

University of California Santa Barbara

**BLUM**CENTER

ON POVERTY, INEQUALITY, AND DEMOCRACY

# PEOPLE'S GUIDE

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## TO UCSB'S HOUSING CRISIS



University of California Santa Barbara

# BLUMCENTER

ON POVERTY, INEQUALITY, AND DEMOCRACY

The UCSB Blum Center on Poverty, Inequality, & Democracy aims to foster interdisciplinary, socially engaged research and learning about poverty and inequality, and contribute to collective action that advances intersectional economic and environmental justice regionally, in the United States, and abroad.



# MEET THE TEAM

*The People's Guide to UCSB's Student Housing Crisis was prepared by the Blum Center student leader team, with assistance from the Blum Center's Assistant Director Dr. Kashia Arnold.*



Leon Barhoum



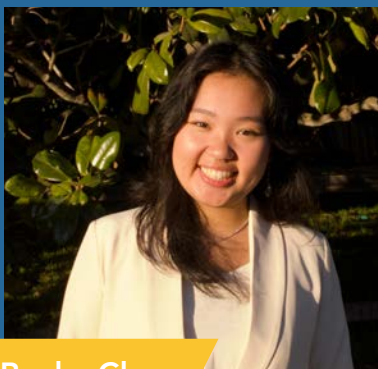
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# FOREWORD

## A Call for Action



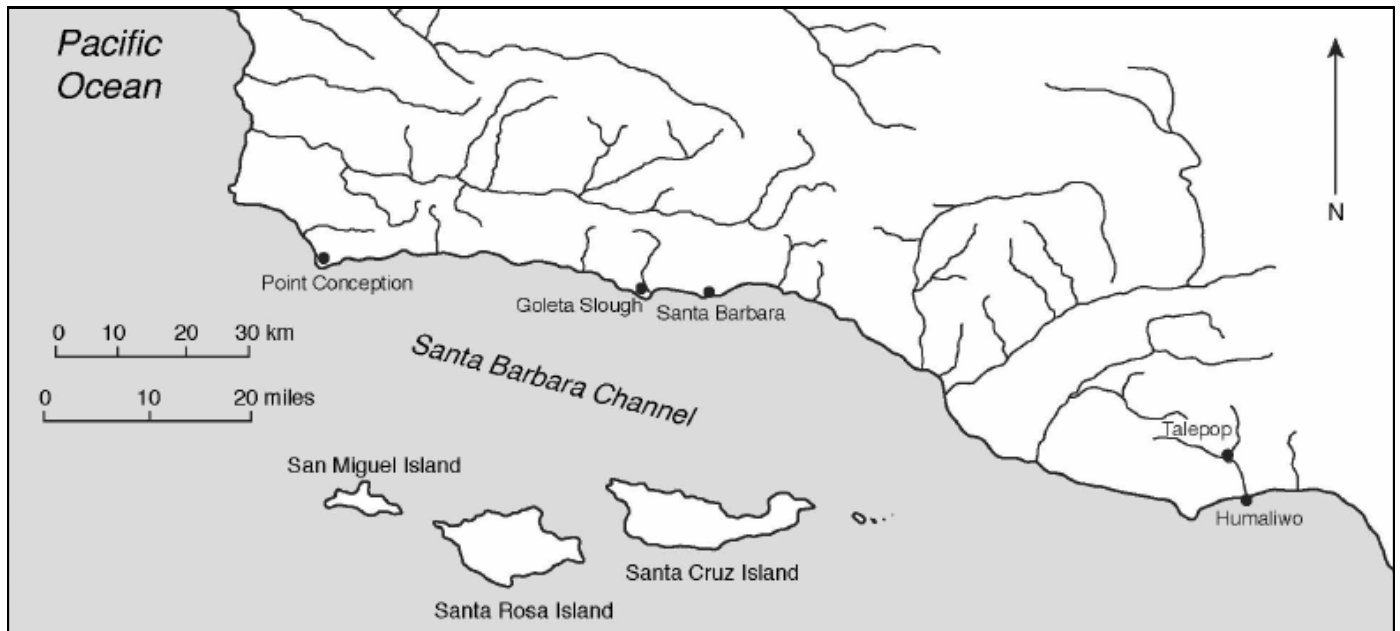
*I doubt there's anyone who denies the seriousness of the housing crisis. It's a statewide situation, manifested in the increasing numbers of unhoused people, in the price of home ownership, and the proportion of paychecks needed for the rent.*

*Here on the central coast, the scarcity of affordable housing compels tens of thousands of people who work here to commute, and much difficulty recruiting professionally trained workers. There are a lot of reasons for our regional perfect housing storm, but one factor has been the failure of UCSB to fulfill its plans to house thousands of students, faculty and staff as the campus population grew. Admirably, the Blum Center provided an opportunity for students to turn their housing distress into a project aimed at promoting positive action. This PEOPLE'S GUIDE provides us with a comprehensive (and beautifully packaged) compendium of data, historical narrative, analysis and vision. It's a resource for students confronting housing issues as both consumers and activists—and equally for activists and community leaders working now for real solutions.*

*I appreciate this project as a housing justice advocate—but also as a teacher. It's a marvelous model of effective pedagogy. Use it and share it.*

**Dr. Richard Flacks, Professor Emeritus University of California, Santa Barbara and Director, Sustainable University Now (SUN)**

# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



UCSB and Isla Vista are located on Chumash land. The University was founded upon exclusions and erasures of many Indigenous peoples, including those on whose lands this institution is located, the villages, and unceded lands of the Chumash people.

Many of the projects and research conducted by this University are within the traditional territory of the Chumash Peoples, and/or affect other Indigenous peoples in their territories. Each Tribe, Council, Clan, and Band is working diligently to restore and continue their traditional stewardship practices on these lands and heal from this historical trauma.

The UCSB Blum Center acknowledges the Chumash people, who are the traditional custodians of this land. We honor and respect the Elders and Indigenous peoples both past and present.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Institute for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Research (ISBER)

Isla Vista Tenants Union

Santa Barbara County Action Network (SBCAN)

UCSB Campus Planning & Design

UCSB Financial Crisis Response Team

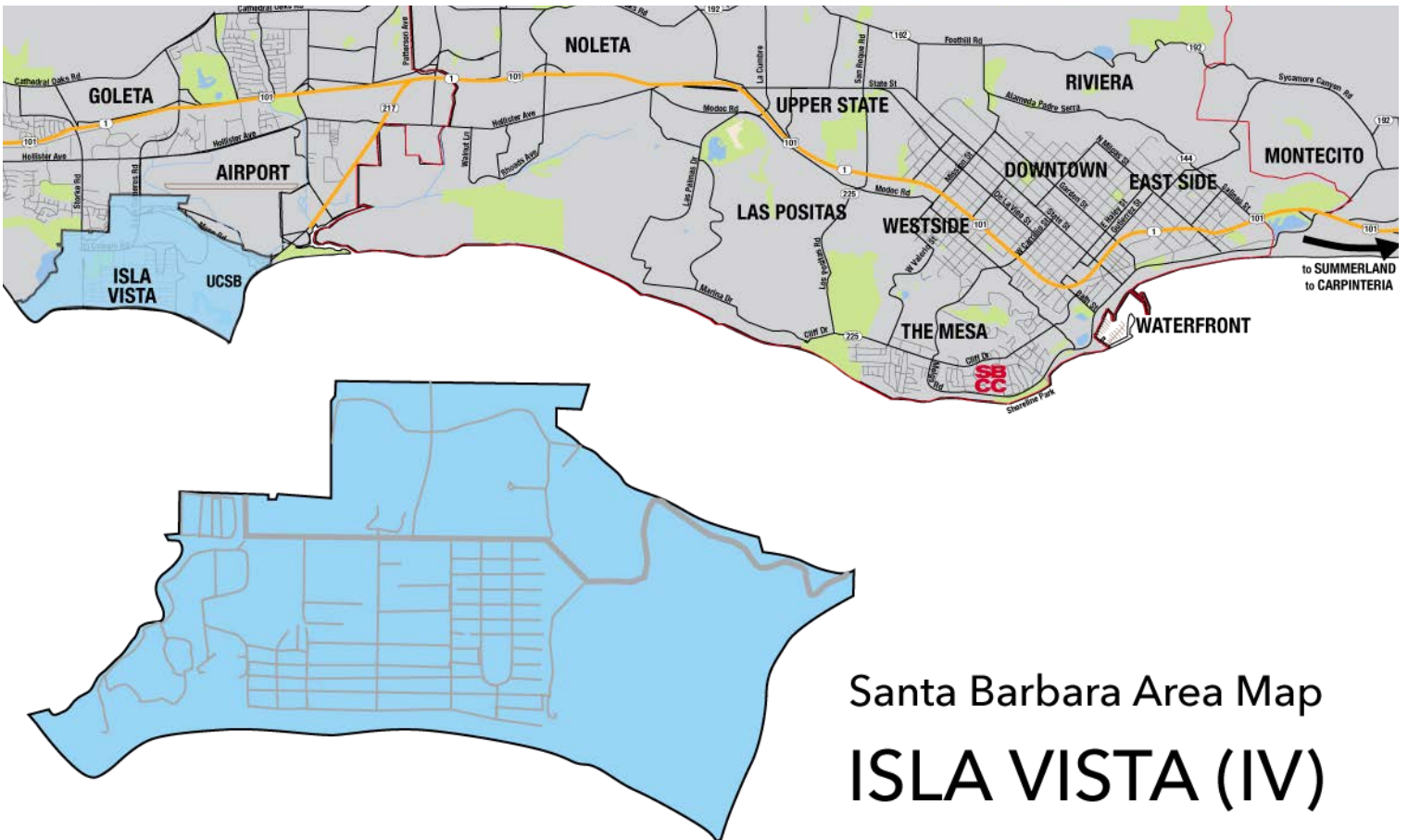
UCSB Housing Authority

UCSB University & Community Housing Services

# University of California, Santa Barbara



Image Credit: Santa Barbara Independent



Santa Barbara Area Map  
**ISLA VISTA (IV)**



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# INTRODUCTION

## UCSB Needs Affordable Housing



We started this project because we recognize that our campus housing scarcity and the high cost of rent has not been adequately discussed in a manner that identifies the causes and what can be done to address them. A common assumption we encountered in our conversations with UCSB students, staff, and faculty, is that “housing in Santa Barbara has always been expensive” and “there really isn’t anything that can be done about it.” As this People’s Guide seeks to demonstrate, this assumption is not true—we as a campus community can reasonably expect more affordable housing to be constructed, and in a timely and well-communicated manner.

This People’s Guide provides the knowledge and tools to clarify and assess the complex array of factors contributing to campus housing scarcity, the decision-making over the past decade that has yielded little housing construction, and the alternative options that are available to consider.

When we first began this project in January 2023, the campus was expecting the construction of Munger Hall, notoriously nicknamed ‘dormzilla,’ to house approximately 3,500 students in a dense housing experiment. UCSB’s 2010 Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) had mandated that the University provide 5,000 additional beds for UCSB students by 2025 and Munger Hall was the University’s only solution to provide urgently needed student housing.

The brainchild of the recently deceased billionaire-philanthropist Charles Munger, the mega-dorm’s window-less rooms, dearth of natural light, and lack of open-air ventilation posed a serious concern to UCSB students and faculty who felt blindsided by the university’s



willingness to pursue an untested housing design that many considered unsafe for students' physical and mental wellbeing. When we returned to campus this Fall Quarter, we learned that Munger Hall was not to be, and that new plans were in the works to construct student housing, but it was not clear what had transpired.

In the aftermath of Munger Hall's demise, we recognize that our campus community can learn from its failure. Our argument, and what this People's Guide demonstrates, is that private contributions and participation have had an outsized influence on the public resources the university draws on to meet the housing needs of UCSB students, staff, and faculty. We recognize that UCSB has not received adequate financial support from the State of California in recent decades, and that this poses significant challenges for the University to meet its housing requirements. However, this budget squeeze has also been used to open the floodgates to arrangements that prioritize private profit over public need.

At the same time, our campus community does not appear well informed about the University's efforts to provide affordable and accessible housing. Our hope is that forthcoming campus housing construction will avoid the pitfalls of past decisions that enabled the Munger Hall plan to be adopted as the campus's only student housing solution. Far too much time and resources have been spent without UCSB meeting the LRDP's new housing requirements.

This People's Guide reflects an array of research into journalist reporting, campus announcements, webpages, and publications, interviews with UCSB staff, faculty, and students, and also a voluntary survey consisting of 237 undergraduate and graduate students. Students who contributed to this survey wanted to understand why UCSB lacked adequate affordable housing and expressed desperation, outrage, and alarm about the current state of affairs.

