

DATE ISSUED: March 13, 2002

REPORT NO. 02-054

ATTENTION: Honorable Mayor and City Council  
Docket of

SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO (USD) LOWER WEST PARKING  
STRUCTURE - SITE NO. 11, CONDITIONAL USE AND SITE  
DEVELOPMENT (CUP/SDP) PERMIT NO. 41-0092, AMENDMENT  
TO USD MASTER PLAN CONDITIONAL USE AND RESOURCE  
PROTECTION ORDINANCE (CUP/RPO) PERMIT NO. 92-0568.  
COUNCIL DISTRICT 6. PROCESS 5.

REFERENCE: Planning Commission Report No. P-02-013/Planning Commission Agenda of  
January 24, 2002. Planning Commission Resolution No. 3229-PC recommending  
approval to the City Council (Attachment 21).

OWNER/

APPLICANT: University of San Diego, a Non-Profit California Corporation  
(Attachment 12).

#### SUMMARY

Issue(s) - 1) Should the City Council APPROVE an application to AMEND CUP/RPO Permit  
No. 92-0568 (USD Master Plan) - Site No. 11, to allow development of a multi-  
level, 703-space parking structure on a northerly portion of an existing 376-space  
surface parking lot?

Manager's Recommendation -

- 1) **CERTIFY** Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 41-0092, and **ADOPT** the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and
- 2) **APPROVE** CUP/SDP Permit Amendment No. 41-0092.

Planning Commission Recommendation - On January 24, 2002, the Planning Commission voted 5-0 to recommend that the City Council -

- 1) CERTIFY Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 41-0092, and ADOPT the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and
- 2) APPROVE CUP/SDP Permit Amendment No. 41-0092.

Community Planning Group Recommendation - On August 24, 2001, the Linda Vista Community Planning Committee (LVCPC) voted unanimously (12 Yes, 0 No) to accept the attached sub-committee report (Attachment 16) as the position of the Linda Vista Community Planning Committee. The University's response and staff response are included as Attachments 17 and 18 respectively. Conditions have been added to the draft Permit (Attachment 10) to address these concerns.

Other Recommendations - None.

Environmental Impact - This project has been reviewed in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) No. 41-0092 has been prepared. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) is included with implementation of the Project. Conditions have been added to the MMRP to address impacts associated with Biological Resources, Geology/Soils, Noise, Hydrology/Water Quality, Light/Glare, and Paleontological Resources. These mitigation measures have been included as Conditions in the draft Permit (Attachment 10, Pages 4 through 8).

Fiscal Impact - All costs associated with the processing of this application are paid from a deposit account maintained by the Applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact - None.

Housing Affordability Impact - None.

## BACKGROUND

In May of 2000, the University made application seeking a CUP amendment to process the four following site specific amendments to the Master Plan. Although it was initially intended that these projects be processed concurrently, it was determined during initial review that processing of each project on an individual basis could occur:

1. Camino Parking Complex (withdrawn) - included a 797-space, multi-story parking structure on a site partially occupied by an existing 132-space surface parking lot.
2. Science and Technology Center (41-0091 approved - under construction) - a multi-story, 150,000 square-foot, building located on Project Site No. 9. This site was originally approved for development of the Academic Office Building and 894-space Southwest Parking Garage (replacing an existing 226-space surface parking lot). The Academic Office Building and Southwest Parking Garage as approved, provided a total of 894 parking spaces. Subsequent to approval of the Master Plan, the University determined that development of this site with a Science and Technology Center was preferred in lieu of the Academic Office Building and Southwest Parking Garage. According to the University, due to the incompatibility of the Science Center's sensitive scientific instruments with the vibrations caused by vehicles using the parking garage, this amendment did not include the provision of any parking on this site. This situation created a deficit of 894 parking spaces which the University intends to recoup with development of the Kroc Institute (Site No. 10, approved under Substantial Conformance, construction completed), and Lower West Parking Complex. The Kroc Institute included 229 additional surface and subterranean parking spaces. Provision of these spaces reduces the parking deficit from 894 to 665. On April 5, 2001, the Planning Commission approved this amendment and the Science and Technology Center is now under construction.
3. Casa de la Paz (40-0419 approved - completed) - a detached, multi-unit apartment building (approved by the Planning Commission on November 2, 2000, and located on a westerly portion of Project Site No. 10, also developed with the Kroc Institute).
4. Lower West Parking Complex (initial version withdrawn by the University; current version under consideration). The initial version of this proposal included a 1,051-space, three-level parking structure located on an existing 376-space surface parking lot on Project Site No. 11, at a southwesterly portion of the campus. This project would have provided 675 more spaces than currently exist on the 376-space surface lot (for a total of 1,051 parking spaces), and would have eliminated the deficit created by the elimination of parking on Site No. 9.

