocean. Additionally, although the structures will be visible from public viewpoints, such as Goleta Beach, the new development will blend in with the existing development that is also visible from offsite (Exhibit 5). Therefore, the proposed LRDP amendment to increase the maximum height on the project site would not result in a significant impact to visual resources.

Further, the proposed project would eliminate all residential parking on site and requires residential parking for the project to be maintained off site. The LRDP requires one parking space per four student bed spaces for all new dormitory housing, and the site-specific Policy LU-16 requires parking for the project to be provided in a combination of on- and off-site locations. The LRDP includes these requirements, because inadequate on-site parking has the potential to create or exacerbate existing parking problems and discourage access to the coast by both directly using coastal access parking spaces and indirectly by raising the level of difficulty to find available parking. Although the proposed project is not directly adjacent to any coastal access points, nearby coastal access parking does exist, which has the potential to be impacted if adequate parking for the project is not provided. Since residential parking for the project is not proposed on site, the University proposes to modify Policy LU-16 to require residential parking be provided in existing parking lots/structures 22, 38, and 50. The University submitted a parking analysis which found that adequate parking to serve the proposed project exists within these parking lots/structures. Additionally, the proposed project would provide 1,688 bicycle parking spaces (one space for every student bed), and students living on site would have unlimited bus use on all Metropolitan Transit District bus lines as well as access to rental cars (Zipcars) parked on campus. Additionally, as required by the LRDP, the University will continue to monitor parking on campus to ensure coastal access parking does not become impacted. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a significant impact on public access.

UCSB LRDP Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 & Notice of Impending  
Development No. UCS-NOID-0002-26

In addition, the impending development would remove and replace 131 non-native trees with 166 drought-tolerant tree species. Although the existing landscaping is non-native, the trees on site still have the potential to provide habitat for nesting birds. Therefore, Special Condition 2 requires a qualified environmental resource specialist to conduct pre-construction bird surveys in order to avoid any potential adverse impacts to raptor or sensitive bird species. The project would also involve 14,400 cubic yards of grading with 7,200 cubic yards of cut and 7,200 cubic yards of fill. As grading activities have the potential to adversely impact the nearby Campus Lagoon through sedimentation due to erosion of bare soils during construction, Special Condition 3 requires the proposed interim erosion control plan as well as construction best management practices to be implemented in order to protect the quality of the adjacent coastal waters as well as the long-term stability of the site. The University proposes to start the project in June 2026, and project construction is estimated to take two and a half years.

The standard of review for the proposed amendment to the LRDP is consistency with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. The standard of review for the proposed NOID is consistency with the policies and provisions of the certified 2010 UCSB LRDP as amended. The LRDP amendment, as submitted, is consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. The proposed NOID, subject to eight (8) special conditions, is consistent with the policies and provisions of the certified LRDP, if amended pursuant to LRDP Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1.

The LRDP Amendment was filed as complete pursuant to Section 13553 of the California Code of Regulations on April 2, 2026. The NOID shall not be deemed filed as complete until the Commission has acted on the subject LRDP Amendment. According to Section 13522 of the California Code of Regulations, the Commission has 60 days from the date of filing to act on the LRDP Amendment, which in this case is June 1, 2026. The motions and resolutions for Commission action can be found starting on **page 7**.

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**Exhibit 8** - University of California Board of Regents Amendment Request

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Substantive File Documents

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## **I. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. STANDARD OF REVIEW**

#### **LRDP Amendment:**

The standard of review for the proposed amendment to the certified LRDP, pursuant to Sections 30605, 30512(c), and 30514(b) of the Coastal Act, is that the proposed amendment meets the requirements of and is in conformance with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. Pursuant to Section 13547 of the California Code of Regulations, when the Commission has certified an LRDP amendment without modifications, the certification is effective immediately. In this case, if the Commission certifies the LRDP amendment as submitted, no further University action will be necessary. Should the Commission deny the LRDP amendment as submitted, without suggested modifications, no further action is required by either the Commission or the University, and the LRDP amendment is not effective.

#### **Notice of Impending Development:**

Section 30606 of the Coastal Act and Sections 13547 through 13550 of the California Code of Regulations govern the Coastal Commission's review of specific development where there is a certified LRDP. Section 13549(b) requires the Executive Director or her designee to review the notice of impending development (or development announcement) within ten working days of receipt and determine whether it provides sufficient information to determine if the proposed development is consistent with the certified LRDP. The notice is deemed filed when all necessary supporting information has been received.

Pursuant to Section 13550(b) of the regulations, within thirty days of filing the notice of impending development, the Executive Director is to report to the Commission on the nature of the development and make a recommendation regarding the consistency of the proposed development with the certified LRDP. After a public hearing, by a majority of its members present, the Commission determines whether the development is consistent with the certified LRDP and whether conditions are required to bring the development into conformance with the LRDP. No construction shall commence until after the Commission votes to impose any conditions(s) necessary to render the proposed development consistent with the certified LRDP.

### **B. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Section 30503 of the Coastal Act requires public input in preparation, approval, certification and amendment of any LRDP. The University held a duly noticed public hearing consistent with Sections 13552 and 13515 of the California Code of Regulations, which require that notice of availability of the draft LRDP amendment (LRDPA) be made available six (6) weeks prior to the Regents approval of the LRDP amendment and Final EIR. One written comment letter from the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District was received. Notice of the Commission's hearing on the subject amendment has been distributed to all known interested parties.

## **II. STAFF RECOMMENDATION: MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS**

### **A. LRDP AMENDMENT No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1: APPROVAL AS SUBMITTED**

#### **Motion I:**

*I move that the Commission certify the University of California at Santa Barbara Long Range Development Plan Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 as submitted.*

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in certification of the Long Range Development Plan Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 and the adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion to certify passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

#### **Resolution I:**

*The Commission hereby approves certification of the University of California at Santa Barbara Long Range Development Plan Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 as submitted and adopts the findings stated below on the grounds that the amendment is consistent with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. Certification of the amendment as submitted complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen the significant adverse effects of the plan on the environment.*

### **B. NOID No. UCS-NOID-0002-26: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

#### **Motion II:**

*I move that the Commission determine that the development described in the Notice of Impending Development No. UCS-NOID-0002-26 (East Campus Housing Project), as conditioned, is consistent with the certified University of California at Santa Barbara Long Range Development Plan, as amended.*

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in a determination that the development described in the Notice of Impending Development UCS-NOID-0002-26, as conditioned, is consistent with the certified University of California at Santa Barbara Long Range Development Plan, as amended, and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

#### **Resolution II:**

*The Commission hereby determines that the development described in the Notice of Impending Development No. UCS-NOID-0002-26, as conditioned, is consistent with the certified University of California at Santa Barbara Long Range*

*Development Plan, as amended pursuant to LRDP Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 for the reasons discussed in the findings herein.*

### **III. NOTICE OF IMPENDING DEVELOPMENT NO. UCS-NOID-0002-26 SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

#### **1. Consistency with the LRDP**

Prior to commencement of development, certification of the Long Range Development Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 by the Coastal Commission must be final and effective in accordance with the procedures identified in California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 5.5, Section 13547. Approval of the LRDP as submitted certifies the amendment effective immediately.