The sections are organized as follows: we first introduce the current state of the housing crisis, including the student housing experience in Isla Vista and the requirements of the 2010 Long Range Development Plan. Next, we discuss the failures of private

development with the demise of Munger Hall and the delay in completing the Ocean Road Housing Project for UCSB faculty and staff. We then turn to California's broader housing crisis, which includes examining housing across the UC system and the University of California's recent decision to invest in housing as a profit-seeking endeavor. Following this section, we introduce alternative housing solutions our campus can evaluate that better utilize the University's existing resources.

Finally, we connect the campus housing crisis to the Blum Center's Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative (CCREI), which addresses widening inequities on the Central Coast. Here we spotlight the graduate student housing experience at UCSB in the wake of COLA strikes and the high cost of living graduate students face to attend the University. We also provide an overview of existing campus resources and programs that UCSB students are eligible to use.

Thank you for supporting this work. We hope it helps you determine how the University should proceed with its construction of urgently needed campus housing.

In Solidarity,

The Blum Center Student Leader Team



## Section 1



# CURRENT STATE OF THE CRISIS



Image Credit: Daily Nexus File Photo



Image Credit: Daily Nexus File Photo



Image Credit: Daily Nexus File Photo



# SANTA BARBARA

With its sunny ocean views and abundance of natural beauty, Santa Barbara is famously portrayed as an idyllic laid-back beach community. However, securing stable, affordable housing in this scenic place is exceptionally difficult.

Santa Barbara is the fifth most expensive city in the State of California.\* The astronomical cost of housing disproportionately affects Santa Barbara's most vulnerable residents, including students, single parents, working-class individuals, and low-income households.



Image Credit: John Wiley User: Jw4nvc - Santa Barbara via Wikimedia Commons



Image Credit: Daily Nexus File Photo

\*Source: Best Places to Live Report, *U.S. News* (2023).

# ISLA VISTA

## Past and Present

Prior to the inception of the area we know as Isla Vista, the Chumash people occupied its land that they named Anisq'Oyo for over 15,000 years. Through imperial conquest, settler colonialism, and eventual military control, the land was taken from, and never returned to, the Chumash people. Beginning in the 1920s and accelerating through the 1960s, most housing in Isla Vista was constructed adjacent to UC Santa Barbara to accommodate a burgeoning student population.


Isla Vista was zoned for high-density housing while lacking adequate municipal representation. It has since been incorporated in 2014 as a community services district, with limited capacity to govern. Today, the area houses thousands of UCSB students in aging housing stock while facing the consequences of nonexistent city oversight and regulation amidst a worsening housing crisis.



Image Credit: Daily Nexus



Image Credit: alanmak via Wikimedia Commons

A coastal scene featuring a steep cliff on the left with a wooden walkway leading down to the ocean. The sky is overcast and grey. In the background, there are some buildings and trees on the cliff. The ocean is visible on the right side of the image.

Isla Vista is a community services district with an important but limited capacity to govern. It has largely been left to create its own local government. It is overseen at the county level, causing residents to slip through the cracks when in need of social services.



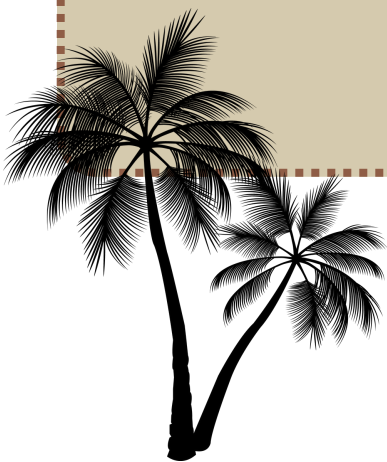
## EXCERPT FROM:



***April 12, 1987***

Isla Vista is completely surrounded by UCSB -- except on its southern boundary, which is the Pacific Ocean. This unusual configuration is the result of a decision by the UC Regents in the 1960s to leave a large segment of privately owned-land within the bowels of the Santa Barbara campus. Since a couple of the Regents either personally owned some of those properties, or were on the boards of directors of corporations which did, we are only left to speculate about their motives. The official story is that the State of California didn't have sufficient funds at the time to develop both a campus and a community, so they left the community-building task to the private sector.

**-- The result was Isla Vista. --**



# ISLA VISTA

## Key Housing Facts



Isla Vista houses  
**12,492** people per  
square mile\*



Isla Vista's  
average rent is  
**\$3,155** for an  
801 sq. ft.  
apartment\*\*



Statewide average:  
**69.4** people per  
square mile\*



**98%** of the  
households in Isla  
Vista are renter-  
occupied\*

*Isla Vista houses 23,000 students who are roughly split between UCSB and Santa Barbara City College. Approximately 61 percent of UCSB's students live off campus in Isla Vista, Goleta, and Santa Barbara. More students are turning to off-campus housing given that UCSB suspended its 2+2 program that guaranteed undergraduates two years of housing in campus apartments if they lived for two years in residence halls.\*\*\**

Sources: \*Maddie George, et al., Isla Vista Housing Help!: A Guide for First-Time Tenants (2022).

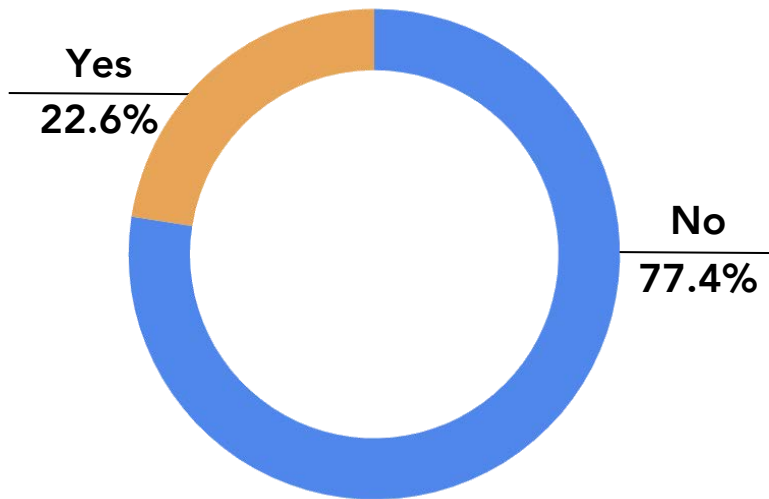
\*\*Isla Vista, CA Rental Market. Rentcafe.com (2023).

\*\*\* UCSB Student Affairs Official Website (2023), *Santa Barbara Independent*, September 11th, 2023, *Daily Nexus*, September 23rd, 2022.

# ISLA VISTA

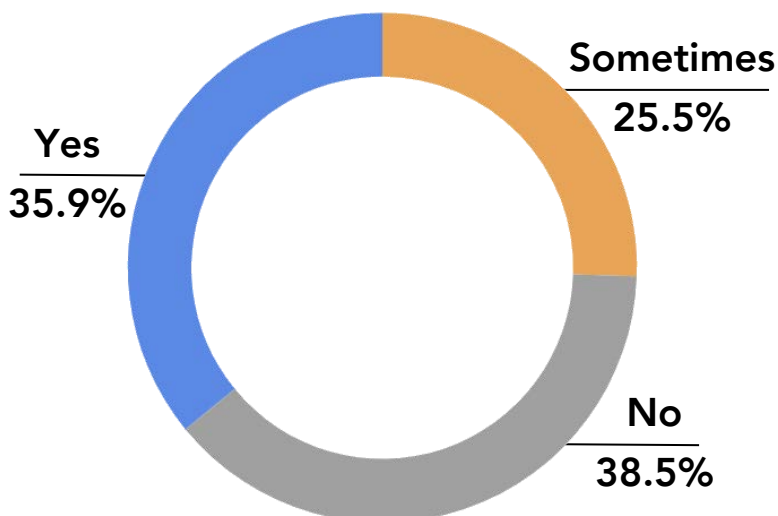
## What do students have to say?

**Do you think your housing is affordable to attend UCSB?**  
(Approximately 1/3 of ones' monthly income going towards rent is considered affordable housing.)



In a voluntary survey conducted by the Blum Center, **77.4%** of respondents consider their housing unaffordable.

**Do your housing costs affect your ability to pay for basic needs\*?**




The same voluntary showed that more than **60%** of respondents struggled to afford their basic needs due to high housing costs.

\*Basic needs are defined as the minimum requirements people need to live a healthy and functioning life. Basic needs include shelter, food, clothing, clean drinking water, sanitation, healthcare, and public transportation.

# ISLA VISTA

## What do students have to say?

UCSB student comments about UCSB's housing crisis reveal high levels of discontent regarding UCSB housing and a desire to learn more about topics such as alternative housing plans and tenants' rights.



"My anxiety reaches its peak when thinking about where I will go during the breaks and especially during summer while transitioning to housing for the next school year."

"I want to know how we will change policies to halt the crisis and how to make it better. I believe UCSB should take more responsibility for the students in Isla Vista...they are absolutely responsible for their part in our housing shortage. What do they plan to do with current and future enrollment to help deflate this issue?"

*"Why is getting a bed so hard here?"*

"When/how is UCSB going to build more graduate student housing? It's essential to being able to afford to work at the University."

"Why haven't we placed rent control on landlords who are clearly ripping off students and profiting off their inability to find housing near campus?"



# ISLA VISTA

Santa Barbara City College



Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) is unique in that it is regarded as a destination city college. While approximately half of the student population are Santa Barbara County locals, the other half of SBCC's student population comes from all over the United States and abroad. This creates a challenge with UCSB and SBCC students both seeking and often competing for the same housing resources.





Despite being classified as a large institution with roughly 14,000 students in 2022, SBCC doesn't provide any on-campus housing. Beach City, an apartment complex owned by St. George & Associates, houses around 500-600 students and largely serves as SBCC's "dorms" due to its location nestled in between SBCC's East and West campuses.

Beach City and the various other small complexes within the Mesa do not come close to meeting the housing needs of SBCC students. Many SBCC students opt to live in Isla Vista, despite the community's limited housing and proximity to UCSB. Students from both campuses are attracted to Isla Vista's social life that caters to college students.

# ISLA VISTA

## How much do students spend on housing?

Housing costs in Isla Vista vary. Based on a combination of data from a student survey and rental cost data released by the city of Santa Barbara, we calculated an estimated range of what students can expect to pay in monthly rent in Isla Vista.

	<p>Some students report a single room costing as little as \$900 in Isla Vista. However, the average rent of a 3-bedroom duplex in Isla Vista is \$6,600. If each occupant of a duplex wanted a single room, that would cost \$2,200 per person.</p>
	<p>Some students report paying less than \$750 for a double room in Isla Vista, and some report paying over \$2000.</p>
	<p>While many students cram into triple rooms as an opportunity to save costs, a triple in Isla Vista can still cost some students around \$1500.</p>
	<p>A quad room is the ultimate cost-minimizing option. Many students report spending around \$750 to share a room with three other students, yet one survey respondent pays over \$1750 monthly rent for a quad room.</p>

Source: City of Santa Barbara 2022 Rent Survey for the South Coast.



# UCSB'S HOUSING CONTRACT

## 2010 UCSB Long Range Development Plan

### The Long Range Development Plan (LRDP)

UCSB is obligated through its Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) to provide additional campus housing for students, faculty and staff. In 2010, UCSB made an agreement with Santa Barbara County and the City of Goleta to increase the student enrollment cap from 20,000 to 25,000 by adding an additional 5,000 beds by the year 2025. The university was also expected to build new housing units for 1,800 faculty and staff.

The housing development plans outlined in the LRDP are based on a projected 1% annual enrollment increase to the year 2025, equalling to about 250 students per year for a maximum enrollment of 25,000 by 2025.

In September 2022, the County of Santa Barbara filed a lawsuit against the University of California Regents, accusing UCSB of violating the 2010 LRDP following reports that UCSB had a total enrollment of 26,179 students for 2020-2021. UCSB has only completed the development of 1,500 additional beds for students and 160 faculty homes.

### Has UCSB violated this contract?

While the LRDP agreement states that UCSB's enrollment may not exceed 25,000, John Longbrake, UCSB's vice chancellor for external affairs, claimed that enrollment numbers over 25,000 were based on higher-than average Fall Quarter enrollment figures for 2021.\*

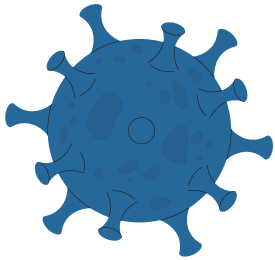
Longbrake asserts that the enrollment cap outlined in the LRDP is measured by a three-quarter average; therefore, UCSB has not officially violated its contract. That being said, former Supervisor Gregg Hart of the County of Santa Barbara (now Assemblyman Hart) maintains that **UCSB "has failed to meet its promise to provide adequate housing for students, faculty, and staff."**

UCSB enrollment has steadily increased since 2010 and reached the maximum cap of 25,000. **Total student enrollment for the 2020-21 AY was 26,179. Enrollment for 2022-23 was 26,421. The current 2023-24 AY enrollment is 26,068.\*\***

Source: \*City of Goleta Announces Intent to Sue, *Noozhawk* (2021)  
\*\*Student Enrollment Trend, UC Santa Barbara

# ISLA VISTA

## Impact of COVID-19



As a consequence of COVID-19, students needed lower density housing; however, housing costs in Isla Vista made this a difficult goal. Students sought housing options on Facebook and other social media platforms; they experienced intense competition for units and an increase in scams.