During the review process pertaining to the Lower West Parking Complex (initial version), the University determined that the impacts related to bulk and scale of the parking structure at the location proposed presented significant issues for the neighbors and surrounding property owners of adjacent properties located primarily along Cushman Avenue to the west, Cushman Place to the south, and the Casa del Pueblo condominiums to the east. Discussions at meetings of the

Linda Vista Community Planning Committee also indicated significant concerns related to project impacts. City staff, the University, the Community Planning Committee, and residents of the surrounding neighborhood sought Planning Commission feedback regarding implementation of approved Master Plan projects, the siting of the proposed parking structure, and also with regard to potential alternative on-campus sites to accommodate the location/relocation of required parking.

On February 1, 2001, the Planning Commission held a public workshop to discuss implementation of the Master Plan and issues related to the modification of approved Master Plan projects, including the provision of on-campus parking and alternatives for the siting of parking structures. Four Alternatives were included among the discussions. A brief description of each of these Alternatives is included in Attachment 20. As a result of this workshop, the Planning Commission determined that a tour of the prospective sites on Campus and follow-up discussion at a public hearing, also to be held on Campus, was appropriate.

On March 29, 2001, the University hosted a Planning Commission public hearing intended to facilitate further evaluation and discussion of potential on-campus parking structure sites. A tour of these sites was included to assist in site evaluation. This event was publicly noticed in accordance with Land Development Code (LDC) provisions and was open to the general public. After touring the Campus, the Planning Commission heard public testimony and discussed the four Alternatives presented (Attachment 20) as well as implementation of other Master Plan projects. The Planning Commission encouraged consideration of a site which sought to balance impacts to people and the environment. Among the four Alternatives, Commissioners noted that the general location of Project Site No. 11 (included in two of the Alternatives) offered unique opportunities for a parking structure to enhance use of the existing surface parking lot provided that it was sited and designed appropriately, and in a manner sensitive to adjacent properties. The discussions included a recommendation for appropriate landscaping to further minimize visual impacts to adjacent uses. It was noted that this general location includes a small canyon area adjacent to the north, and presents opportunities to accommodate a terraced multi-level parking structure.

The University considered these recommendations and as a result, withdrew the Lower West Parking Structure as initially proposed (on top of the existing surface parking lot), and submitted a redesigned proposal which included a terraced, multi-level structure located northerly of and immediately adjacent to/partially upon the existing surface parking lot located on Site No. 11.

On January 24, 2002, the application was heard by the Planning Commission. Prior to commencement of the hearing the following three concerns remained under discussion between the University, concerned neighbors and representatives of the Linda Vista Community Planning Group -

1. Vehicle circulation between the parking structure and the surface parking lot as it relates to use of the southerly access drive adjacent to the Casa del Pueblo condominiums;
2. Screening of parking structure openings to address glare from vehicle headlights and interior structure lighting;

3. Use of the surface parking lot for activities other than parking of vehicles.

Negotiations to address these concerns concluded prior to commencement of the hearing and resulted in the following agreement -

1. With the exception of emergency and services vehicles and university-related special events, ingress and egress to the lowest bay of the new structure and the surface parking lot will be provided via the existing south access drive. Ingress and egress to the remaining portion of the new parking structure will be provided via the new north access drive;
2. The University will install solid screening to parking structure openings including the top of the structure, to block headlight glare and to mitigate spillover lighting from the structure. It was clarified that 'solid screening' would not preclude the use of mesh material; and
3. The University may use the surface parking lot to accommodate events that are consistent with the University's institutional mission not to exceed a total duration of fifteen (15) days per year.

The Planning Commission voted 5-0 to recommend approval of the project to construct the parking structure at the alternative location and to include modified conditions of approval in the draft permit to reflect the Agreement discussed above. A copy of this Agreement is included as Attachment 19.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Lower West Parking Complex ("Structure") is located north of and immediately adjacent to the existing 376-space surface parking lot, on an expanded Site No. 11, west of Marian Way. The rectangularly-shaped Structure (186' x 334') consists of approximately 230,000 square-feet including five-levels (including roof level) oriented in an east-west configuration similar to the existing surface lot. The Structure is designed to be partially embedded into the hillside in a terraced configuration, with a maximum height of approximately 57' (west elevation), and having a coverage of approximately 62,000-square-feet. Construction materials are proposed to include plaster cement in a tan color tone to match existing campus buildings, with medium taupe contrasting moldings and architectural detailing. Red barrel clay tile roofs will be included with cobalt blue glazed accent tile. Site grading includes 25,000 cubic yards of cut, and 5,000 cubic yards of fill, with 20,000 cubic yards being exported. Resulting fill slopes and retaining walls will be landscaped to reduce visual impacts.

The Structure is intended to accommodate a total of 703 parking stalls on the five levels. A southerly portion of the Structure is located on a northerly portion of the 376-space surface lot, eliminating 69 parking spaces (resulting in 307 surface parking spaces). A total of 1,010 (307 surface +703 Structure) spaces would be provided resulting in a net increase of 634 parking spaces (1,010 - 376). Parking spaces and driveway aisles will conform to City standards.

Staff review of the amendment request has determined that the proposed development is consistent with applicable Land Development Code regulations, and conforms with the Linda Vista Community Plan (1998) land use designation of the property for Institutional (University) use. The project will conform with the goals, purpose and intent of Master Plan and Design Guidelines as approved by the City Council in 1996, with respect to site planning, architecture, landscaping, lighting and signage. Enhanced landscaping consisting of 48-inch box trees intermixed with smaller trees, shrubs and vines will be provided along the elevations adjacent to Cushman Avenue and the Casa del Pueblo condominiums, in an effort to reduce visual impacts to adjacent properties.

