



## Section 4

# ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS



Image Credit: LA Magazine / Gensler Architects



Image Credit: LA TIMES/ Louisa Van Leer Architecture



Image Credit: LA TIMES/ Louisa Van Leer Architecture

# POLICY OPTIONS & SOLUTIONS

*Munger Hall was not the only solution to address UCSB's student housing crisis. In this section, we explore other policy proposals that merit evaluation and discussion as plausible solutions to ensure housing is affordable.*

## Rent Stabilization

### In a region with high rent burden, how can rent stabilization help?

While long-term solutions to the housing crisis are crucial, feasible policy frameworks and concrete programs are still in the works and will take years to be implemented. However, short-term solutions such as rent stabilization, along with other tenant protections, present a reasonable, and complementary, interim step.

Rent stabilization is a policy aimed at safeguarding tenants from the volatility of the rental housing market. It is a tool used to promote fairness, equity, and expand access to affordable and quality housing.

***Under rent stabilization, landlords are limited in their ability to increase rent prices above a certain threshold, and tenants are given greater security, protection, and stability.***



Image Credit: Santa Barbara Independent

**Rent stabilization** is a system of laws, regulations, and ordinances, administered by a government or other public authority to ensure the affordability of housing in the rental market.

**Professors Alice O'Connor and Richard Appelbaum of UC Santa Barbara** identify rent stabilization as "a necessary and feasible tool in the long-term effort to serve the housing needs of the local workforce, and all who contribute to the health, vitality, and stability of our community." With Santa Barbara already one of the nation's most rent-burdened regions, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the crisis and contributed to its skyrocketing prices, inflation, and lack of affordability.\*

**The Central Coast Regional Equity Study** (more in Section 5), conducted in partnership with UCSB's Blum Center, USC Equity Research Institute, and the Fund for Santa Barbara, also notes the hardships marginalized communities, people of color, and immigrants face in securing affordable housing, as they are disproportionately affected by rent burden and other inequities.\*\*

Sources: \*Santa Barbara Independent, June 29th, 2022.

\*\*UCSB Blum Center and The Fund for Santa Barbara, Towards a Just and Equitable Coast (2021).

# POLICY OPTIONS & SOLUTIONS

## Student Housing Co-Operatives



### Collective Solutions

Student housing co-ops pose a feasible alternative to privately owned accommodations. In a housing co-op, students live together in a democratically-run community. Members of the co-op collectively own and manage the housing property, sharing responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning, and maintenance.

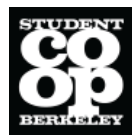
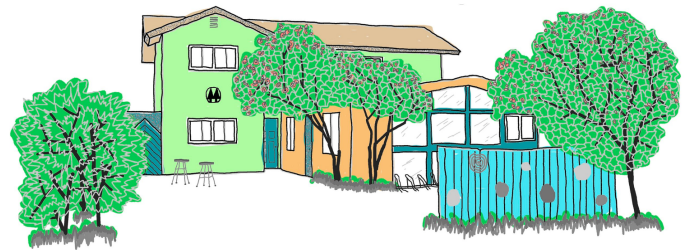
The board of directors at each co-op organization consists of members who live in the houses. Each member pays a monthly fee, which covers the cost of rent, utilities, and other expenses.

### Shared Equity Model

These co-ops run under a shared equity model, where **rents and other additional expenses are adjusted based on the financial situation of each resident.** This allows students to be able to pay significantly lower rent costs than market rates, sometimes up to half.

Members of the cooperative set their own prices, and collectively make investment financial, and operational decisions.\* Because of this, students can even gain valuable business experience, life skills, and work experience through living in a co-op.

**Isla Vista and Berkeley have some of the largest student housing co-ops in the nation.**



**Berkeley Student Cooperative**

Celebrating **90** Years of  
Affordable, Cooperative Student Housing



### Blum Center Cooperative Economics Initiative

Housing co-ops are a good example of cooperative economics, one of the Blum Center's current initiatives addressing inequality.

Source: \*California Center for Cooperative Development Official Website (2023).

# POLICY OPTIONS & SOLUTIONS

## Local Ordinances and Policies

What is the role of local regulation in addressing housing?



Image Credit: Santa Barbara Independent

## Santa Barbara Independent

Housing APRIL 6, 2023

### Santa Barbara County Tightens Eviction Ordinance

Board of Supervisors Passes New Requirements Matching Recent Amendments to City's Just Cause Eviction Ordinance



Supervisors Laura Capps and Das Williams | Credit: Courtesy

A potential policy solution to address renovictions is the implementation of strict local ordinances. These ordinances could include regulations that require landlords to provide a detailed renovation plan and timeline to tenants, ensuring transparency and minimizing the potential for abuse. Landlords would be required to document and justify which renovations were completed.\*

Additionally, ordinances could mandate the provision of alternative accommodation or financial assistance during the renovation period. Rent control measures could also be considered to prevent excessive rent increases following renovations. By enacting these policies, local governments can protect tenants' rights, promote housing stability, and discourage exploitative renovictions.

Other ordinances could include local sales tax amendments to allocate a portion of county income to support community housing funds.

Sources: \*Santa Barbara Independent, April 6th, 2023; Noozhawk, March 21st, 2023.