UCSB closed its on-campus housing facilities during the COVID-19 crisis and access was only given to students with special circumstances.



UCSB partnered with local hotels to shelter unhoused students. The cost of a hotel room was the same as a university-owned double. By December 2021, 280 UCSB students were living in hotel housing.\*

Source: \*"What's it like to study from a hotel? As UC housing crunch worsens, these students are finding out." CalMatters. November 23, 2021.

# ISLA VISTA

## Renovictions

Mass evictions are an observable pattern in Isla Vista. Property owners justify evictions by claiming they are performing substantial renovations. However, the proposed capital improvement projects (CIP) are often not completed and involve unnecessary upgrades to permit higher, inflated rents. These evictions leave former tenants, many of whom are low-income families or individuals, with no other forms of housing. Some are forced to leave the Santa Barbara area entirely. These evictions are not only unethical but also often unlawful; CIP's should be legally limited to solely ensuring that units comply with health and safety codes. Evicted tenants should also be ensured compensation and accommodations.\*

In 2006, more than 50 low-income and Spanish-speaking Isla Vista families were given a 30-day eviction notice from the Cedarwood apartments in order to replace these families with student renters. In 2014, six families were evicted by Majestic Asset Management in order to renovate their units and raise the rent by over 50%. After the tenants had secured other housing, Majestic opted not to go through with the renovations.\*\*



Image Credit: The Channels



Image Credit: Santa Barbara Independent

In March 2023, over 1,000 residents at apartment complex CBC & The Sweeps received eviction notices due to renovation, forcing residents to vacate their homes within 60 days. On April 6, the County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to pass an emergency ordinance requiring Core Spaces, the owners of the complex, to provide proof that renovations would be happening. This has slowed down the eviction process, but residents are still vulnerable to eviction.\*\*\*

Sources: \*Santa Barbara Independent, April 4th, 2023, Santa Barbara Independent, April 6th, 2023.

\*\*Daily Nexus, April 2nd, 2015, Santa Barbara Independent, August 24th, 2006.

\*\*\*Santa Barbara Independent, April 4th, 2023.

# ISLA VISTA

## Unhoused Students



A survey conducted in 2013 found that 8% of UCSB students were without a home at some point in their college career. Since then, the housing crisis in Isla Vista has continued unabated.\*



Despite campus efforts to help its unhoused students, many students have resorted to living in vans and cars or commuting long distances to receive their education.\*\*



Image Credit: Los Angeles Times

**A UCSB student  
in his converted  
van.**

Sources: \**Santa Barbara Independent*, June 27th, 2015.

\*\**Los Angeles Times*, November 12th, 2021.

# ISLA VISTA

## Tenants' Rights

Finding a rental unit in Isla Vista is hard, but tenants' problems don't stop there. Predatory landlords take advantage of tenants and do not always follow the law. See below for a summary of your rights as a tenant\*:

**Landlords must give the tenant reasonable advance notice in writing before entering the unit.** This does not include emergencies, if the tenant has abandoned the unit, if the tenant is present and gives consent, or if the tenant and landlord have agreed that the landlord will enter to make repairs.

**California law allows landlords to use a tenant's security deposit for four purposes:**

- (1) unpaid rent;
- (2) cleaning the rental unit when the tenant moves out, but only to make the unit as clean as it was when the tenant first moved in;
- (3) for repair of damages other than normal wear and tear;
- (4) the cost of restoring or replacing furniture or personal property

**Tenants are entitled to a move out inspection, where they can request a walk-through inspection prior to move-out.** The rental company must notify the tenant in advance of any defects in the property that could be deducted from their security deposit so tenants can make repairs.

**The security deposit cannot be used for repairing defects that existed in the unit before you moved in.** This includes normal wear and tear during your/previous tenancies, or for cleaning a rental unit that is as clean as it was when you moved in.

*Certain resources do exist for tenants, such as the UCSB Rapid Rehousing Program, the Isla Vista Tenants Union (IVTU), and the UCSB Legal Resource Center (LRC). For a full list of student resources, see the Housing Resources Addendum below.*

Source: Isla Vista Community Services Official Website (2023).





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## Section 2



# PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT AT UCSB MUNGER HALL & OCEAN RD



Image Credit: UC Santa Barbara



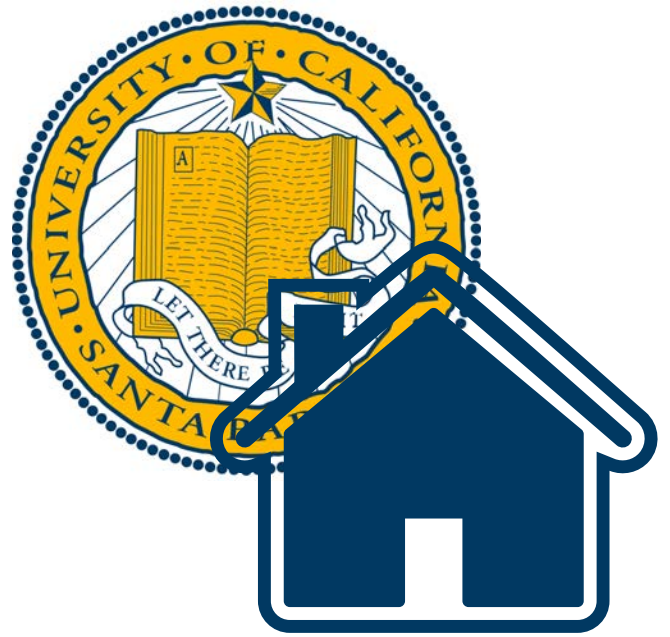
Image Credit: Greystar



Image Credit: Daily Nexus File Photo

# INTRODUCTION

*This section introduces UCSB's Munger Hall and Ocean Road student, faculty, and staff housing projects. The former has since been canceled, and the latter is currently stalled in terms of construction. Both the Munger Hall and Ocean Road housing projects demonstrate the University's vulnerabilities in relying on public-private partnerships to deliver affordable housing.*



Munger Hall's demise reflects the consequences of private philanthropy efforts that did not prioritize the needs of the campus community. Instead of student housing that was constructed in a reasonable timeframe, Munger Hall was a highly controversial social experiment in high-density housing led by the billionaire philanthropist Charles Munger. Similarly, the Ocean Road housing project intended for UCSB faculty and staff has stalled due to the withdrawal of the private developer Greystar.

Both projects highlight the outsized influence of private contributions and participation, which have outweighed the scale of public resources the university draws on to meet the housing needs of UCSB students, staff, and faculty.

As the University moves forward with its housing plans, it ***must learn from the lessons of Munger Hall and Ocean Road to provide housing in a timely and effective manner.*** Prioritizing public resources to cater to the needs of the UCSB community over private interests is essential. The University must engage with its campus community, gather input, and enhance transparency in terms of campus housing objectives and stakeholder involvement.



# CAMPUS HOUSING SOLUTIONS

## Why was Munger Hall Proposed?



Image Credit: *The Daily Nexus*

***The Munger Hall and Ocean Road housing projects represent over a decade in university decision-making and planning through its public-private partnerships to provide campus housing.***

In hindsight, Munger Hall was a nonviable housing proposal from its inception. UCSB needed to meet the 2010 Long Range Development Plan's (LRDP) housing requirements by adding 5,000 more beds for students by 2026.\*

The Munger Residence Hall was proposed in 2016 following a \$200 million donation from recently deceased Berkshire Hathaway Vice Chairman and 'billionaire-philanthropist' Charles Munger.\*\* The student housing project would have increased student on-campus housing by 50% and provide an additional 3,500 beds for students. It was expected to be completed by summer 2026.\*\*\*

Source: \**UCSB Daily Nexus*, July 7th, 2022, *Santa Barbara Independent*, June 14th, 2022

\*\**Santa Barbara Independent*, March 24th, 2016

\*\*\**UCSB The Current*, July 27th, 2021, *Santa Barbara Independent*, June 14th, 2022

# CAMPUS HOUSING SOLUTIONS

## Campus Construction & the Public-Private Partnership

Over the past twenty years the State of California's spending on the University of California has not kept pace with the state's growth in per-capita income. This means that UC Santa Barbara does not have existing funds on hand to increase student housing and relies on an inadequate patchwork of university system borrowing, campus borrowing, internal operations revenue, and private donations to construct new buildings.\*

The projected costs to construct Munger Hall were expected to exceed 1 billion dollars. Charles Munger's \$200 million donation—20% of the budget—was to help finance the construction of much-needed student housing, **but the funds were contingent on using his design**. Charles Munger had some experience as a housing developer, but not architectural experience. Munger has funded architectural projects of his own on other campuses, such as the Munger Graduate Residences at the University of Michigan. \*\*

Charles Munger was not required to seek the feedback of UCSB students or faculty when proposing his design. UCSB's administration set aside all other student housing plans when Munger offered funding in 2015.

Sources: \*American Association of University Professors Official Website (2021).

\*\*Santa Barbara Independent, March 24th, 2016.



Image Credit: UC Santa Barbara



Image Credit: Gallo Images / Getty Images



# THE CONTROVERSY

## The Public-Private Partnership & Munger Hall

*"For many, Munger Hall embodied the bottom-line driven ethos of corporate philanthropism that often prioritizes quantity over quality; and the sad state of academia where, thanks to funding shortfalls, universities must bow to whoever can pick up the tab."--Daniel Roche, The Architect's Newspaper*

Nicknamed "dormzilla," by the *Santa Barbara Independent* in July 2021, Munger Hall would have been the "eighth-densest neighborhood neighborhood on the planet," in housing 5,000 students in a single building that lacked windows, natural light, and required mechanized ventilation.\* Architect Dennis McFadden resigned from his position on the Design Review Committee in October 2021, stating "from my perspective as an architect, a parent and a human being, I cannot give tacit approval to this project."

McFadden discerned that no approval, vote, or input was allowed by the campus Design Review Committee despite Munger Hall's untested design and lack of research and data that would be expected for a major departure in student housing standards. UCSB students, faculty, and other community members marched in protest on November 5th, 2021 to denounce Munger Hall's problematic design.\*\*



Image Credit: Mark Alfred, UCSB Daily Nexus

Sources:

\**Santa Barbara Independent*, July 14th, 2021; *Bloomberg*, November 2nd, 2021; *CNN Business*, November 3rd, 2021.

\*\*Website: [imgur.com/a/frdrElI](https://imgur.com/a/frdrElI); *Daily Nexus*, November 5th, 2021.

# FROM THE SOURCE

## Dennis McFadden's Resignation Letter\*

DENNIS MCFADDEN FAIA

Susannah Scott, Senate Chair, Professor, Chemical Engineering  
Renee Bahl, Associate Vice Chancellor, Design, Facilities & Safety Services  
Co-Chairs, Design Review Committee  
University of California, Santa Barbara

October 24, 2021

Dear DRC Co-Chairs:

Following the Design Review Committee meeting on Tuesday, October 5, I submitted my resignation as an architectural consultant, with deep regret, to Julie Hendricks, UCSB Campus Architect.

I was disturbed by both the process and the content of the Munger Hall design presentation. It was clear the DRC was a mere formality: The design was described as 100% complete, approval was not requested, no vote was taken and no further submittals are intended or required. Yet in the nearly fifteen years I served as a consulting architect to the DRC, no project was brought before the committee that is larger, more transformational and potentially more destructive to the campus as a place than Munger Hall. This is the very project the committee exists to consider. That the DRC is prevented from influencing its design or approval is contrary to what I have understood to be the committee's purpose, as well as my role on it.

The basic concept of Munger Hall as a place for students to live is unsupportable from my perspective as an architect, a parent and a human being. I cannot give tacit approval to this project, something I believe I would be doing by continuing my role as a consulting architect to the DRC.

I have grown more disturbed by the project with greater distance from the presentation. In attempting to document an architectural critique of the design to submit to the committee - consistent with my role - my thoughts converged around three essential issues:

### Internal Isolation

An ample body of documented evidence shows that interior environments with access to natural light, air and views to nature improve both the physical and mental wellbeing of occupants. The Munger Hall design ignores this evidence and seems to take the position that it doesn't matter: The building offers communal living spaces for multiple groups of 64 students, but at the cost of any connection to the exterior. The 8-person living units are sealed environments with no exterior windows in the shared space or in 94% of the bedrooms; the spaces are wholly dependent on artificial light and mechanical ventilation. The design team offered no research or data to justify the radical departure from student housing standards, historical trends, evidence-based design principles and basic sustainability principles. Rather, as the "vision" of a single donor, the building is a social and psychological experiment with an unknown impact on the lives and personal development of the undergraduates the University serves.