#### **2. Nesting Bird Surveys and Construction Monitoring**

The University shall retain the services of a qualified biologist or environmental resource specialist (hereinafter, “environmental resource specialist”) to conduct nesting bird surveys and monitor all construction activities which may impact nesting birds, including demolition, grading, and vegetation removal. Prior to commencement of development, the University shall submit the name and qualifications of the environmental resource specialist, for the review and approval of the Executive Director. The University shall have the environmental resource specialist ensure that all project construction and operations are carried out consistent with the following:

- A. The environmental resource specialist shall conduct surveys 30 calendar days prior to commencement, or recommencement, of the approved development to detect any active sensitive species, reproductive behavior, and active nests within 500 feet of the project site. Follow-up surveys must be conducted one week prior to the initiation of construction and nest surveys must continue on a monthly basis throughout the nesting season or until the project is completed, whichever comes first.
- B. If an active nest of any federally or state listed threatened or endangered species, species of special concern, or song bird species is found within 300 ft. of the project, or an active nest for any species of raptor is found within 500 ft. of the project, the University shall retain the services of an environmental resource specialist with experience conducting bird and noise surveys to monitor bird behavior and construction noise levels. The nest shall not be removed or disturbed. The environmental resource specialist shall be present at all relevant construction meetings and during all significant construction activities (including tree and vegetation removal and activities with potential noise impacts) to ensure that nesting birds are not disturbed by construction-related noise. The environmental resource specialist shall monitor birds and noise every day at the beginning of the project and during all periods of significant construction activities. Construction activities may occur only if construction noise levels are at

or below a peak of 65 dB at the nest(s) site. If construction noise exceeds a peak level of 65 dB at the nest(s) site, sound mitigation measures such as sound shields, blankets around smaller equipment, mixing concrete batches off-site, use of mufflers, and minimizing the use of back-up alarms shall be employed. If these sound mitigations measures do not reduce noise levels, construction shall cease and shall not recommence until either new sound mitigation can be employed or the birds have fledged.

- C. If an active nest of a federally or state-listed threatened or endangered species, bird species of special concern, or any species of raptor or heron is found, the University shall notify the appropriate State and Federal agencies within 24 hours, and shall develop an appropriate action specific to each incident. The University shall notify the California Coastal Commission in writing by email within 24 hours and consult with the Commission regarding determinations of State and Federal agencies.
- D. The environmental resource specialist shall require the University to cease work should any breach in permit compliance occur, or if any unforeseen sensitive habitat issues arise. If unforeseen impacts or damage occur to sensitive habitats or sensitive species, the University shall be required to submit a mitigation plan to adequately mitigate such impacts. The mitigation plan shall be processed as a new notice of impending development.
- E. For the purpose of this special condition, "sensitive species" shall be taken to mean any special-status wildlife species. Special-Status Species are species listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Rare under the federal or state Endangered Species Acts, Candidate Species, California Fully Protected Species, and, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15380(d), all other species tracked by the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), which are considered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to be those species of greatest conservation concern, and locally important species including raptors, herons, and songbirds.

### **3. Interim Erosion Control and Construction Responsibilities**

The University agrees to implement the erosion control measures and construction best management practices contained in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for UC Santa Barbara East Campus Housing, prepared by Flowers & Associates, Inc. dated January 23, 2026, and the Erosion Control Plan (Project Plan Sheets C1.10, C1.10A, & C1.10B), dated October 31, 2025, as well as the following requirements:

#### **A. Erosion Control Plan**

- 1) Grading shall take place only during the dry season (April 1 – October 31). This period may be extended for a limited period of time if the situation warrants such a limited extension, if approved by the Executive Director.

- 2) The erosion control measures shall be required on the project site prior to or concurrent with the initial grading operations and maintained throughout the development process to minimize erosion and sediment from runoff waters during construction. All sediment should be retained on-site, unless removed to an appropriate, approved dumping location either outside of the coastal zone or within the coastal zone to a site permitted to receive fill.
- 3) All temporary, construction related erosion control materials shall be comprised of bio-degradable materials (natural fiber, not photo-degradable plastics) and must be removed when permanent erosion control measures are in place. Bio-degradable erosion control materials may be left in place if they have been incorporated into the permanent landscape design.

B. Construction Best Management Practices

- 1) No demolition or construction materials, debris, or waste shall be placed or stored where it may enter sensitive habitat, receiving waters or a storm drain, or be subject to wind, rain, or dispersion.
- 2) All trash and debris shall be disposed of in the proper trash and recycling receptacles at the end of every construction day. The University shall provide adequate disposal facilities for solid waste, including excess concrete, produced during demolition or construction.
- 3) Debris and excavated soil shall be disposed of at a permitted disposal site or recycled at a permitted recycling facility authorized to receive the debris and/or fill material. If the disposal site is located in the coastal zone, the disposal site must have a valid coastal development permit, or NOID as applicable, for the disposal of the debris or fill material. If the proposed disposal site is not authorized to receive the debris and/or fill, a coastal development permit, or NOID as applicable, will be required prior to the disposal of material.
- 4) All stockpiles and construction materials shall be covered, enclosed on all sides, shall be located as far away as possible from drain inlets and any waterway, and shall not be stored in contact with the soil.
- 5) Machinery and equipment shall be maintained and washed in confined areas specifically designed to control runoff. Thinners or solvents shall not be discharged into sanitary or storm sewer systems.
- 6) The discharge of any hazardous materials into any receiving waters shall be prohibited.
- 7) Spill prevention and control measures shall be implemented to ensure the proper handling and storage of petroleum products and other construction materials. Measures shall include a designated fueling and vehicle maintenance area with appropriate berms and protection to prevent any spillage of gasoline or related petroleum products or contact with runoff. The area shall be located as far away from the receiving waters and storm drain inlets as possible.

- 8) Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Good Housekeeping Practices (GHPs) designed to prevent spillage and/or runoff of demolition or construction-related materials, and to contain sediment or contaminants associated with demolition or construction activity, shall be implemented prior to the on-set of such activity.
- 9) All BMPs shall be maintained in a functional condition throughout the duration of construction activity.

#### **4. Tribal Cultural Resources**

- A. Prior to commencement of development, the University shall contact all tribes who have requested consultation on this project to give notice that ground disturbance shall be scheduled beginning on or around a specific date. Any Tribal representative that requests to monitor and a qualified archaeological monitor shall be present on-site during all ground-disturbing activities subject to the notice of impending development. If an area of archeological and/or tribal cultural resources is discovered during the course of the project, project activities with the potential to impact such resources shall cease and shall not recommence until the archaeologist and Tribal representative, in consultation with Native American Tribes listed on an updated Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) contact list, analyze the significance of the find and prepare a supplementary archaeological plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director.
- B. Should human remains be discovered on-site during the course of the project, immediately after such discovery, the on-site archaeologist and Native American monitor shall notify the county coroner within 24 hours of such discovery, and all construction activities shall be temporarily halted until the remains can be identified. An "exclusion zone" may be established around the discovery area. If the county coroner determines that the human remains are those of a Native American, the coroner shall contact the NAHC within 24 hours, pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. The NAHC shall deem the Native American most likely descendant (MLD) to be invited to participate in the identification process pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The University shall comply with the requirements of Section 5097.98 and work with the MLD person(s) to preserve the remains in place, move the remains elsewhere onsite, relinquish the remains to the descendants for treatment, or determine other culturally appropriate treatment. Within five (5) calendar days of notification to NAHC, the University shall notify the Executive Director of the discovery of human remains and identify any changes to the proposed development or mitigation measures that may be needed related to the inadvertent discovery. The Executive Director shall maintain confidentiality regarding the presence of human remains on the project site. The Executive Director shall determine whether the identified changes are de minimis in nature and scope.