When the Master Plan was processed, the Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) required that sensitive biological and hillside areas be conserved through deed restriction, open space easement or other suitable instrument. These sensitive areas on campus are identified on Page 0.7 of the Master Plan and Design Guidelines (Declaration of Restrictions, Attachment 5) and noted by CUP/RPO Condition No. 3 (Attachment 14) as being restricted, in accordance with the RPO. CUP/RPO Permit Condition No. 7.a. (Attachment 14), provides that future development proposals which impact these sensitive areas may be considered for approval by the City Council under "Process 5", requiring a recommendation from the Planning Commission. The project as proposed impacts those resources as indicated in MND 41-0092. These impacts will be mitigated as noted in the MND which has been included in the draft Permit as Condition Nos. 11 through 34 (Attachment 10, Pages 3 through 9) to address project related impacts.

The project site does not lie within the Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA). However, the site does contain sensitive resources and is subject to the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP). The project as proposed would be consistent with the directives of the MSCP and would fully mitigate impacts to sensitive resources, in accordance with the City of San Diego's Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL) Guidelines. Pursuant to Land Development Code requirements, a Site Development Permit is being included with the Conditional Use Permit to address impacts to environmentally sensitive lands.

## DISCUSSION

The projects identified for development with approval of the CUP and Master Plan were largely conceptual. According to the University, only donations and grants and not tuition monies, are used to fund its capital improvements. (Many grants and donations are restricted by donors to specific uses.) As a result, the University is unable to predict with any certainty when the funds will become available for implementation of a specific improvement. The sequencing of projects is determined in response to future developments in the economic and academic environment. The need for flexibility is inherent in the operation of the University, and therefore, the Master Plan is considered a "living document" subject to revision.

Although the Master Plan does not provide a specific mechanism to ensure the provision of the required number of parking spaces in accordance with increases in the FTE each academic year, the University is attempting to fulfill its obligation to provide adequate off-street parking on University property while accommodating changing conditions. A significant number of these spaces (1,120) have been provided with development of the Mission Parking Complex

(Project Site No. 1), on an easterly portion of the campus accessed from Linda Vista Road via Marian Way. The 229 additional parking spaces provided with the Kroc Institute, (Project Site No. 10) and 634 spaces proposed with the Lower West Parking Structure (Project Site No. 11) are intended to recoup those 894 spaces not otherwise provided with the Science and Technology Center (Project Site No. 9).

The proposed project implements specific policies in the Linda Vista Community Plan relating to the University of San Diego campus. The Plan calls for the University to provide on-campus parking for students, faculty and employees, and for any future expansion(s) to emphasize structured parking rather than surface lots. The Plan also calls for development on the campus to maintain the existing 16th Century Spanish Renaissance theme in its new construction and rehabilitation of existing buildings. The structured parking lot and its design are consistent with the policies and objectives established in the Linda Vista Community Plan for the USD campus. The proposed project would provide a multi-level parking structure on a site currently designated in the USD Master Plan for surface parking lot use. Architecturally, the parking structure is consistent with the USD Master Plan Design Guidelines with the utilization of Spanish Renaissance design elements. The project as proposed is consistent with the Linda Vista Community Plan.

#### TRAFFIC IMPACT STATEMENT

Since the subject project is a parking structure and does not generate additional trips, traffic information in the form of a traffic table is not being provided.

## CONCLUSION

As a result of the Planning Commission workshops, and continuing efforts by the University, residents, and representatives of the Linda Vista Community Planning Group, this project has been sensitively designed to balance the impacts to adjacent residentially developed properties and the neighborhood. Staff recommends approval of this project with the Conditions included in the draft Permit (Attachment 10).

Respectfully submitted,

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Tina P. Christiansen, A.I.A.  
Development Services Director

Approved: P. Lamont Ewell  
Assistant City Manager

TPC/WCT:

Note: The attachments are not available in electronic format. A copy is available for review in the Office of the City Clerk.

### ATTACHMENTS:

1. Community Plan Land Use Map
2. History/Background
3. Project Location Map
4. Master Site Plan
5. Master Plan Declaration of Restrictions, Page 0.7
6. Project Site #11 Site Plan
7. Elevations
8. Grading Plan
9. Landscape Concept Plan
10. Draft Permit and Conditions (as Revised at PC Hearing of 1-24-02)
11. Draft Resolution and Findings
12. Ownership Disclosure Statement
13. Project Chronology
14. CUP/RPO Permit 92-0568 (pages 1-11 and 37-42)
15. Master Plan Design Guidelines (Pages 11.1 through 11.4)
16. LVCPC Recommendation Letter
17. University Response to LVCPC Recommendation(s)
18. Community Planning Group Recommendation Discussion
19. Agreement document
20. Discussion of Alternative Locations Considered
21. Planning Commission Resolution No. 3229-PC (Recommending Approval)