***"As the 'vision' of a single donor, the building is a social and psychological experiment with an unknown impact on the lives and personal development of the undergraduates the University serves."--Dennis McFadden***



*Munger Hall was promoted as a “visionary design” that would provide “better and more affordable for students.” A more sobering assessment is that it was an untested social and psychological experiment in high density housing.\**

After five months of review in 2022, UCSB’S Academic Panel released a 200-page Faculty Senate Report, which concluded that the dormitory likely poses significant health and safety risks to its inhabitants – even in its scaled down version. The report denounced the building’s inattention to critical factors such as COVID-safe ventilation techniques, safer entry- and exit-ways and even the psychological toll on students in its design. The Academic Panel insisted that given the safety risks outlined, “it would be unwise for UCSB to proceed without significant modification to the design.”\*\*

Sources: \**The Current*, July 21st, 2021.

\*\**Daily Nexus*, December 21, 2022.



Image Credit: Sammy Munoz, UCSB *The Bottom Line*

# FACULTY & STAFF HOUSING

## The Ocean Road Housing Project



Image Credit: Greystar



The Ocean Road Housing Project was first proposed in 2005 for UCSB faculty. It aligned with UCSB's objectives to meet the 2010 Long Range Development Plan's (LRDP) housing requirements by partially fulfilling the 1,840 housing units mandated in the LRDP by 2025.\*

This faculty and staff housing project was to be constructed by Greystar Real Estate Partners, an international investment, management and real estate developer worth over 74 billion dollars. Greystar was recruited to develop the project in 2022.\*\*

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Sources: \*Daily Nexus, December 6, 2021.

\*\*Santa Barbara Independent, June 14th, 2022.



# AFFORDABLE & LOCAL

## Fulfilling the University's LRDP requirements

The Ocean Road project planned to build 540 units of “affordable” faculty and staff housing that included 180 for-sale townhome units and 360 rental units. This housing has the potential to attract and retain UCSB faculty and staff, reduce commuter traffic, and enhance the campus community by 1,874 units of new mixed-use faculty and staff housing by 2025.\*

Construction on Ocean Road was delayed for over fifteen years due to efforts to adhere to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and locating a private developer to work with. It was originally expected to be finished by 2025.



Image Credit: UCSB Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor

Source: \**Daily Nexus*, December 6th, 2021.



# PROPOSED LOCATIONS

## Faculty & Student Housing Construction

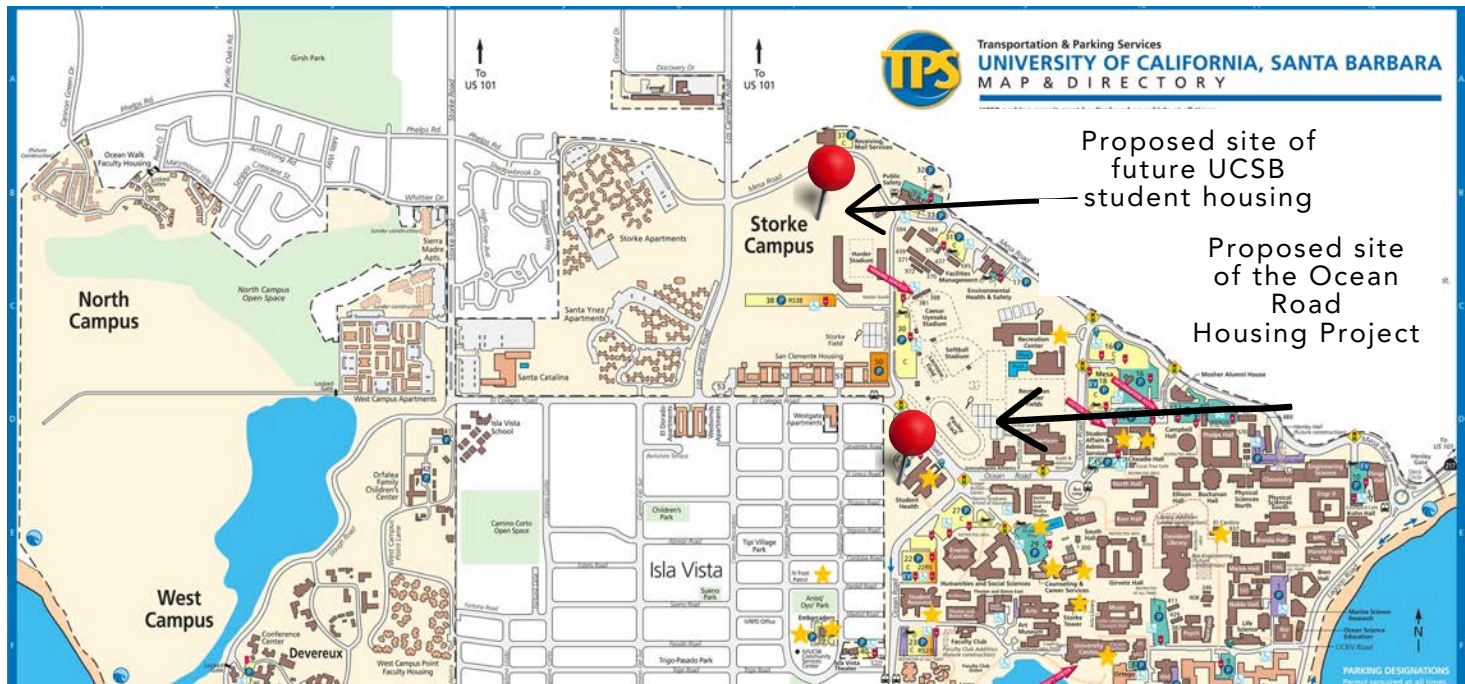


The Ocean Road Housing project is slated to be built along the Ocean Road street.

Campus student housing will be built near Mesa and Stadium Roads.



Image Credits: UC Santa Barbara



# CURRENT STATUS

## Munger Hall Canceled & Ocean Road Stalled



In the summer of 2023, the Munger Hall project was canceled and Greystar, the Ocean Road private developer, withdrew from the project.\* UCSB will replace its site with a new student housing facility to be finished in Fall 2027. It is unknown when the Ocean Road project will resume.\*

Details for both projects have not been publicly shared as to why Munger Hall was canceled or why the Ocean Road project has stalled. We do know that:

- ***UCSB Campus Housing was bypassed in the development of Munger Hall and the Ocean Road Project, despite having been historically involved in campus housing projects.\*\****
- ***Munger Hall and Ocean Road were both developed by, and depended on, private-public partnerships.***
- ***UCSB still needs to provide housing for 5,000 students and 1,840 faculty by the end of 2025 according to the LRDP.***

Sources: \**The Real Deal*, August 8, 2023; *Santa Barbara Independent*, July 19th, 2023, UCSB Student Housing Development Official Website (2023).

\*\**Santa Barbara Independent*, July 30th, 2023.





# SYSTEMIC CONCERNS

The Blum Center student leader team finds that the failure of **MUNGER HALL AND OCEAN ROAD** **SYMBOLIZES THE CONSEQUENCES OF LARGER SYSTEMIC ISSUES** involving university housing, including years of **INADEQUATE PUBLIC INVESTMENT** in housing development, current **DEPENDENCE ON PRIVATE DONORS**, and the combination of **NEGLECT, POLITICAL RESISTANCE**, and **UNREGULATED MARKET FORCES** that have raised housing expenses to shocking and unsustainable levels, putting students and working-class residents of Isla Vista at risk of displacement.



# THE LESSONS

Campus Consideration &  
Transparency is Essential



*The Munger Hall & Ocean Road Housing Projects signify the limits of the private-public partnership, including the overreliance on private sources of investment, and the need to leverage University resources on behalf of the campus community.*

Forthcoming University student housing plans need to incorporate UCSB undergraduate and graduate student input, Faculty Senate review, Campus Housing oversight, and avoid the controversy of Munger Hall. Key campus stakeholders must be prioritized. Consistent and comprehensive updates that transparently identify the allocation of campus resources are also critical in order to foster trust that has been lost as a consequence of Munger Hall.

The construction of campus housing is a significant outlay of university resources and requires extensive planning and approvals that can take years to accomplish. However, we cannot let another decade pass without addressing our campus's most urgent and consequential problem: *ever-worsening housing scarcity*.

**The University has an obligation to provide transparency through every step they take in developing campus housing. UCSB's community of students and faculty NEED and DESERVE answers on the housing question. At a minimum, there must be greater disclosure of the University's intentions and decisions.**

# FORTHCOMING HOUSING?

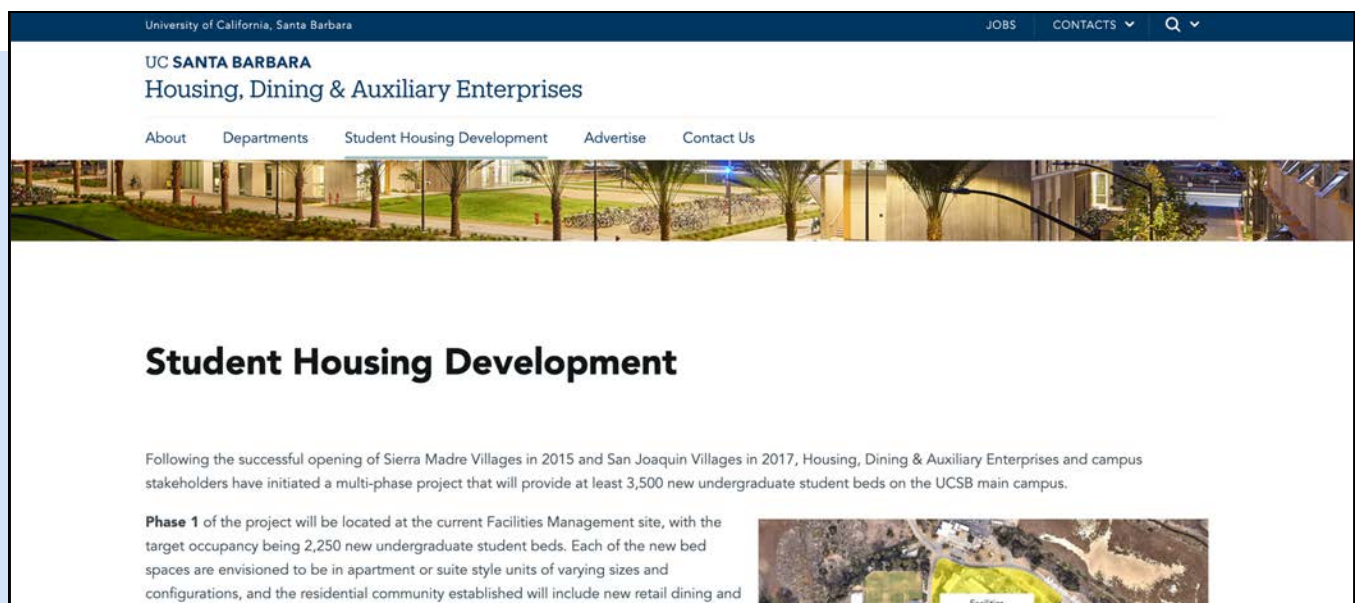
## Campus Student Housing Post Munger Hall

On Oct 25, 2023, an email sent out to UCSB department representatives revealed two new student housing projects: **a new housing facility and an expansion of on-campus dormitory.**

The new housing facility, which is to replace the site of Munger Hall, is scheduled to open in Fall 2027; the dormitory expansion has no provided deadline yet.

This housing will also be overseen by a Student Housing Project Building Committee that consists of representatives from key campus auxiliaries and organizations, including Associated Students, the Graduate Student Association, and the Academic Senate Council on Planning and Budget, among others.

More information on this project can be found on <https://hdae.ucsb.edu/student-housing-development>.





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## Section 3

# CALIFORNIA'S HOUSING CRISIS



Image Credit: UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs




Image Credit: Wall Street Journal



Image Credit: Los Angeles Times



# THE STATISTICS



## California's Unhoused Population, 2020\*

**161,548** Total Unhoused Population

**48,771** Chronically-Homeless Individuals

**12,172** Unhoused Youth

**11,401** Unhoused Veterans



Image Credit: Public Policy Institute of California

At least **22,500** people in California have become unhoused since the beginning of the pandemic.\*\*

Sources: \*California Senate Housing Committee, "Fact Sheet: Homelessness in California," (2021).

\*\*CalMatters Official Website, May 2nd, 2023.