- C. If UCSB seeks to recommence project activities within an exclusion zone following discovery of tribal cultural and/or archaeological resources (excluding the discovery of human remains, which shall follow Section 5097.98 as noted in (B) above), UCSB shall submit a Supplementary Archaeological Plan (SAP) prepared by the project archaeologist in consultation with the Native American Tribes listed on the NAHC list. The SAP shall be submitted for the review and written approval of the Executive Director. If the Executive Director approves the SAP and determines that the SAP's recommended changes to the proposed development or mitigation measures are de minimis in nature and scope, construction may recommence after this determination is made by the Executive Director in writing. If the Executive Director approves the SAP but determines that the changes therein are not de minimis, construction may not recommence until after a new NOID is approved by the Commission.

## **5. Final Landscaping Plans**

The University agrees to implement the Landscape Plan submitted with the NOID (dated October 31, 2025 with revised portions dated January 30, 2026) and the following criteria:

- A. All disturbed areas on the project site shall be planted and maintained for erosion control purposes as soon as feasible and no later than (60) days after construction is completed. All landscaping shall consist of drought resistant plants/shrubs and trees. No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society, the California Invasive Plant Council, or by the State of California shall be employed or allowed to naturalize or persist on the site. No plant species listed as a 'noxious weed' by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized or maintained within the property.
- B. Plantings shall be maintained in good growing condition throughout the life of the project and, whenever necessary, shall be replaced with new plant materials to ensure continued compliance with applicable landscape requirements.
- C. Rodenticides containing any anticoagulant compounds (including, but not limited to, Warfarin, Brodifacoum, Bromadiolone or Diphacinone) shall not be used.
- D. The University shall undertake development in accordance with the approved final plans. Any proposed changes to the approved final plans shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plans shall occur without a new notice of impending development unless the Executive Director determines that a new notice of impending development is not legally required.

## **6. Plans Conforming to Geotechnical Consultant Recommendations**

The University agrees to comply with the recommendations contained in all of the geology, geotechnical, and/or soils reports submitted for UCS-NOID-0001-26. These recommendations, including recommendations concerning foundations, sewage disposal, and drainage, shall be incorporated into all final design and construction plans,

which must be reviewed and approved by the geotechnical consultant prior to commencement of development. The final plans approved by the consultant shall be in substantial conformance with the plans approved by the Commission relative to construction, grading, and drainage.

## **7. Lighting Plan**

The University agrees to implement the Lighting Plan submitted with the NOID (dated October 31, 2025) and the following criteria:

- (1) Exterior night lighting shall be designed, installed, and, where applicable, retrofitted to minimize to the greatest extent possible all forms of light pollution, including light trespass, glare, and sky glow consistent with the following:
  - i) Lighting shall be of low glare design.
  - ii) No skyward-casting lights shall be used.
  - iii) Lighting shall use the best available visor technology to minimize light spill and direct/focalize lighting downward, toward the targeted area(s) only. Light shielding shall be installed to direct light downward onto the subject site and prevent light trespass into campus open space, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive habitat, ESHA/wetland buffer, and the Campus Slough.
  - iv) The lowest intensity lighting shall be used that is appropriate to the intended use of the lighting. Lighting shall use the best available technology and a lighting spectrum designed to minimize lighting impacts on sensitive species and habitat.
  - v) Where safety goals would be adequately met without overhead lighting, such as along pathways, ground-level directive lights or standards less than three feet in height shall be used.
  - vi) Programmable timing devices shall be utilized to turn off unnecessary lights where feasible.
- (2) Maximum color temperature of lighting fixtures shall contain a maximum color temperature of 3,000 degrees Kelvin (K), unless it can be demonstrated that such features would not meet required safety measures.
- (3) All lighting fixtures shall be the minimum lumens (intensity) required for safety and security. No non-security or non-safety lighting and no lighting for aesthetic purposes are allowed.
- (4) Security lighting attached to the structures shall use a control device or automatic switch system or equivalent functions to minimize lighting.
- (5) No permanently installed lighting shall blink, flash, or be of unusually high intensity or brightness.
- (6) Stand-alone light fixtures shall be limited to the minimum standard (pole) height and height of the light mounting necessary to achieve the identified lighting design objective, and no taller than a maximum height of 20 feet.

- (7) Light trespass shall be no greater than one foot-candle (10.76 lumens) beyond the site of the light source.
- (8) Existing “globe” style outdoor light installations in the vicinity of the project site shall be replaced with new light fixtures consistent with design and efficiency standards set forth in subsections 1 and 2 above. Replacement of these lights shall be undertaken concurrently with project construction and fully implemented by such time as the East Campus Housing Development is occupied.

## **8. Required Approvals**

The University acknowledges and agrees to obtain all other necessary local State or Federal permits that may be necessary for all aspects of the proposed project (including but not limited to Regional Water Quality Control Board). Prior to commencement of development, the University shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, either evidence of final required approvals or evidence that no approval is needed. Any change in the approved project which may be required by the above-stated agencies shall be submitted to the Executive Director in order to determine if the proposed change shall require a new notice of impending development pursuant to the requirements of the Coastal Act and the California Code of Regulations.

## **IV. FINDINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE LONG RANGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT AS SUBMITTED AND THE NOTICE OF IMPENDING DEVELOPMENT AS CONDITIONED**

The following findings support the Commission’s approval of the LRDP amendment as submitted, and approval of the Notice of Impending Development subject to eight (8) Special Conditions. The Commission hereby finds and declares as follows:

### **A. LONG RANGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT (LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1) DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND**

The University of California Santa Barbara is proposing an amendment to its certified 2010 Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) to allow for the construction of the East Campus Housing Project. The proposed amendment is project-driven and has been submitted in conjunction with a related Notice of Impending Development for the proposed project (UCS-NOID-0002-26). The amendment is proposed in order to accommodate a new residential complex within the East Side Residence Halls site, which is located on the southeastern portion of the University’s Main Campus (Exhibit 1). The proposed residential complex would replace the existing two-story Santa Rosa Hall, which has a design capacity of 412 beds (Exhibit 2). The new residential complex would have a design capacity of 1,688 beds resulting in a net increase of 1,276 on-campus student beds.

The certified 2010 LRDP provides specific standards for development at the East Side Residence Halls Site through Policy LU-16. Specific development standards include a maximum of 3,938 student bedspaces and a maximum of 906,000 gross square feet of

development, maximum building heights of 65 ft., and other site-specific development standards addressing site coverage, campus-wide housing allowances, Academic and Support build-out, and parking requirements. Policy LU-16 also includes an exception to the 65 ft. height limit for redevelopment of the existing San Nicholas and San Miguel Residence Halls, which are 72 ft. and 75 ft., respectively.

