

Stanford - lands  
**STANFORD UNIVERSITY NEWS SERVICE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STANFORD - Stanford's use of its land endowment--long a major source of funds for the support of education--may become a major campus issue this fall, according to several student leaders.

In a number of publications the students have questioned the University's management of the vast acreages under its control, contending that valuable open space has been sacrificed to meet the needs of corporate interests. In the process, they say, Stanford has created a shortage of low-rent housing in the area, and is doing little to alleviate it.

"Stanford land development is so guilty," says Michael Sweeney, a senior active in last spring's demonstrations. "Stanford has been simply oblivious to the real problems of the community, encouraging only luxury housing and industry."

Barry Askinas, one of four student body presidents, reports that "students are upset by some of the corporations in the Industrial Park and their relationship to the University--the number that are part of the military-industrial complex, and the fact that many are very closely related to the various departments in the School of Engineering."

The issue has overtones of the People's Park controversy in Berkeley, according to Victor Von Schlegeli, former student body vice-president. "It's a question of what right the Board of Trustees and one office of the University have to determine the use of University land without consideration of the people in the area."

"The people in the area do determine our land use," responds Boyd Smith, manager of real estate in the office mentioned, Business Affairs. "They decide directly, through the decisions of their elected representatives. They and their representatives decide whether to annex our land, how it shall be zoned and used, and if our land use meets city needs, and requirements."

"On the campus, a faculty-student-staff advisory committee has reviewed and endorsed all our land use plans, our leases, and the specific development of lots, roads, buildings, and landscaping."

Bringing the issue to the forefront has been the proposed development of two parcels of Stanford land: a 20-acre plot on the southeast corner of El Camino Real and Page Mill Road, and 143 acres of land surrounding a 58.5-acre academic reserve site on Coyote Hill. Plans for a high-rise financial center on the 20-acre parcel were approved by the Palo Alto City Council on September 8, as were lot division plans for Industrial Park leases around the Hill.

Conservationists, students and some Los Altos Hills residents have objected to land development around the Hill, which was zoned by the City of Palo Alto for research park use in 1960. The zoning was confirmed in a public referendum in the same year and reaffirmed in 1967. The University has spent more than \$1 million in city-approved roads in preparation for development, Smith says.

Stanford began developing its lands in 1951 to obtain revenue for its educational programs, to offset rising property taxes, and to protect the land from condemnation by neighboring communities. Stanford must pay property taxes on all land not in academic use. Last year the taxes totaled \$670,000. Property is leased for periods up to 51 years, then reverts back to the University. It is thus in interim use, earning income while being held for future academic needs. (more) 10/2/70

Since 1951, the program has provided the University with a net income of \$33.5 million. This has been invested and in 1968 yielded \$1.8 million. The income will increase as the program continues and as interest compounds. Land development is therefore an important source of unrestricted funds for the University.

The funds are available for such purposes as salary improvements, minority student programs, educational innovations, and many other needs that are unforeseen or that lack sources of support. "So on one hand the University is being told to stop land development that earns new and urgently needed funds, and on the other hand it is being asked to find the money to finance new and urgently needed projects," Smith says. "Some people would like to have their cake and eat it too."

He points out that the University has leased out only 11% of its property, or 950 of its original 8800 acres. Nearly 700 acres have been condemned for public use.

"The fact of the matter is, Stanford has placed far more land in the academic reserve than it has developed. The reserve has been increased from 2250 to 5200 of Stanford's 8800 acres in the past 15 years. It is the biggest and fastest growing segment of our land."

More than 4000 of the academic reserve acres are in the foothills and in terms of people are very lightly used, Smith adds. They include the radiosience farm, Jasper Ridge Biological Reserve and the Coyote Hill Reserve.

"Where we have developed, we have made it a policy from the beginning to do so with maximum aesthetic standards. In the Coyote Hill area, for example, the Reserve, a 35-50 acre public golf course, a landscaped buffer strip along Arastradero Road, and the City's requirement that 30% of each lot be left entirely open will result in more than half the project remaining in open space even when fully completed."

In addition, there are 2200 acres of undeveloped land outside the academic reserve.

Another charge has been that Stanford is recklessly exploiting its lands to make money. Smith says that exactly the opposite is the case.

"Stanford's development standards are unsurpassed anywhere else in the country. There is no question that we could earn far more from our land if our development policies were less stringent. We could make our lots smaller, we could lower our architectural standards and landscaping requirements, we could build more densely, we could require less building and landscaping maintenance. It costs tenants much more to build at Stanford and much more to operate. But they are willing to pay this in order to provide their employees with a high quality working environment and to be near the University."

The greatest financial beneficiary from Stanford land use is the city of Palo Alto, Smith adds. This year the University and its tenants in the city will pay a total of \$10.1 million in city, school and county taxes and for municipal services.

What about the charge that Stanford is catering to the interests of the military-industrial complex? "Yes, there are some firms involved in national defense efforts, an essential activity supported by the majority of the people in this country," Smith says. "There also are many more firms producing goods and services destined to meet civilian needs."

(more)

He lists such tenants as the world's leading producer of birth control pills, a company seeking an insecticide that will not harm the environment, one working on new ways to introduce drugs into the body, and a leader in the educational computer field.

On the low-rent housing question, Smith points out that Peninsula population growth, the tight money situation, and rising construction costs all have contributed to the problem in the area. Those who say that Stanford should have built public housing years ago to meet today's need are engaging in hindsight, he says. "Only a few years ago, the apartment vacancy rate in the area was 30%, and apartment construction was at a standstill."

Today, Stanford's land development plans in no way conflict with the University's low-rent housing plans, Smith emphasizes. Several locations on the campus have been mentioned as possible sites for a housing project, but none of them is endangered by development activities.

Last spring a student-faculty-staff committee recommended that 400-800 units be built on Stanford land to help alleviate the local housing shortage. The Board of Trustees authorized the "urgent exploration" of a study by the University. Alan S. Maremont of San Francisco has been retained as an adviser for the program, and a broadly-representative faculty-staff-student committee is to be named to work with him.

In the meantime, Stanford is building housing to accommodate 602 students, has provided mobile home accommodations for 468 more, and is considering additional student and faculty-staff units. Since 1959, the University has built new housing for 2244 students, reports University Business Manager Dwight Adams.

"Stanford is one of the national leaders among private institutions in the provision of housing for its students," Adams notes. "We already have 6000 students in residence. This effort of the campus obviously has helped to free space for others off the campus."

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