# THE STATISTICS

## PRICE OF THE SAME HOME:



CALIFORNIA  
**\$900,000**

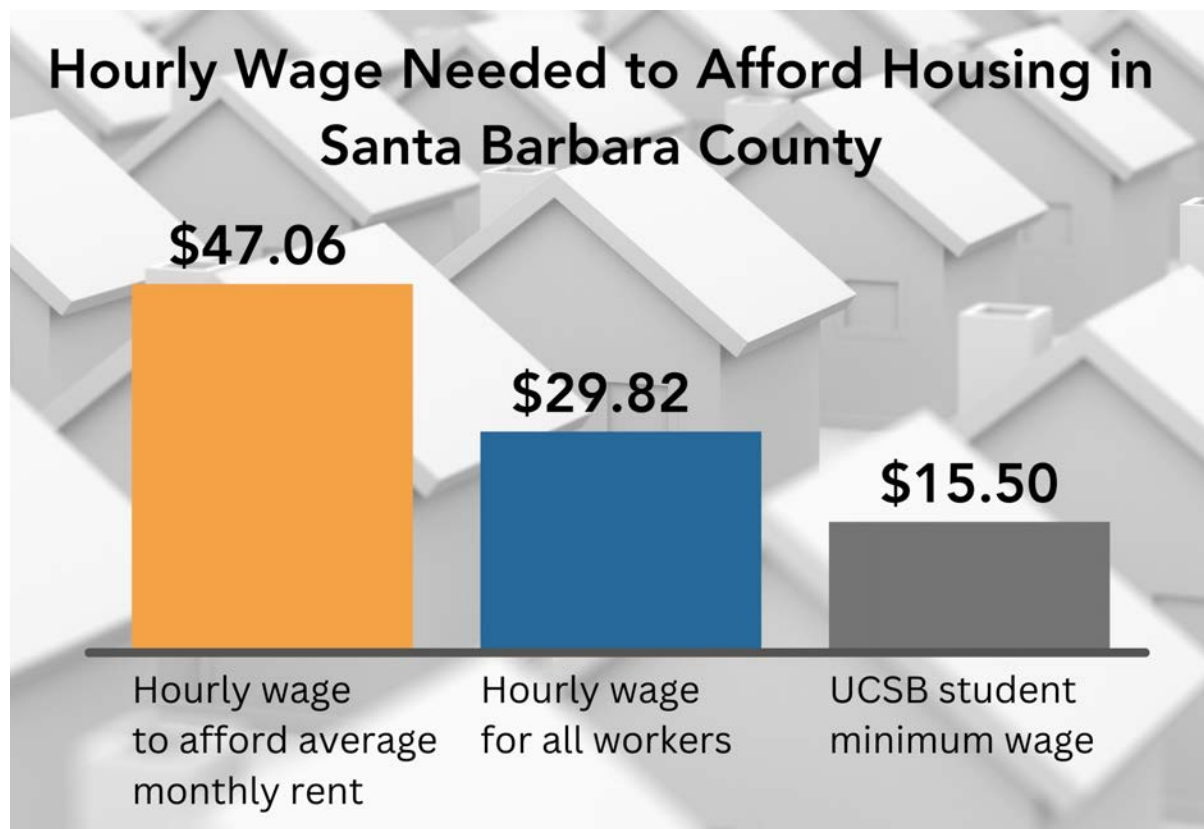


TEXAS  
**\$300,000**

## AVERAGE APARTMENT RENT:

Los Angeles:	<b>\$1,432</b> for a studio, <b>\$2,225</b> for one bedroom
Santa Barbara:	<b>\$1,800</b> for a studio, <b>\$2,500</b> for one bedroom
National Average:	<b>\$1,150</b> for a studio, <b>\$1,320</b> for one bedroom

## Hourly Wage Needed to Afford Housing in Santa Barbara County



Undergraduates are permitted to work full-time, but UCSB stresses that they should work 20 hours or less per week to prioritize their studies. At 20 hours a week, that averages \$1,240 a month in income at \$15.50 per hour.

Sources: Santa Barbara Foundation, "Housing Affordability: Philanthropic Solutions for Santa Barbara County" (2023), UC Santa Barbara Human Resources Official Website (2023), KTLA5.com, "Californians can save thousands when buying a home in Texas," July 8th 2023.



# AN OVERVIEW

## California's housing market leads the nation in unaffordability:

California's housing market is one of the worst in the nation and has long posed a challenge to policymakers and advocates seeking to address income inequities and promote equitable access to housing across the state.

Driven by a variety of factors including a lack of new construction, restrictive zoning laws, rising demand due to population growth and job creation; the crisis disproportionately affects low income and

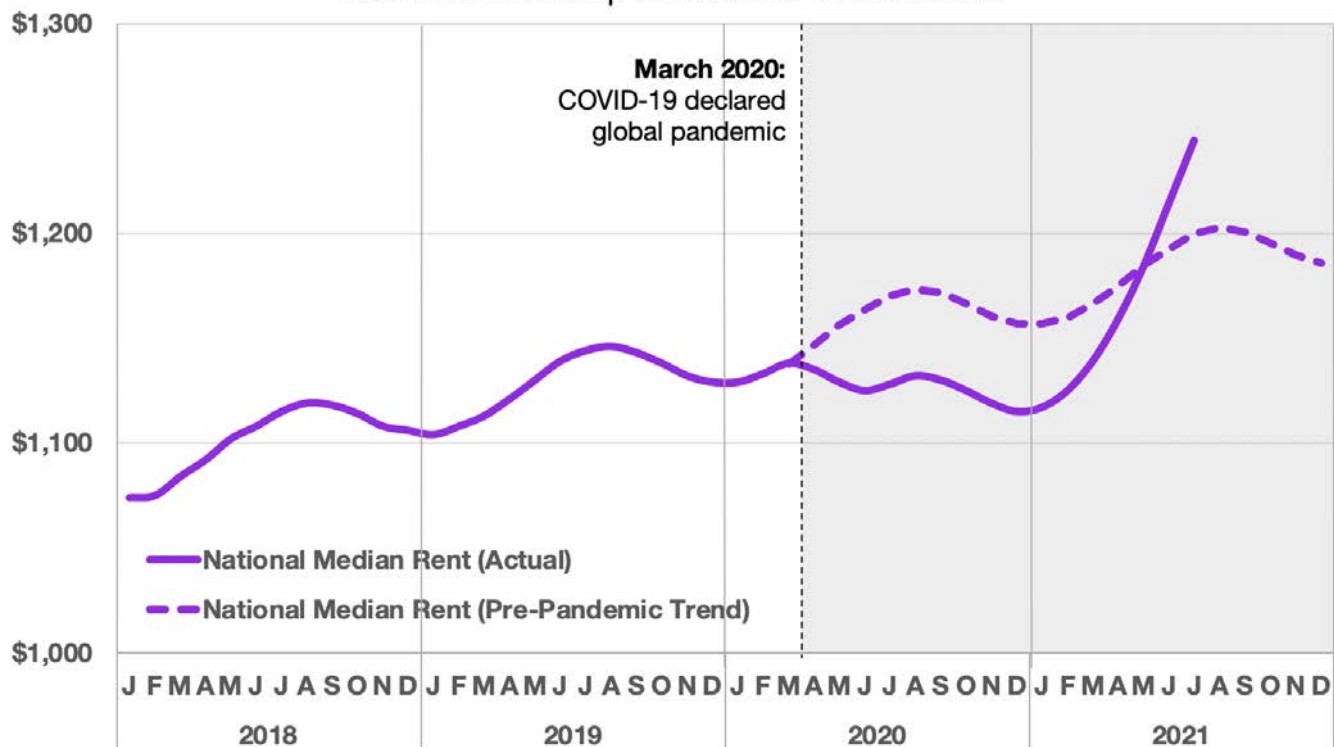
historically-marginalized communities.

These skyrocketing prices have led to a staggering housing shortage and the worst homeless crisis in the nation. Since 2020, California's overall unhoused population has increased by about 6%, compared to just 0.4% in the rest of the country. \*

Out of the total population of unhoused people in the US, approximately 30% resided in California.

### National Rent Growth Exceeding Pre-Pandemic Trend

National Index Up 9.4% Since March 2020



Source: Apartment List Rent Estimates

Note: Projected rent estimates assume that month-over-month price changes in 2020-2021 equal the average price changes that occurred during the same months in 2018-2019

Apartment List

Source: \*Public Policy Institute of California, "Homeless Populations Are Rising around California," (2023).

# AN OVERVIEW

## Santa Barbara Rental Housing Market

California is a state with a high cost of living, but Santa Barbara stands out for having one of the most exorbitant rent prices in the nation.\* Long famous as a scenic retreat for the uber-wealthy, Santa Barbara has become a desirable destination for remote workers in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.



### In National Rankings, Santa Barbara is:

- 1st** in Most Expensive Small Cities for 1-Bedroom Apartment Rentals
- 1st** in Cities with the Most Dramatic Increase in Median Rent for Available Units
- 4th** in Most Expensive Small Cities for 3-Bedroom Single-Family Home Rent

***UCSB students are directly affected by rental price hikes and greater demand for housing.***

Source: \*Website: [dwellsy.webflow.io/blog/rent-price-data](https://dwellsy.webflow.io/blog/rent-price-data).

# THE UC SYSTEM

## The California Master Plan

In the 1960s, California established a system of public higher education to provide all Californians with affordable access to a college degree. The California Master Plan for Higher Education coordinated the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), and the California Community Colleges (CCC) systems, which remain popular and quality college options for California residents.

The UC system was originally committed to providing an accessible and affordable tuition-free education for California residents. Under the Master Plan, students were expected to pay fees for additional facilities, which included housing.

The UCs were once intended to be smaller, research-focused institutions. But over time, as the population expanded and demand for higher education increased, so did the enrollment at the UC campuses.\*

In an attempt to meet this demand, tuition and fees have increased to cover instructional and operational costs at UC and CSU campuses as public spending declined per student. Now housing, not just tuition expenses, are a major financial burden for individuals pursuing a 4-year or graduate degree.



### UC ENROLLMENT BREAKDOWN AS OF FALL 2022\*\*

UC Davis	39,679
UC Berkeley	45,307
UC Santa Cruz	19,478
UC Merced	9,103
UC Santa Barbara	26,420
UC Los Angeles	46,430
UC Irvine	35,937
UC Riverside	26,809
UC San Diego	42,006
UC San Francisco	3,140

Sources: \*UC Office of the President Official Website (2023).

\*\* University of California, March 3rd, 2023



# THE UC SYSTEM

## UC-Wide Enrollment Increases

**2012-13: 233,198**

Total UC Students  
Enrolled

**2022-23: 294,309**

Total UC Students  
Enrolled\*

While the California Master Plan did not directly cause the current housing crisis, it did not account for increased enrollment - and thus did not anticipate the current demand for undergraduate education. The plan did not establish a mandate for housing development and did not set aside funds for future construction.

Furthermore, the plan left each of the individual UC campuses responsible for their own student housing, with little cooperation between campuses and administration.

The increased academic prestige of UCs and location desirability have resulted in overwhelming demand that threatens to undermine the UCs broader mission.

As a result of recent pressure from Sacramento to increase enrollment across all of the UC campuses, each university crafted a long-range development plan (UCSB's LRDP is discussed in greater depth on page 14).

These LRDPs detail comprehensive strategic planning for proposed student housing in order to accommodate an expected increase in students and faculty.



Sources: \*University of California, March 3rd, 2023

\*\* UCSB Office of Budget and Planning



# THE UC SYSTEM

## More Students Attending UCs

For Fall 2022, the UC system's nine undergraduate campuses received a record number of nearly 211,000 first-year applications.\*

According to admissions data, UCSB received 110,991 first year applications during the 2022 admission cycle, 18,000 of whom were out-of-state students.\*\*

Most UC campuses have experienced an increased demand for on-campus housing. Waitlists for UC housing climbed to 14,000 students for Fall 2022 at all 10 campuses, a massive increase from 7,500 students at eight campuses in fall of 2021. \*\*\*



Average Monthly Rent For Off-Campus 1-Bedroom and 2-Bedroom Apartments Near UC Campuses\*\*\*\*

Sources: \*University of California Office of the President, Freshman Applications by Campus and Residency, January 11th, 2023.

\*\*College Gazette, February 8th, 2023.

\*\*\*Los Angeles Times, March 14th, 2023.

\*\*\*\*University of California Office of the President, Student Financial Support, March 2022.

# THE UC SYSTEM

An estimated **417,000** students in California lack a stable place to sleep.\*

Representing **5%** of undergraduates at UCs

**10%** of undergraduates at California State Universities

**20%** of students at California Community Colleges

The University of California Board of Regents recently approved plans for residential projects that would add nearly 8,000 beds across five UC campuses.\*\* These projects are part of a larger UC objective to add 22,000 beds across all nine campuses by 2028.

However, these plans are still years away from being implemented.

Many UC projects are reliant on state funding that may not be guaranteed or could be delayed. UC officials have cited labor shortages, inflation, rising construction costs, and supply chain issues as some of the prominent obstacles to building new housing.



Image credit: *Los Angeles Times*. UCSC student Michael Chin lives in a trailer to be close to campus.



Image Credit: KCRW. UC Berkeley has been criticized for enrollment increases said to exacerbate the unhoused crisis.

Sources: \**Los Angeles Times*, March 14th, 2023.