The proposed amendment would modify LRDP Policy LU-16 and LRDP Figures D.4 (Height Limits) and E.1 (Vehicular Circulation and Parking) in order to accommodate the proposed East Campus Housing Project, which comprises four separate residential buildings (Exhibit 3). More specifically, the proposed amendment would allow Building 1 of the proposed project to be built to a height of 85 ft. and Building 2 to be built to a height of 75 ft. The proposed amendment would also modify which parking lots are required to serve the residents at the East Side Residence Halls site and amend figures D.4 and E.1 to depict the maximum allowable heights and new parking configuration associated with the project.

The University's proposed changes to Policy LU-16 are shown below with certified LRDP language shown in straight type, language proposed by the University to be deleted shown in ~~strikeout~~, and language proposed by the University to be inserted shown in underline.

**Policy LU-16** – Development at the **East Side Residence Halls** site shall be located within the 28.7-acre potential development envelope designated as Housing on Figure D.3 and shall be consistent with the following build-out provisions:

- a maximum of 3,938 student bedspaces;
  - Up to 906,000 GSF development;
  - ~~Heights shall not exceed 65 feet as shown in Figure D.4.;~~
  - Site coverage up to 50 percent; and
  - Maximum onsite student population of 4,000
- a. Housing unit build-out on this site shall be counted toward the housing development cap consistent with Policy LU-02.
  - b. Academic and Support build-out on this site shall not exceed 66,000 GSF. New academic and support build-out on this site shall be counted toward the 3.6 million GSF campus-wide Academic and Support development cap consistent with Policy LU-01.
  - c. Bicycle parking serving the development shall be provided on the site. Vehicular parking serving the entire site shall be provided in a combination of on- and off-site locations where parking availability to serve permanent housing is affirmatively demonstrated within the following locations: ~~Parking Lot 2, Lot 50, Lot 38, and new Lot 3, Parking Structure 22, new Lot 23, and/or Lot 30.~~ Parking Lot 2, Lot 50, Lot 38, and new Lot 3, Parking Structure 22, new Lot 23, and/or Lot 30.
  - d. Development shall not exceed 65 feet in height as shown on Figure D.4, except that:  
(1) San Nicolas residence hall may be rebuilt at its existing height of 72 feet, and

- (2) San Miguel residence hall may be rebuilt at its existing height of 75 feet, consistent with Figure D.4.
- (3) East Campus Proposed Building 1 may be built to a height of 85 feet.
- (4) East Campus Proposed Building 2 may be built to a height of 75 feet.

## **B. NOTICE OF IMPENDING DEVELOPMENT (UCS-NOID-0002-26) DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND**

Development for the proposed project would occur within an approximately 7.5-acre site that currently encompasses Santa Rosa residence hall, Parking Lots 2 and 9, and landscape areas. The project site is bordered by UCEN Road to the north, De La Guerra Dining Commons and Santa Cruz Hall to the south, the College of Creative Studies building to the west, and Anacapa Residence Hall to the east (Exhibit 2). The project site is substantially flat and slopes gently to the south with ground elevations ranging from 47 to 49 feet above sea level. Vegetation on the site generally consists of ornamental grass, shrubs, and trees.

The University proposes to demolish the existing Santa Rosa residence hall and construct four new residential buildings up to 85 feet in height to accommodate 1,688 student beds and 5 staff apartments. The project also includes demolition of Parking Lots 2 and 9, construction of 157 faculty/staff parking spaces and 16 service vehicle spaces, new pedestrian paths, new bicycle parking, new landscaping, and 14,400 cubic yards of grading (7,200 cu. yds. of cut and 7,200 cu. yds. of fill). The new residential buildings would range from six to eight stories tall and contain approximately 470,200 sq. ft. of floor area. In addition to the bed spaces, the buildings would contain study, lounge, and recreation areas, resident-serving services, such as laundry, and other project-related service and support functions. The site is designated as "Housing" by the certified 2010 LRDP.

Project construction is estimated to take 2.5 years. Construction staging areas would be located on the project site, and construction worker parking would be located in Lot 38 on Storke Campus, which would remain closed for the duration of the project. Construction workers would be shuttled from Lot 38 to the project site each workday. Throughout the proposed project's construction period, traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle safety control measures would be implemented, including the use of temporary fencing around the construction site and staging areas, barriers, signage, flag persons, and traffic control persons. Following completion of proposed construction activities, all areas within and adjacent to staging areas that were disturbed by construction-related operations would be restored to their previous condition.

## **C. CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

The proposed amendment has been submitted with a related notice of impending development. As designed, the project could not be approved without the proposed amendment to the LRDP. Therefore, approval of the proposed amendment to the LRDP is necessary in order for the related NOID to be found consistent with the certified LRDP. The standard of review for the proposed LRDP amendment is the Chapter 3

policies of the Coastal Act. The standard of review for the related NOID is the policies of the certified 2010 LRDP. NOID No. UCS-NOID-0002-26 is not consistent with the certified LRDP unless the proposed LRDP Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 is approved and certified. **Special Condition 1** for NOID No. UCS-NOID-0002-26, therefore, stipulates that prior to the commencement of development, certification of the Long Range Development Plan Amendment No. LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 by the Coastal Commission must be final and effective in accordance with the procedures identified in California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 5.5, Section 13547.

### **Development and Visual Resources**

Coastal Act Section 30250, which has been incorporated in the certified LRDP, requires new development to be located in close proximity to existing developed areas able to accommodate it and where such development will not have a significant adverse impact, either individually or cumulatively, on coastal resources. Further, the certified LRDP was approved with several policies to prevent cumulative impacts of new development, including Policy LU-06, which mirrors Section 30250. The proposed project would be located on an existing developed site and in close proximity to other buildings on campus. The project site along with the adjacent sites to the east, south, and west are designated for housing in the LRDP, while the portion of campus north of the project site is designated for academic and support uses. Additionally, when the 2010 LRDP was certified in 2014, it was anticipated that the residence halls on the southeastern portion of Main Campus, collectively named the East Side Residence Halls, would be redeveloped, and Policy LU-16 was included in the LRDP to provide site-specific development standards for redevelopment of the East Side Residence Halls site, which includes the project site.

Among other requirements, Policy LU-16 allows for a maximum of 3,938 student bed spaces and a maximum of 906,000 gross square feet of development. The proposed "East Campus Housing Project" would replace existing Santa Rosa Hall, which was built in 1958 and designed to accommodate 412 students, with four new residential buildings designed to accommodate 1,688 students: thereby increasing the total student beds at the East Side Residence Halls site to 3,356. The total gross square feet (GSF) of floor area at the East Side Residence Halls site is 391,718. The proposed residential buildings would contain a total of 470,200 GSF, which, along with the demolition of the 74,500 GSF in Santa Rosa Hall, would bring the total GSF at the East Side Residence Halls site to 809,718, which is within the total GSF allowed by Policy LU-16. Although the proposed project would increase the density of the site, the new number of student residents would be within the maximum allowed by Policy LU-16, and the development would be consistent with the character of the surrounding area on campus, which is developed with multiple, large-scale academic and residential buildings.