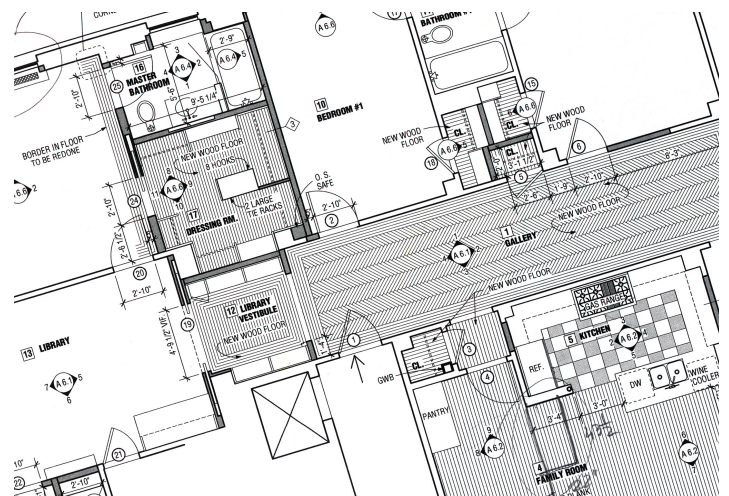
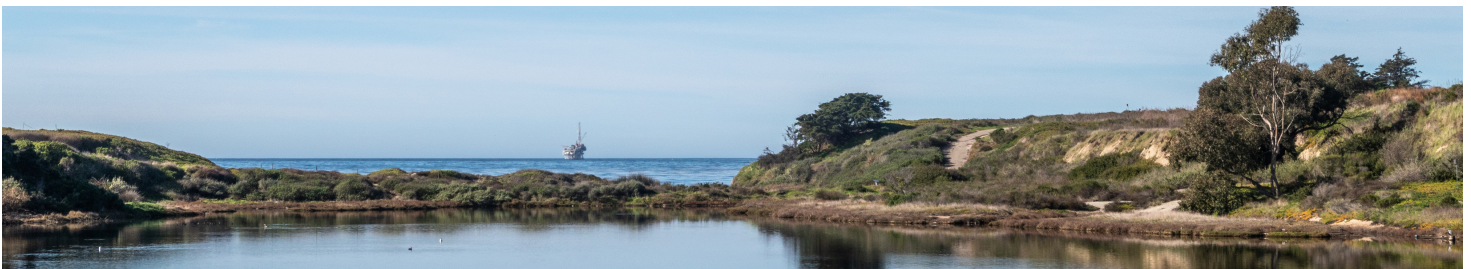
# UCSB CAMPUS PROJECTS

What campus housing projects at UCSB represent useful alternatives to Munger Hall?

## Mesa Verde

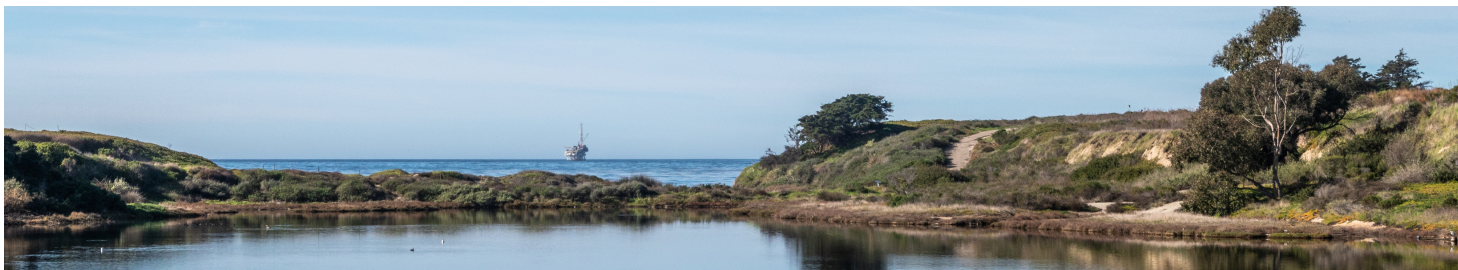
Prior to Munger Hall, Mesa Verde was a proposed student housing project on the current UCSB's Facilities Management site on Stadium Road, **the same location intended for Munger Hall**. First proposed in 2011, and updated in 2018, the Mesa Verde project consisted of **600 apartment-style units of on-campus student housing with 2,000 beds.\***

Until 2019, the Mesa Verde project appeared in UCSB budget proposals. It was abruptly replaced by the Munger Hall project on all subsequent plans. Before Mesa Verde was scrapped, UCSB had purchased a \$12.5 million Goleta warehouse to use as storage for the demolition and relocation of Facilities Management. This warehouse has since been used for the Munger Hall mock-up. **UCSB has not released an official statement explaining this abrupt change in plans and why Mesa Verde was abandoned as a student housing option.**



Source: \*Daily Nexus, November 23rd, 2022.

# UCSB CAMPUS PROJECTS



## Request for New Housing Proposals

Since the dissolution of the Munger Hall project, UCSB has issued a formal “request for qualifications” directed at architectural firms in search of designs for a new student housing project.\*

Like Munger Hall, the new student housing development will aim to provide 3,500 beds, in order to manage enrollment increases from the last ten years.

The UCSB Faculty Senate Report on Munger Hall from December 2022 demanded the following changes be made in order for the project to be deemed acceptable:

- Operable windows
- Bedroom sizes increased “to match or exceed” that of existing on-campus single bedrooms
- Size and mass of building reduced
- Population density reduced\*\*

UCSB will have to take these suggestions into account when choosing a new student housing proposal, in order to gain the support of the campus community.

Additionally, although Greystar pulled out of the Ocean Road Project (Section 2), this faculty and staff housing plan could be revisited as a way to ameliorate UCSB’s housing crisis.

Sources: \*Santa Barbara Independent, July 27th, 2023.

\*\* UCSB Academic Senate, Reports and Resources Official Website (2023).



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