\*\**The Daily Californian*, March 15th, 2023.

# THE UC SYSTEM

## Proposed Housing Solutions at Other UCs

### How are the other UCs tackling this issue?

Due to increased applications, pressures from Sacramento to increase enrollment, and high prices of living in urban coastal communities, UC campuses have had to start reimagining housing solutions.

#### UC Berkeley

The main UC Berkeley campus has been constrained by opposition from the city of Berkeley and the surrounding neighborhood with regards to enrollment increases and subsequent planned housing.\* As a result, UC Berkeley is considering a satellite program at Moffett Field (previously an airfield, now owned by NASA) in Mountain View, CA. This campus would focus primarily on aerospace science and engineering.\*\*



Image Credit: UC Berkeley Aerospace Engineering

#### UC Los Angeles

UCLA is also considering satellite programs and off-campus locations in order to increase enrollment without adding more students on the main campus. UCLA is already working with AltaSea to develop a satellite campus in San Pedro that aims to accommodate 600 to 1,000 more students.\*\*\*

UCLA is renovating Gayley Heights (previously studio units) into triple-occupancy student apartments that will be roughly 60% below market-rate.\*\*\*\*



Image Credit: STUDIOS

Sources: \*Los Angeles Times, February 24th, 2023

\*\* Berkeley News, October 16th, 2023

\*\*\* Los Angeles Times, September 27th, 2022

\*\*\*\*Website: <https://studios.com/ucla-gayley-heights-apartments.html>



# THE UC SYSTEM

## Proposed Solutions at Other UCs

### UC Davis

UCD is constructing a project called "Aggie Square" at its satellite campus in Sacramento. The project will consist of science and technology buildings and housing for several hundred undergraduate students. \*



Image Credit: UC Davis

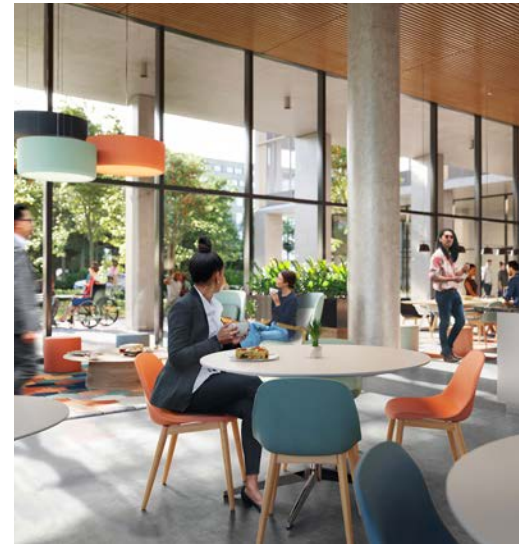


Image Credit: UC Davis

### UC Merced

UCM has already completed a \$1.2-billion project that includes classrooms, research labs, and student housing that allows the campus to increase enrollment by 2,000 students.\*\* UCM is also set to open a medical program that will increase graduate student enrollment by about 200 students\*\*\*



Image Credit: UC Merced



Image Credit: UC Merced

Sources: \*UC Davis, Aggie Square Development Official Website (2023).

\*\*UC Merced "Newsroom", September 8th, 2023.

\*\*\* EdSource, October 26th, 2021.



# THE UC SYSTEM

## Private Finance & UC Investment in Blackstone

### Does this address student housing needs?

In January 2023, The University of California's investment arm announced a \$4 billion investment into Blackstone's Real Estate Income Trust (BREIT).<sup>\*</sup> Blackstone, one of the nation's largest private equity firms, has long faced scrutiny for its role in the housing crisis. Critics accuse Blackstone of purchasing properties, increasing rents, and accruing equity for wealthy institutional investors. All the while, local residents are displaced from their homes and struggle to find affordable accommodations.

The decision to invest in BREIT is controversial with more than 40 organizations representing UC faculty, students, and workers, along with housing advocates condemning the deal, and demanding the university system divest from Blackstone. Critics argue that as the largest employer and landlord in the state, the University of California has a duty to ensure housing affordability and basic needs be met.<sup>\*\*</sup>

The UC itself has pledged to ensure affordable housing on numerous occasions and across its campuses. The investment in Blackstone does not follow this pledge and arguably contributes to housing scarcity by supporting the presence of private equity in the housing market.

Kathryn Lybarger, the President of American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 3299, says "essentially the UC is investing in a corporation that further drives UC's own workers' housing insecurity." Lybarger, like others, calls for more sustainable investments, ones that actually better the lives of students, staff, and faculty.<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

Sources: <sup>\*</sup>Reuters, January 3rd, 2023.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Jacobin, April 24th, 2023.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>ASFCME, January 13th, 2023.



Image Credit: UC

**Jagdeep Singh Bachher**

**University of California  
Chief Investment Officer and Vice President  
of Investments**

*Responsible for managing the UC pension, endowment, short-term, and total-return investment pools. He reports directly to the Board of Regents.*




Image Credit: Blackstone

**Stephen A. Schwarzman**

**The Blackstone Group  
Chairman & CEO**

*Involved in all phases of Blackstone's development and investment portfolio.*



***“The investment office has a fiduciary duty to generate market-rate returns, which rules out investing in reduced-rent housing for students or employees.”***

Nathan Brostrom, Chief Financial Officer  
University of California

# THE UC SYSTEM

Private Financing & UC Investment in Blackstone

Does this address student housing needs?



Representative Katie Porter was a full professor at UC Irvine's School of Law before joining Congress in 2018.

Image Credit: Office of Representative Katie Porter

## Crisis or Opportunity?

Rep. Katie Porter (D-CA), of Irvine responded to the Blackstone deal stating, **"while Californians struggle with the high cost of housing, private equity firms like Blackstone have exploited this ongoing crisis to pad their profits at the expense of students, workers, and families."** Porter, like many, calls for an end to 'Wall Street Landlords.'<sup>\*</sup>

Given the urgent need for affordable student housing across the UC system, UC investment in BREIT signals that the state's housing crisis is considered financially lucrative as opposed to a problem to solve. According to the deal's critics, **the Blackstone deal also does not guarantee a better rate of return over other traditional investments**. This leads many to believe, including experts and members of the general public, that this deal warrants much-needed additional scrutiny and transparency to understand the primary motivations guiding UC investment decisions.<sup>\*\*</sup>

## Our Concerns

For the Blum Center Student Leader Team, this investment deal raises more questions than answers. As students attending a public university, we want to understand why the university system's pension fund is at odds with its pledge to provide affordable student housing. **We want to know why sustainable and ethical investments are not being prioritized to improve conditions for UC students, faculty, and employees.**

Sources: <sup>\*</sup>*The American Prospect*, February 28th, 2023.

<sup>\*\*</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, January 20th, 2023.



# PRIVATE EQUITY & CORPORATIONS

## Corporate Landlords

### What are the consequences of increased corporate investment in available student housing stock?

Corporate landlords are large investment firms (hedge funds, private equity firms, or real estate investment trusts) that acquire single-family homes or apartment buildings in order to extract rent from tenants while holding properties for the long-term.



## Standout Facts


- Before 2010, institutional landlords didn't exist in the single-family market; now, there are **25-30 large corporate owners** of single-family units.\*
- Between 2011 and 2017, **\$36 billion** was spent on more than 200,000 homes by some of the largest private-equity groups and corporations in the world.\*\*
- A study conducted in Atlanta found that large corporate owners of single-family rentals were **8 percent** more likely than small landlords to file eviction notices.\*\*\*

Sources: \*New York Times, March 5, 2020.

\*\*The Atlantic, February 13, 2019.

\*\*\* Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta Study: Community and Economic Development Department (2016).



A multi-story apartment building with balconies and black railings. The building is light-colored with dark window frames. The balconies have black metal railings. The sky is clear and blue.

*"Students are the perfect market if you really want to make a profit on housing. Students make great tenants because you can pack them in, jack up rents, and ensure high turnover."*

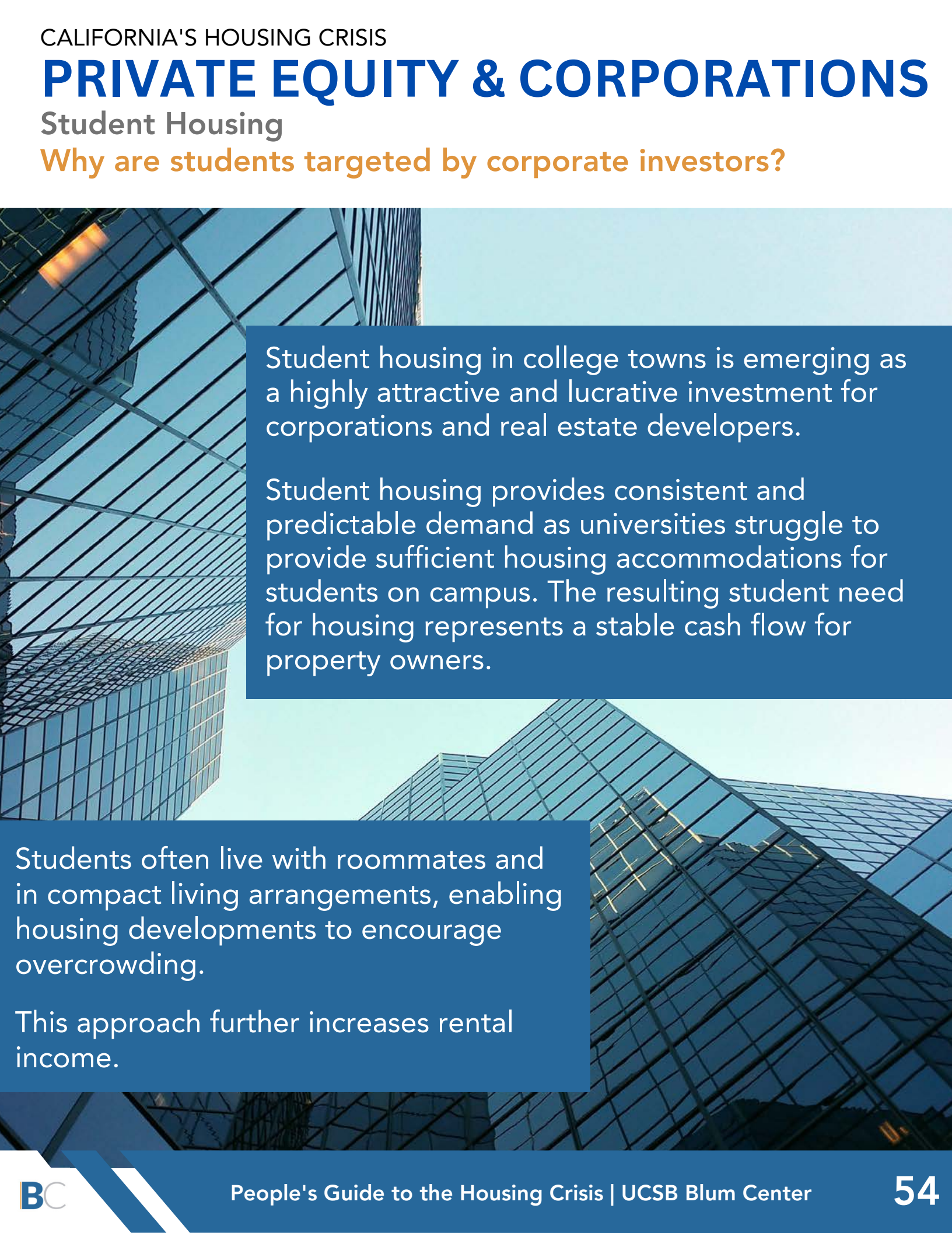
Dr. Richard Flacks  
Professor Emeritus of Sociology  
University of California, Santa Barbara

INTERVIEW WITH THE BC STUDENT LEADER TEAM

# PRIVATE EQUITY & CORPORATIONS

## Student Housing

### Why are students targeted by corporate investors?



Student housing in college towns is emerging as a highly attractive and lucrative investment for corporations and real estate developers.

Student housing provides consistent and predictable demand as universities struggle to provide sufficient housing accommodations for students on campus. The resulting student need for housing represents a stable cash flow for property owners.

Students often live with roommates and in compact living arrangements, enabling housing developments to encourage overcrowding.

This approach further increases rental income.





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## 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.

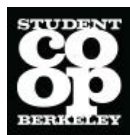
The board of directors at each co-op organization consists of members who live in the houses. Each member pays a monthly fee, which covers the cost of rent, utilities, and other expenses.