The LRDP also contains several policies to ensure that new development minimizes risks to life and property and ensures structural stability and integrity consistent with Section 30253 of the Coastal Act, such as LRDP Policy GEO-01, which requires geotechnical and soil studies for new development, and LRDP Policy GEO-02, which requires new buildings to not be located on or near any faults. The Santa Barbara area

is in a seismically active region, and two faults exist within 1,000 feet of the project site (Campus fault is 820 ft. to the north and Isla Vista fault is 220 ft. southwest of the project site). The University has submitted a geotechnical report, as required by GEO-01 of the LRDP, which indicates that the potential for seismic ground surface rupture to affect the site is very low. Additionally, consistent with the requirements of GEO-02, the new buildings would be a minimum of 50 feet from identified fault lines. Additionally, the report addresses other geologic conditions on the site, including drainage, subsurface conditions, and groundwater. The geologic consultants have found the geology of the proposed project site to be suitable for the construction of the proposed buildings. The report also contains several recommendations to be incorporated into the project construction, design, drainage, and foundations to ensure stability and geologic safety for the proposed project site and adjacent areas. To ensure that all recommendations of the geotechnical consultants are incorporated into the project, **Special Condition 6** requires the University to comply with and incorporate the recommendations contained in the submitted geologic report into all final design and construction, and to obtain the approval from the geotechnical consultants prior to commencement of construction.

In addition, the LRDP requires the University to manage and conserve its water resources for all development on campus. Policies PS-01 and PS-03 require water consumption to be minimized through the use of the best available water-conserving plumbing fixtures, efficient irrigation systems, the use of native and/or non-native, drought-tolerant plant species, and the use of reclaimed water for landscaping. Low-flow plumbing fixtures, the use of recycled water for irrigation, a drought-tolerant planting palette, and a water conserving irrigation system have all been incorporated into the proposed project to reduce the project's water consumption. Additionally, UCSB submitted a project-specific water availability analysis in compliance with LRDP Policy PS-04. Using data from the Goleta Water District (GWD), the University estimated the project's potable water demand would be approximately 33.2 acre-feet per year (AFY). UCSB currently holds a permit with GWD for use of 944.5 AFY of water on the Main Campus and in West Campus Family Housing. In the 2023/2024 fiscal year, UCSB used a total of 501.7 acre-feet of potable water on Main Campus and in West Campus Family Housing. After deducting the proposed project's water demand and the 2023/2024 water usage from the GWD permitted amount, approximately 409.6 AFY would remain available to UCSB under the requirements of the GWD permit. Furthermore, GWD's Urban Water Management Plan projects that by the year 2040, available water supply would be 16,244 acre-feet and total water demand would be 11,737 acre-feet. Given the general surplus between GWD's projected supply and demand data, the quantity of UCSB's unused water right allocation, and the East Campus Housing Project's projected water demand of 33.2 AFY, the Commission finds that there is an adequate potable water supply to serve the proposed project consistent with the water supply policies of the LRDP.

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act, which is also incorporated in the certified LRDP, requires that the visual qualities of coastal areas be considered and protected, landform alteration shall be minimized, and where feasible, degraded areas will be enhanced and restored. This policy requires that development be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and other scenic coastal areas as well as requires development

to be sited and designed to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas. Additionally, the LRDP contains policies, such as building height restrictions, to ensure that the scenic and visual qualities of the coast on campus are considered and protected. Policy LU-16 requires building heights on the proposed project site to be a maximum of 65 ft. Policy SCEN-01 requires new structures to be in general conformance with the scale and character of surrounding development and encourages clustered developments and innovative designs to minimize impacts to visual impacts. Policy SCEN-03 requires new development to be sited and designed to minimize adverse impacts to scenic resources to the greatest extent feasible as well as requires the University to enhance primary and secondary view corridors (as shown in the LRDP) where feasible.

The East Campus Housing Project includes four buildings. Building 1 would be sited adjacent to UCEN Road, Building 2 would be sited directly south of Building 1, Building 3 would be sited directly south of Building 2, and Building 4 would be sited to the east of Buildings 1, 2, and 3 (Exhibit 3). The University proposes to construct Building 1 to a height of 85 ft., Building 2 to a height of 75 ft., and Buildings 3 and 4 to heights of 65 ft. However, Policy LU-16, which provides development standards for the project site, allows for a maximum height of 65 ft. To accommodate the proposed project, the University proposes the subject LRDP amendment, which would modify Policy LU-16 as well as Figure D.4 (Height Limits), to specifically allow Building 1 to be built to 85 ft. and Building 2 to be built to 75 ft.

Generally, the LRDP directs Main Campus buildings to be developed in concentric zones consistent with 35-foot, 45-foot, 65-foot and 85-foot maximum height profiles. Higher profile buildings are designated to the core of the Main Campus with lower height buildings maintained along the perimeter, allowing views from inland buildings to the coast and providing “stepped-levels” of development which sets back the larger campus buildings from surrounding areas and reduces the impact of new structures on scenic and visual qualities. The subject site is directly adjacent to the 85-foot height zone on Main Campus, and the University proposes to site the four residential buildings in a similar stepped fashion with the tallest (85 ft.) building sited adjacent to the 85-foot zone, the 75 ft. tall building sited adjacent to and just south of the 85 ft. tall building, and the two 65 ft. tall buildings sited south and east of the taller buildings. Additionally, the project site is surrounded by other mid-rise campus buildings including the Library Tower, which is 92 ft. tall, and San Nicholas and San Miguel residence halls which are 72 ft. and 75 ft. tall respectively.

The University has submitted photo simulations of the proposed development from various public viewpoints to support the proposed increase of the maximum allowable building height on the site. As the photo simulations show, due to the site’s location on Main Campus, the proposed development would not impact public views to or along the ocean. Once constructed, the structures will be visible from public viewpoints, such as Goleta Beach. However, the view from Goleta Beach is distant at approximately three-quarters to one mile away, and the new structures will blend in with the existing development that is also visible from offsite (Exhibit 5). Additionally, the University’s visual analysis included photo simulations of the LRDP buildout (65 ft. tall structures

only) in addition to the proposed project. The submitted visual analysis shows that the proposed 75 ft. and 85 ft. tall buildings would only be visible from certain public viewpoints and would not be significantly more visible than 65 ft. tall buildings. Therefore, the proposed LRDP amendment to increase the maximum height of Buildings 1 and 2 on the project site would not result in a significant impact to visual resources.

LRDP Policy SCEN-05 requires that natural building materials and colors be used in new development where practical in order to be compatible with the surrounding landscape. The proposed materials for the East Campus Housing buildings consist of precast concrete panels and floor-to-floor windows with bird safe glass that has a reflectivity coefficient of less than 30 percent, which is consistent with the LRDP's Bird Safe Building requirements. The upper floors would be off-white and concrete and earth-toned colors would be used on the lower floors. Additionally, consistent with Policy SCEN-06, which requires new development to include landscaping to mitigate visual impacts, UCSB is proposing to plant 166 trees on site, as well as vegetated swales and other landscape areas, which will surround the building and further mitigate the visual impacts from the new development. Further, the proposed development has been designed to fit within the previously disturbed site and proposed grading would primarily be for removal and installation of utilities, installation of stormwater management facilities, preparation of building foundations, and minor recontouring. Grading volumes would be balanced as 7,200 cu. yds. of cut and 7,200 cu. yds. of fill are proposed. Therefore, the project would not result in any significant alteration of natural landforms.

