

UC Regents approve use of nine acres of land as possible site for conference center

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The Regents of the University of California Friday (May 18) approved the use of nine acres of land adjacent to the northwest corner of the UC San Diego campus as a possible site for a conference center.

The Regents, meeting in San Francisco, approved the recommendation of its Committee on Grounds and Buildings that the site at the east end of the campus gliderport and adjacent to the Torrey Pines Golf Course be designated as an "inclusion area" for development of a conference center.

The concept of inclusion areas was established by The Regents in 1967 to ensure the availability of land adjacent to campuses for development of programs which cannot be accommodated on university property such as conference centers, shopping areas or housing.

Dr. William D. McElroy, chancellor of the University of California, San Diego, said construction of the conference center would fulfill the need for educationally related conferences generated by the educational and scientific community of San Diego. He cited the needs of the strong academic and research programs of the general San Diego campus, Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the School of Medicine, plus those of the Extension program and the continuing education program of the School of Medicine,

In addition, he said, several institutions located near the campus, including the Salk Institute, Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation, General Atomic and Calbiochem, have similar scientific missions and needs for conference facilities.

In addition, according to McElroy, it is believed that national educational and scientific societies and governmental organizations such as the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health would also make use of the facility.

The proposed conference center, described as a "facility designed for educational conferences and containing living facilities necessary to support those attending such conferences," would be developed, owned and operated by private interests on land leased on a long-term basis from the university. It would contain specially designed meeting rooms for up to 400 persons which would include equipment for audio visual and television presentations. It would also include 200 motel rooms, restaurants, tennis courts and a swimming pool.

The center would be operated by the developer, McElroy said. However, since the center is to be used for educational and scientific conferences, it has been proposed that a governing board that would include representatives from the developer, the City of San Diego and members from the scientific community, be established to guide the operation of the facility.

According to Donald H. Sites, UC San Diego associate vice chancellor for facilities management, the project will go back to The Regents in July for approval and permission to go to prospective developers for submission of proposals. Once a developer is selected, the project is expected to take two to three years for completion, Sites said.

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