### 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.

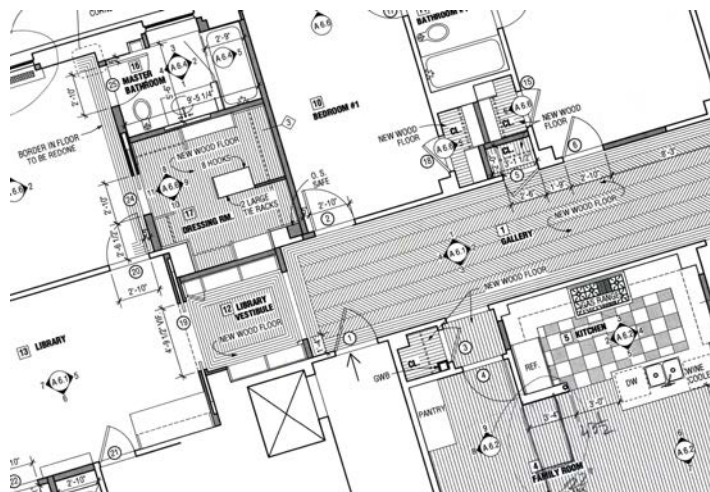
# UCSB CAMPUS PROJECTS

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.

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## Section 5



# CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL EQUITY INITIATIVE



Image Credit: Santa Barbara Independent



# THE CCREI INITIATIVE

## A Conversation About Regional Equity

*The Blum Center's **Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative (CCREI)** addresses widening inequities in the Central Coast region of California, which includes Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo counties.*

The Central Coast's high cost of housing is a key driver of inequity throughout the region and impacts the areas residents, which includes students. Access to affordable housing directly affects students' well-being and stability while achieving their academic goals. The CCREI's emphasis on finding meaningful solutions to address widening inequities also means students seeking a UC education are entitled to affordable housing.

### THIS SECTION INTRODUCES:

- The CCREI's Housing Pledge
- Santa Barbara's housing disparities identified in the 2021 CCREI Study, *Towards a Just and Equitable Central Coast*
- UCSB graduate students fighting for a Cost of Living Adjustment - UCSB 4 COLA
- UCSB graduate student experience
- Santa Barbara housing inequities
- Advancing the CCREI cause

Access the CCREI Study for data on Santa Barbara inequities:  
<https://centralcoastequity.org/regional-equity-study/>



# THE CCREI

## Housing & Equity Pledge

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A just and equitable central coast cannot be realized without access to affordable student housing. The Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative (CCREI) pledges to address housing by calling for, (1) the protection of tenants, preservation of communities, (2) making housing affordable for all, and (3) investment in inclusive, universally accessible infrastructures of opportunity and social provision.\*



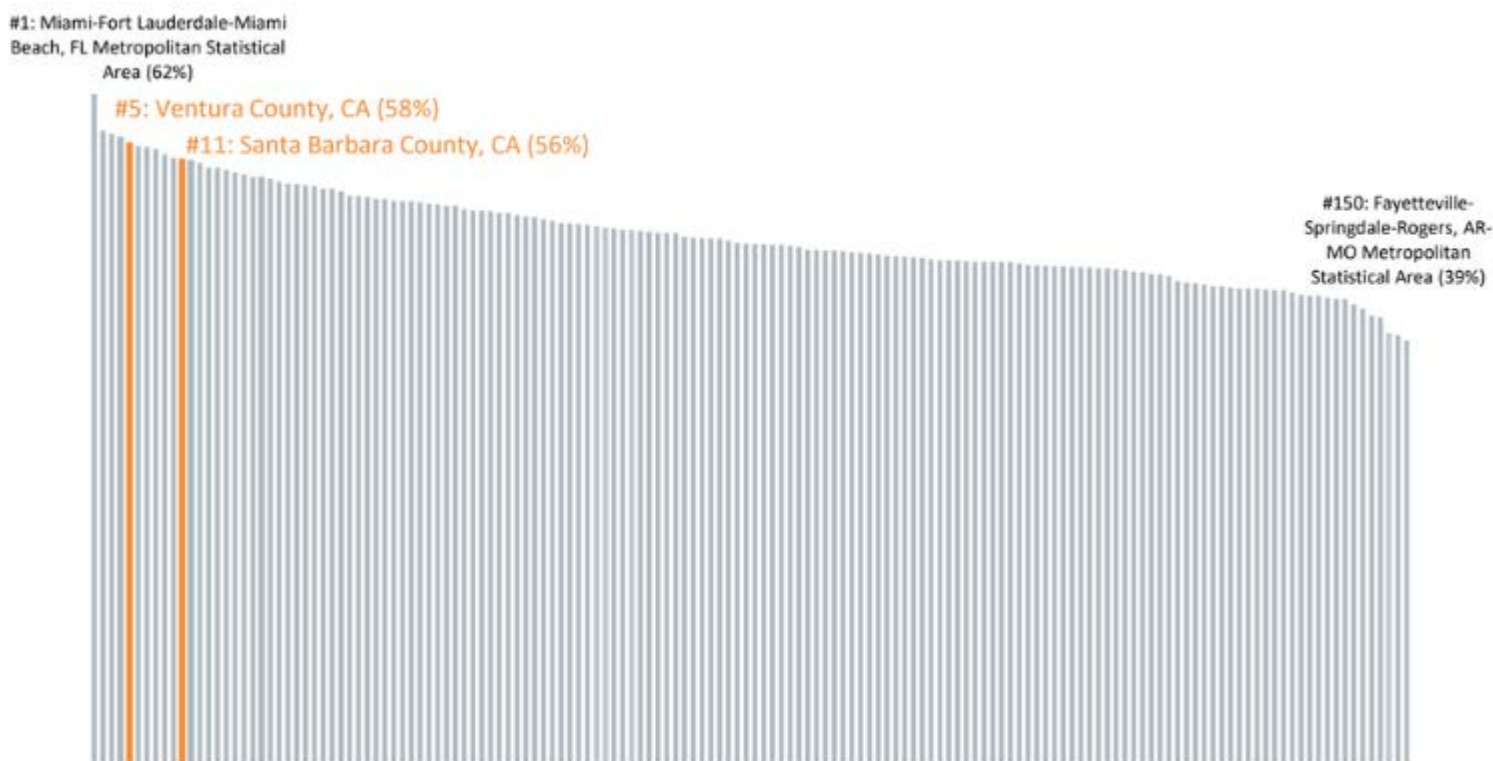
Source: \*UCSB Blum Center and The Fund for Santa Barbara, *Towards a Just and Equitable Coast* (2021), 6.

# THE CCREI STUDY

## Key Findings on Housing

In 2021 the first CCREI Study, *Towards a Just and Equitable Coast*, utilized data indicators to bring the region's socioeconomic inequities -- and the price we pay for them -- to light, and to establish guideposts for advancing regional equity. The study identifies the central role housing plays in exacerbating the region's high cost of living and driving widening inequities.

Figure 7: Top 150 Metro Areas Ranked by Rent Burden, 2018



*Santa Barbara was the **11th most rent-burdened city** in 2018. More than half of all Santa Barbara residents spend over 30% of their income on housing.\**

Source: \*UCSB Blum Center and The Fund for Santa Barbara, *Towards a Just and Equitable Coast* (2021), 18.



# STUDENT HOUSING & COLA

## Current Graduate Student Housing Experience

Many other UC campuses provide affordable subsidized housing for multiple years, however UCSB graduate students are **only guaranteed one year of housing at San Clemente**.



Average price of one-bedroom apartment in Santa Barbara in 2023: **\$2,540.\***

Teaching Assistant Salary: **\$3,433 a month for 9 months**

**85% of survey respondents** from the 2023 Graduate Student Association housing survey report being **rent burdened** with more than 30% of income being spent on rent.\*\*



Source: \*University of California Office of the President official website (2023).

\*\*UCSB Graduate Student Association official website (2023).



## COLA Strikes and Housing Inequity

In 2020, UCSB graduate students were the first to join UCSC students in a wildcat strike seeking **Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)**. The strike's purpose was to advocate for graduate students to receive a livable wage that addressed the high cost of housing. UCSB students staged daily protests to demonstrate their support for UC Santa Cruz. The strikes led to a number of student worker terminations at UCSC.\*



Image Credit: The Santa Barbara Independent

In 2022, the largest student strike in history took place with 48,000 student employees across all 10 University of California campuses. The strike reached a ratification vote in December 2022 to increase UCSB graduate student wages from a range of 16.5 to 25.1%. By October 2024, Teaching Assistants will earn approximately \$34,000 for a 9-month 50% appointment.\*\*

***65% of UCSB graduate students & postdocs voted that the ratified contract did not adequately address their COLA needs.\*\*\****

UCSB graduate TAs remain severely rent-burdened with 74% of their monthly salary necessary to cover the rent of a single-bedroom apartment in Santa Barbara.

Sources: \*Jillian Wertzberger, UCSB Associated Students Living History Project (2022).

\*\*/\*\* Santa Barbara Independent, December 26th, 2022.

# GRADUATE HOUSING

Emily Fox, UAW2865 Union Secretary



*[UCSB Grads] can only afford to live in unregulated units owned by landlords without permits from the city, which means they have few options for recourse against dangerous living conditions, unexpected evictions, or other forms of exploitation.*

*If we didn't have to work so many side jobs, we would be able to complete our programs quicker, produce higher quality research, have more time to dedicate to educating undergraduates, and have lower rates of anxiety and depression.*

*Many grads are forced to take on second, third, and fourth jobs on top of their studies and grad TA or Researcher positions just to make rent and afford food.*



**Emily Fox**  
UCSB Graduate student / UAW2865  
Secretary / Union Organizer

# MARKET INEQUITIES

## Santa Barbara's Affordability Crisis

The Central Coast Regional Equity Study has identified how scarcity within Santa Barbara's private housing market, and inadequate public investment in affordable housing, exacerbates housing inequities for UCSB students.

***"The housing market for renters is one of the most unaffordable in the nation."**\**



Since 1969, California counties and cities are required by state law to plan for adequate levels of low and middle-income housing. Santa Barbara had **CONSTRUCTED ONLY HALF OF THEIR ALLOTMENT** by 2021 for the 2015-2023 period.\*\*

A 2019 study by CAUSE found that 75% of residents experienced housing **HABITABILITY ISSUES** such as leaky roofs, pipes, mold, etc.\*\*\*

Low income renters, *which includes students*, are forced to compete in a tight rental housing market. Little subsidized housing is available. Much less so in the private housing market, resulting in **LACK OF AVAILABLE QUALITY HOUSING FOR UCSB STUDENTS.**

Sources: \*/\*\*UCSB Blum Center and The Fund for Santa Barbara, *Towards a Just and Equitable Coast* (2021), 70, 71.

\*\*\*Central Coast United for a Sustainable Alliance. *Housing Crisis 805* (2019), 10.



# SB INEQUITY POLITICS

Not In My Backyard

## Key takeaways from the 2021 CCREI Study

*"Homeowners have clashed with community activists who have called for more housing construction to lower housing costs... opponents of new housing... have largely won out in these political battles."\**

Current Santa Barbara property owners are politically resistant to increasing affordable housing in their community fearing that it would lower property values.

Communities of color, low income earners including students, and immigrants are most likely to be harmed by these restrictive housing politics due to their limited voice and influence in Santa Barbara housing policy.



Source: \*UCSB Blum Center and The Fund for Santa Barbara, *Towards a Just and Equitable Coast* (2021), 72.

# ADVANCING THE CCREI CAUSE

How has UCSB aligned with the CCREI's equity-centered principles?

***The CCREI supports investment in inclusive, universally accessible infrastructures of opportunity and social provision.***

## We have a long way to go:

- Munger Hall student housing project has since been canceled. It is not yet determined when more student housing resources will be available.
- Even with a new contract, graduate students' COLA needs remain. UCSB has yet to announce a plan to expand graduate access to affordable housing.
- Santa Barbara is not yet constructing an adequate supply of affordable housing, both private and public.
- Santa Barbara homeowners politically oppose new construction of affordable housing which affects students.

## What we can do:

- Advocate for students, regardless of income, race, ethnicity, & gender identity, affordable access to a UC education, which includes housing.
- Advocate against the privatization of higher ed.
- Advocate for public university resources to be applied to providing affordable housing.