Although the proposed amendment is necessary in order to allow the proposed project to exceed the maximum building height standard that was previously planned for this area, the Commission finds that the proposed project is consistent with Coastal Act Section 30250 and 30251 and LRDP Policy SCEN-01 to concentrate development in locations that can accommodate it and to require new development to be compatible with the scale and character of the surrounding development. Therefore, for the reasons discussed above, the Commission finds that the proposed amendment to the LRDP is consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act. In addition, the notice of impending development, as conditioned, is consistent with the applicable policies of the LRDP, as amended, with regards to visual resources and new development.

### **Public Access**

The University's certified LRDP incorporates by reference the Coastal Act's public access and recreation policies, including Sections 30210, 30211, and 30252. Coastal Act Sections 30210 and 30211 mandate that maximum public access and recreational opportunities be provided and that development does not interfere with the public's right to access the coast. Section 30252 of the Coastal Act states, in part, that the location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by facilitating the provision or extension of transit service and providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation.

In addition, the LRDP contains provisions regarding new development's impact on public access and transportation on campus. Policy PA-12 requires motor vehicle traffic generated by new development to not exceed the roadway capacity of existing coastal access routes on Campus so as not to restrict or impede public access to or along the coast. Policy TRANS-06 requires the University to provide bicycle parking in all new campus development, and policies TRANS-15, -16, -17, and -18 address residential and commuter parking on campus and require the University to identify where removed parking would be accommodated as well as demonstrate that adequate parking capacity still exists when any development reduces residential or commuter parking supply.

The proposed East Campus Housing Project consists of the construction of a new 1,688-student bed housing complex that would employ approximately 41 full-time equivalent staff, which would contribute to additional demand for parking for residents, visitors, and staff on the Main Campus. The project proposes to reconfigure the existing parking on site. Approximately 177 vehicle parking spaces are currently located on the project site, including 101 student resident spaces in existing Parking Lot 2, 64 faculty/staff parking spaces in existing Lot 9, and 12 existing faculty/staff spaces on UCEN Road. The project would remove all of the residential spaces on site, and four new lots would be constructed to accommodate 157 faculty/staff parking spaces and 16 service vehicle spaces.

Policy TRANS-15 requires dormitory housing to provide a ratio of 1 parking space for every 4 student bed spaces, which would equate to 422 parking spaces for the proposed project, as well as provide adequate guest parking. The site-specific Policy LU-16 requires vehicular parking for the project to be provided in specific parking lots and structures. The LRDP includes these requirements, because inadequate on-site parking has the potential to create or exacerbate existing parking problems and discourage access to the coast by both directly using coastal access parking spaces and indirectly by raising the level of difficulty to find an available space which may lead to more traffic congestion, more car idling, and longer wait times. Although the proposed project site does not contain coastal access parking and is not located directly adjacent to any coastal access points, parking demands from the project could have a ripple effect that does ultimately impact nearby coastal access parking. For example, the nearby Parking Lot 6 does contain coastal access parking and a coastal access stairway to the beach. If the proposed project does not provide sufficient parking, residents, staff, and particularly visitors may end up using coastal access parking in Lot 6, which would make it more difficult for the public to visit the beaches on Main Campus.

Policy LU-16 currently requires residential parking for the project to be provided in Lot 2, new Lots 3 and 23, Parking Structure 22, and/or Lot 30. The proposed amendment would revise Policy LU-16 to omit reference to "new" parking lots 3 and 23 that have not been constructed as well as Parking Lot 2, which would no longer accommodate residential parking. Additionally, Policy LU-16 would be revised to designate Structure 50 and Lot 38, in addition to Structure 22, to serve the proposed project.

Policy TRANS-15B allows for a reduced number of parking spaces for new development to be approved if a site-specific parking study shows that the actual

parking need for the development is lower than the total number of spaces required. As part of the LRDP and NOID submittal, the University provided a parking study to demonstrate that adequate parking capacity to serve the proposed project already exists on campus. The parking study found that there is a sufficient amount of parking available in existing parking lots and structures on campus, including Structure 22, which is approximately 1,800 ft. northwest of the project site, Structure 50, which is approximately 3,500 feet northwest, and Lot 38, which is approximately 4,000 ft. northwest of the housing site. More specifically, the parking analysis indicates there is an average availability of 153 housing-allocated parking spaces in Lot 38, an average availability of 336 housing-allocated parking spaces in Structure 50, and an average availability of 71 housing-allocated parking spaces in Structure 22. Together, the parking analysis approximates 560 housing-allocated parking spaces available in Lot 38 and Structures 50 and 22, which would be enough to accommodate the 422 spaces required by Policy TRANS-15 for the proposed project.

The parking analysis also asserts that the actual existing demand for residential parking is less than the required four to one ratio stipulated in Policy TRANS-15, because the number of permits sold to undergraduate residents in Fall 2024 and Winter 2025 equates to one permit per five beds. The study also anticipates a new University policy to prohibit first-year students from bringing cars to campus, and based on existing parking permit data, the study indicates that parking demand would be one permit per eight beds once the prohibition is in effect. Therefore, based on the one to eight ratio that is anticipated after the prohibition goes into place, the number of residential spaces required for the project would be 211, which would be less than half the number of available spaces on Lot 38 and Structures 50 and 22.

In addition to the residential parking demand, the project would also generate commuter parking demand as approximately 41 full-time equivalent staff would be employed at the project site. According to the submitted parking analysis, approximately 52% of the new staff would drive alone to work and approximately 9% would carpool or vanpool, which would result in a parking demand of 25 spaces. There are 76 existing commuter (faculty/staff) parking spaces on site in existing Lot 9 and along UCEN Road. The parking on site is proposed to be reconfigured, and 81 commuter spaces will be added for a total of 157 commuter spaces on site. Therefore, the project would accommodate the increase in commuter demand that the project generates. Additionally, visitor parking would continue to be allowed in the faculty/staff spaces after 5:00 PM during the week and all day on weekends.

The proposed project also includes new pedestrian and bicycle facilities. LRDP Policy TRANS-06 requires additional bicycle parking facilities as part of all campus building projects, and the site-specific Policy LU-16 requires bicycle parking for the development to be provided on site. The proposed project includes installation of 1,688 bicycle parking spaces (one bicycle space per student bed) throughout the project site. Improvements to pedestrian access are also proposed. Science Walk is an existing major north-south pedestrian route on the Main Campus that currently terminates at UCEN Road just north of the project site. The project would extend the Science Walk corridor south onto the project site. The corridor would terminate at a new east-west pedestrian path that would be located along the southern perimeter of the project site.

The University also submitted a circulation study which found that while vehicular traffic on the adjacent roadways would increase, the design capacity of the roadways can accommodate the increase, and the proposed project would not significantly impact coastal access routes or public access. Additionally, consistent with the transportation policies of the LRDP, each student resident would receive unlimited bus use (paid for through student fees) on all Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) bus lines, which serve the University as well as the region from the City of Goleta to the City of Carpinteria. Employees can choose to partake in the University's transportation alternative program (TAP), which offers discounted bus passes, a limited number of complimentary parking days per quarter, and discounted carpool permits among other benefits. MTD buses connect to other regional buses that serve Ventura County and northern Santa Barbara County, as well as Amtrak train service, the Santa Barbara Airport, and Greyhound. Other vehicle transportation options for students and others on campus include Zipcars, which are rental cars parked on campus that can be rented by the day or by the hour, as well as taxicab and other rideshare services, and MTD Wave, which is an on-demand microtransit service that provides flexible, curb-to-curb service for areas of Goleta and Isla Vista with pickup/drop-off locations at the UCSB Bus Loop in the center of Main Campus and Elings Hall which is located at the east entrance to Main Campus.

Although the proposed project would remove some existing residential parking from campus, the submitted parking study demonstrates that enough existing residential parking remains to adequately to serve the project. Therefore, for the reasons discussed above, the Commission finds that the proposed amendment to the LRDP is consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act with regards to public access. In addition, the notice of impending development, as conditioned, is consistent with the applicable policies of the LRDP, as amended, with regards to public access.

### **Biological Resources and Water Quality**

Section 30240 of the Coastal Act states that environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA) shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values and that development in areas adjacent to ESHA shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts that would significantly degrade such areas. ESHA are defined as areas in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments. Section 30231 of the Coastal Act mandates that the biological productivity and quality of coastal waters be maintained and, where feasible, restored through measures, such as controlling runoff, preventing depletion of groundwater supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging wastewater reclamation, and maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats. Additionally, the LRDP contains several policies that address sensitive habitat areas and the water quality of coastal waters. For example, Policy ESH-07 requires construction noise level to not exceed 65dB(A), Policy ESH-11 prohibits the use of any noxious or invasive plant species in campus landscaping, and Policy ESH-28 prohibits all tree trimming and tree removal activities during bird breeding and nesting season unless the trees are outside of ESHA or Open Space and where a qualified biologist has found that there are no active raptor nests within 500 feet of the trees to be

trimmed or removed. Additionally, LRDP Policy ESH-25 requires the biological productivity and quality of campus wetlands to be maintained, and where feasible, restored.

The project site is located within an existing developed area on Main Campus and does not contain any ESHA. The certified LRDP identifies ESHA buffer along the Campus Lagoon, approximately 250 ft. south of the project site. Although development activities are not proposed to occur in or adjacent to ESHA, the construction of new development has the potential to adversely impact nearby ESHA, coastal waters, and sensitive species through disturbance from noise and light pollution, sedimentation due to erosion during construction, polluted runoff once the project is complete, as well as directly impact sensitive bird species through the removal of trees used for nesting and/or roosting or bird strikes on the building itself.

The project includes removal of 131 non-native mature trees. Although the trees proposed for removal are non-native, they still have the potential to provide habitat for sensitive bird species. Consistent with the requirements of Policy ESH-28, the University submitted the results of a raptor and nesting bird survey for the project site. Red-tailed hawks were observed adjacent to the Campus Lagoon, but no raptor species were observed within the project site. Breeding of several smaller species was observed however, including dark-eyed junco, hooded oriole, house finch, orange-crowned warbler, and song sparrow. Therefore, to ensure that potential impacts to nesting birds are avoided during tree removal activities, **Special Condition 2** is necessary to require a qualified environmental resource specialist to conduct pre-construction bird surveys to determine whether nesting or breeding behavior is occurring within 500 feet of the project site should tree removal activities occur during the bird breeding season. Further, Special Condition 2 requires that a qualified environmental resources specialist be present during all tree removal activities and shall require the University to cease work should any breach in compliance occur, or if any unforeseen sensitive habitat issues arise. If significant impacts or damage occur to sensitive habitats or to wildlife species, UCSB shall be required to submit a mitigation plan to adequately mitigate such impacts.

Additionally, UCSB is proposing to replace the removed trees at a 1:1 ratio in accordance with the Campus Tree Trimming and Removal Program of the certified LRDP. Policy ESH-40 allows the University to plant a diverse assemblage of plant species to create an outdoor botanical classroom. Accordingly, the proposed landscape plan consists of a mixture of native and non-native drought-tolerant plants that can tolerate recycled water. The proposed landscape plan does not contain any invasive or problematic species, as is prohibited by Policy ESH-11, since invasive plants can displace native plant species and the wildlife which depend upon the native plants. Invasive plants often can also reduce the biodiversity of natural areas, because, absent the natural controls which may have existed in the plant's native habitat, invasive plant species tend to spread quickly and create a monoculture in place of a diverse collection of plant species. Therefore, to ensure that problematic or invasive species are not planted on site, **Special Condition 5** requires the University to implement the proposed landscape plan. In addition, to ensure that adverse impacts to raptors and other wildlife are minimized, Special Condition 5 prohibits the use of rodenticides containing any

anticoagulant compounds (including, but not limited to, Warfarin, Brodifacoum, Bromadiolone or Diphacinone).

UCSB proposes to adhere to Policy ESH-07 during construction in order to minimize noise disturbance on the nearby habitat. UCSB also proposes to minimize structural lighting to avoid glare and light pollution that may otherwise potentially impact habitat and sensitive species. The existing project site already contains security lighting, and all proposed outdoor lighting would be shielded, directed downward, and provide the minimum amount of light necessary for adequate safety and security. Additionally, five outdated lights identified for replacement or retrofit in UCSB's certified Outdoor Lighting Replacement and Retrofit Program currently exist on UCEN Road adjacent to project site. These lights would be replaced through the project consistent with Policy ESH-15, which requires all NOIDs with an outdoor lighting component to include replacement or retrofit of outdated lights within the project vicinity. To ensure all lighting for the project is consistent with the lighting requirements of the LRDP, the Commission finds **Special Condition 7** necessary to require the University to implement the proposed lighting plan, ensure all exterior night lighting is of low intensity, low glare design, and is hooded to direct light downward, and to ensure outdated lights within the vicinity of the project site are replaced.

Furthermore, Policy ESH-25 requires the biological productivity and water quality of campus wetlands to be maintained and, where feasible, restored. Pollutants commonly found in runoff associated with development have the potential to impact adjacent ESHA and coastal waters. Pollutants, such as hydrocarbons, including oil and grease from vehicles, heavy metals, synthetic organic chemicals, dirt and vegetation, litter, fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides, can cause eutrophication and anoxic conditions resulting in fish kills and diseases, sedimentation, which increases turbidity and thereby reduces the penetration of sunlight needed by aquatic vegetation which provide food and cover for aquatic species, disruptions to the reproductive cycle of aquatic species, and acute and sublethal toxicity in marine organisms leading to adverse changes in reproduction and feeding behavior. These impacts reduce the biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, reduce optimum populations of marine organisms, and can have adverse impacts on human health. The proposed landscape areas are designed with bioswales that would capture storm water runoff before it flows through the Main Campus storm drain and into the Campus Lagoon. To ensure these plans are implemented, Special Condition 6 requires the University to comply with and incorporate the recommendations for drainage into all final design and construction, and to obtain the review and approval of the geotechnical consultants prior to commencement of construction. Additionally, **Special Condition 8** is necessary to require the University to submit evidence that all final required approvals from federal, state, and local agencies have been obtained in order to ensure all water quality and other requirements are implemented.