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## Addendum



# CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES



**BASIC NEEDS RESOURCES**

HOME ABOUT RESOURCES EVENTS AND ACADEMICS ENGAGE CRISIS RESPONSE REGION

Home

HOME

**COVID-19 UPDATE**  
Click here to view new resources and updates.

**URGENT CRISIS?**  
View critical resources here.

**FOOD**  
resources

**HOUSING**  
resources

**FINANCIAL**  
resources

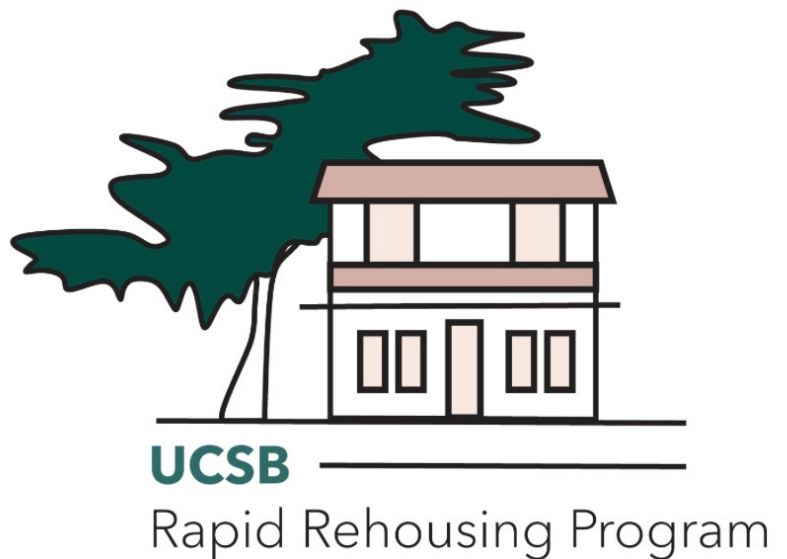
**WELLBEING**  
resources

**TECHNOLOGY**  
resources

**ACADEMIC**  
resources

**Get Advice**  
Individual sessions with a trained Basic Needs Peer Advisor.

**Drop-In Advising**



# CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES

## Student success requires accessible and affordable housing

Consistent and accessible housing is critical to ensuring UCSB students complete their academic goals and graduate on time. The lack of access to affordable housing is the #1 reason UCSB students may be forced to drop out of school. When UCSB students lose their housing due to an unexpected expense, they may stop attending for a quarter with plans to save money and return, but in reality, most of these students will never go on to complete their degree.

Housing is also directly connected to student's basic needs. If a student cannot afford rent, they will forego meals as food becomes the first area of their budget they cut back on. Some students will turn to the food pantry, but there is a social stigma associated with using it. Students will make great sacrifices to get their degree.

*Students from low-income households should not have to take on more debt to ensure they have housing and can complete their degree.*



There is a clear correlation between student loan debt and housing. The most vulnerable students are those who come from low-income households. The financial aid provided is the bare minimum needed to survive as a student and nothing more. Consequently, when students run into an unexpected emergency, they may take out unsubsidized student loans that can rapidly balloon to \$50-60,000. As student housing costs continue to rise, more UCSB students are requiring campus housing resources to maintain their enrollment.

# CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES

## Basic Needs Program

<https://food.ucsb.edu>



## Housing & Food

UCSB's Basic Needs Program provides resources for UCSB students, staff, and faculty to have healthy food options, support for the campus food justice movement, and creating a "more sustainable and just food system." They provide in-person or virtual assistance and drop-in peer advising to discuss all aspects of student basic needs, including housing.

UCSB's Basic Needs Housing Resources is for all UCSB students, irrespective of immigration status, gender, or sexual orientation. Resources include:

## Affordable Housing Resources

<https://food.ucsb.edu/resources/housing/affordable-housing>

## University & Community Resources

UCSB's Affordable Housing Resources provides off-campus rental listings, landlord or roommate dispute resolution, rental rights and responsibilities, and more.

Affordable Housing Resources also connects to Santa Barbara's Student Housing Cooperative, the Isla Vista Tenants Union, Workforce Housing Program, and the City of Santa Barbara Affordable Housing Program.



*Read on to learn more about specific university and community housing resources.*



# CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES

## Rapid Rehousing Program

<https://food.ucsb.edu/resources/housing/emergency-transitional-housing>

UCSB's Rapid Rehousing Program Exists to support students who are at immediate risk of being houseless. The program provides:

- transitional housing
- housing vouchers
- support for long-term solutions to address students' basic needs.



UCSB Rapid Rehousing Program

## Financial Crisis Response Team

<https://food.ucsb.edu/resources/housing/financial-assistance>



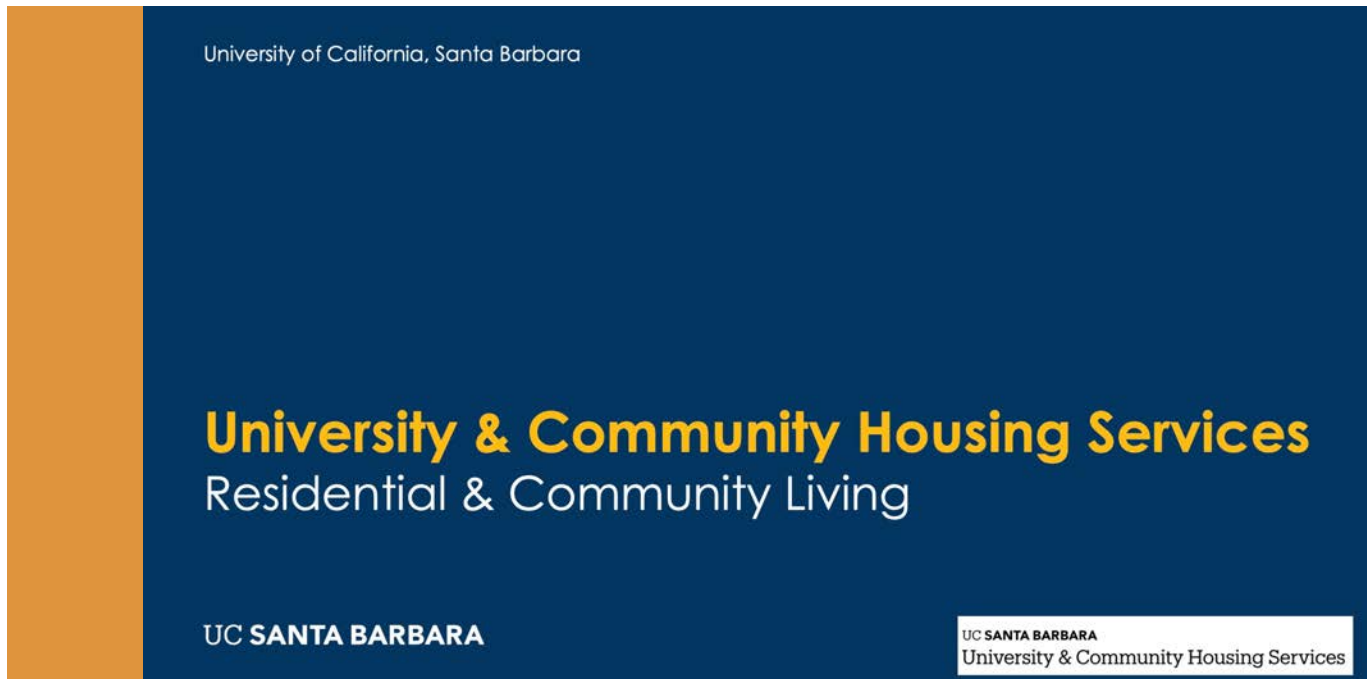
UCSB's Financial Crisis Response Team assists with:

- rental deposit assistance
- housing rent vouchers
- cost of attendance adjustments
- a host of other resources for students in crisis.

# CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES

## UCSB's University & Community Housing Services

Official Resources & Approved Materials:



## SERVICES WE PROVIDE

- **UCSB housing contracts & assignments services**

- <https://www.housing.ucsb.edu/>
- Residence Halls
- University Apartments
- Graduate Housing
- Family Student Housing

- **Community housing**

- Rental Listings website
- Roommate conflicts
- Receive one-on-one assistance from our staff on your housing needs
- Landlord/ tenant disputes
- Educational programs
- Forms and brochures
- Success Guide
  - <https://www.housing.ucsb.edu/student-success-guide>

# CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES

## UCSB's University & Community Housing Services, cont'd.

### Community Housing

Available for a variety of housing needs!

- Rental listing database
- Move in/ Move out Videotaping to secure your deposit
- Rights and responsibilities
- Educational programs
- Mediation and advising



#### How To Use Our Rental Listing Database

- 1 Go to our website: [rentallistings.housing.ucsb.edu](http://rentallistings.housing.ucsb.edu)
- 2 Scroll to LOGIN (top right) and click STUDENT LOGIN
- 3 Sign in with your UCSBnetID and password
- 4 Search/filter listings. Our site is only used by UCSB-affiliated individuals & property providers

UC SANTA BARBARA  
University & Community Housing Services

UCSB

### Community housing vacancy list & resources

We have an updated community housing vacancy list that is a google doc and we update this weekly

If you would like access to this you can email our office directly at [housinginfo@housing.ucsb.edu](mailto:housinginfo@housing.ucsb.edu)





# CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES

UCSB's University & Community  
Housing Services, cont'd.

## Reviewing Your Lease

### Reviewing Your Lease

Make sure to have us look over  
your lease with you before you  
sign it! Have some questions  
prepared, and then anything you  
want to know we will review with  
you.



## Move In/ Move Out Videotaping



### Saving Your Security Deposit

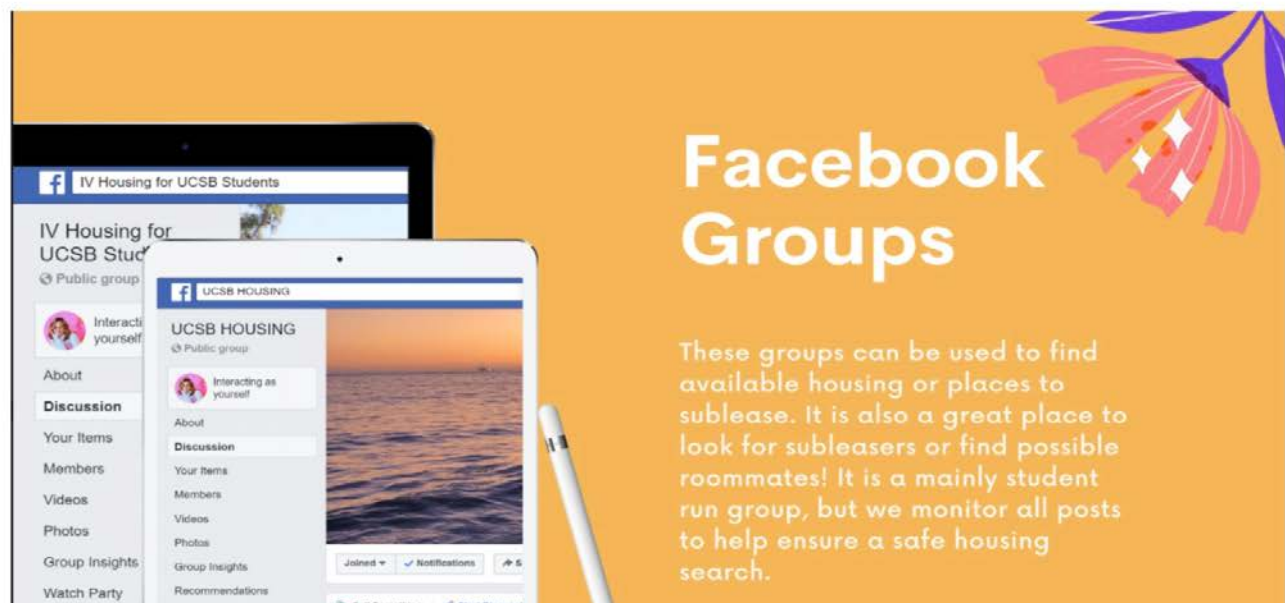
Make sure to have us record your  
home before you move in, and after  
you move out. This will help to save  
your security deposit as you will  
have evidence of what your home  
looked like before and after you  
lived there.

# CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES

## UCSB's University & Community Housing Services, cont'd.

### BEWARE OF SCAMS!

Do NOT sign anything or send money until you check with our office first!



### Off Campus Resources

#### AS Legal Resource

- <https://legal.as.ucsb.edu/>
- (805) 893-4246
- Zoom appointments available

#### Isla Vista Community Service District

- Rental housing mediation services
- (805)-770-2752
- [islavistamediation@gmail.com](mailto:islavistamediation@gmail.com)

#### Isla Vista Tenants Union (IVTU)

- <https://ivtu.as.ucsb.edu/>
- (805) 968 – 6704
- [ivtenantsunion@gmail.com](mailto:ivtenantsunion@gmail.com)

# CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES

## UCSB's University & Community Housing Services, cont'd.

### UCSB Basic Needs Resources

- Peer to peer guidance on what resources are available to you and might meet your needs.
- <https://food.ucsb.edu/resources/housing>
- [thrive@ucsb.edu](mailto:thrive@ucsb.edu)
- 805-893-2786
- Open M-Fri 9am-5pm Next to Jamba Juice - drop ins welcome

### Peer Housing Advocates/Advisors

- Can help you go through listings and provide peer support
- Book an Appointment on this page: <https://food.ucsb.edu/>
- [sa-housingadvocate@ucsb.edu](mailto:sa-housingadvocate@ucsb.edu)

### UC **SANTA BARBARA**

## University & Community Housing Services

- Email: [housinginfo@housing.ucsb.edu](mailto:housinginfo@housing.ucsb.edu)
- Phone Number: 805-893-4371
- Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-430pm
- Website: [www.housing.ucsb.edu](http://www.housing.ucsb.edu)
- 3rd Floor of the UCEN