Grading activities during construction also have the potential to adversely impact the quality of coastal waters. Specifically, disturbed areas on the project site could lead to a potential increase in the volume and velocity of storm water runoff, which could cause erosion of bare soils and lead to sedimentation of the Campus Lagoon. Although the University has proposed an interim erosion control plan, the Commission finds it

necessary to require **Special Condition 3** to ensure that construction best management practices and the proposed interim erosion control plan are implemented in order to protect long-term site stability and protect water quality that would otherwise be impaired by uncontrolled runoff. Further, the University proposes to restore all areas that are disturbed by construction-related operations prior to the conclusion of construction activities.

In addition to the potential impacts to sensitive habitats and coastal waters, new buildings also have the potential to impact birds through bird strikes. Thus, along with siting considerations, the LRDP requires all new development to be designed and constructed according to the bird-safe building design guidelines. Among a host of requirements, the guidelines include requiring glazing treatments on windows so that they are visible to birds and reduce reflectivity, minimizing outdoor lighting, and siting trees and landscape so that the plants are not reflected on the building's surface. The proposed plans include custom glazing treatments on the building's windows, and the University has proposed to construct the building to be consistent with all of the other bird-safe building design guidelines in the certified LRDP.

Therefore, for all of the reasons discussed above, the Commission finds that the proposed amendment to the LRDP, as submitted, is consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act with regard to the protection of environmentally sensitive resources and water quality. In addition, the notice of impending development, as conditioned, is consistent with the applicable policies of the LRDP, as amended, with regard to environmentally sensitive habitat area protection and water quality.

### **Archaeological and Tribal Cultural Resources**

The certified 2010 LRDP was approved with several policies to minimize impacts on archaeological and tribal cultural resources. Coastal Action Section 30244, which has been incorporated in the certified LRDP, requires that where development would adversely impact archaeological or paleontological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer, reasonable mitigation measures shall be required. LRDP Policy ARC-01 requires archaeological studies for all new development that would require ground disturbance. For proposed development that could adversely impact archaeological resources, LRDP Policy ARC-03 requires preparation of a mitigation plan, and LRDP Policy ARC-04 requires that both a Registered Professional Archaeological consultant and a Native American representative shall both be present during all operations that could impact such resources.

Archaeological and tribal cultural resources are known to exist at several locations on the UCSB campus. A Phase I Cultural Resource Study, dated June 2025, was conducted for the proposed project. The study found that the project area had not been previously surveyed and no archaeological sites had been recorded within or adjacent to the project site. The study also found that the likelihood of encountering previously unidentified, potentially significant buried cultural resources within the project site is low.

In March 2025, the University initiated tribal consultation via email and certified mail with local tribal representatives from the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians,

Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians, Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, Chumash Council of Bakersfield, and Northern Chumash Tribal Council. The correspondence included a draft description of the proposed project, along with proposed context, site, demolition, and grading plans. The University's tribal consultation process elicited responses from representatives of the Santa Ynez Band of the Chumash Indians (SYBCI) and the Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians (BVBMI). The BVBMI representative requested a Native American monitor be present for survey and any ground disturbances, and a SYBCI representative noted that the area is extremely sensitive and requested continued engagement in ongoing work. The University has proposed to have an archaeological monitor and tribal representative monitor ground disturbing activities associated with the project. Per the Commission's Tribal Consultation Policy, Commission staff has contacted representatives from Native American Tribes understood to have current and/or historic connections to the project area. At the time of publication of this staff report, no responses had been received and no questions or concerns had been brought to the attention of Commission staff by representatives of the Tribes that were contacted.

Although the University's Phase I Study found the likelihood of encountering significant cultural resources to be low, the UCSB Campus remains a sensitive area for cultural resources. Therefore, the Commission finds that there is still potential for adverse effects to archaeological and/or tribal cultural resources to occur due to inadvertent disturbance during grading and ground-disturbing activities. Thus, **Special Condition 4** is necessary to require that a qualified archeological and tribal cultural resource specialist shall be present on site during all proposed ground-disturbing activities, and that if an area of archaeological and/or tribal cultural resources is discovered during the course of the project, project activities with the potential to impact such resources shall cease. Such activities shall not recommence until a qualified archaeological and tribal cultural resource specialist, in consultation with Native American Tribes listed on an updated Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) contact list, analyzes the significance of the find. If necessary, the specialist(s) will prepare a supplementary archaeological plan for the review and approval of the Commission's Executive Director. If human remains are encountered, the University shall comply with applicable State and Federal laws. Therefore, as conditioned through Special Condition 4, the Commission finds that the proposed project is consistent with all applicable policies of the certified UCSB Long Range Development Plan related to archaeological and cultural resources.

### **California Environmental Quality Act**

Pursuant to Section 21080.9 of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), the Coastal Commission is the lead agency responsible for reviewing Long Range Development Plans and Notices of Impending Development for compliance with CEQA. In addition, Section 13096 of the Commission's administrative regulations requires Commission approval of Notices of Impending Development to be supported by a finding showing the application, as modified by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Secretary of Resources Agency has determined that the Commission's

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program of reviewing and certifying LRDPs qualifies for certification under Section 21080.5 of CEQA. Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the activity may have on the environment. Section 21080.5(d)(l) of CEQA and Section 13540(f) of the California Code of Regulations require that the Commission not approve or adopt a LRDP, "...if there are feasible alternative or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact which the activity may have on the environment."

For the reasons discussed in this report, the LRDP amendment, as submitted, is consistent with the intent of the applicable policies of the Coastal Act and no feasible alternatives are available which would lessen any significant adverse effect that approval would have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed LRDP amendment, as submitted, is consistent with CEQA. The Commission incorporates its findings on Coastal Act and LRDP consistency at this point as if set forth in full. These findings address and respond to all public comments regarding potential significant adverse environmental effects of the project that were received prior to preparation of the staff report. As discussed above, the proposed development approved by this NOID, as conditioned, is consistent with both the policies of the certified LRDP, as amended, and of the California Coastal Act. As conditioned, there are no feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available, beyond those required, which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact that the activity may have on the environment.

Therefore, the Commission finds that the Notice of Impending Development, as conditioned herein, is consistent with CEQA, the Coastal Act, and the applicable provisions of the Long Range Development Plan, as amended.

## **APPENDIX 1: SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS**

University of California Santa Barbara 2010 Long Range Development Plan; Final Environmental Impact Report for East Campus Housing Project (Addendum No. 6 to the 2010 Long Range Development Plan) dated October 2025; Submittal materials for LRDP-4-UCS-26-0001-1 (East Campus Housing Project) and UCS-NOID-0002-26 (East Campus Housing Project)