

Alternative Housing Sites Report

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By: SOGA Leadership

In our efforts to convince UC Berkeley administrators that the Oxford Tract/ land should not be developed, we have often been asked that we present them with alternate sites to consider for housing. Many of our conversations have centered around the potential sites that we believe should have been more strongly considered by the Housing Master Task Force. Those are included in this report. However, we feel it is important to note that as students, we are not the ones who are equipped to answer this question, and we do not have the resources to do a comprehensive analysis of these sites. It is not fair that the responsibility to explore other options has fallen onto our shoulders, and the appropriate University departments should be working to create a more extensive and innovative list of potential sites.

Rather than looking at the sites that the University chose to explore in the original Housing Master Plan Task Force Report, most of which would only provide approximately 200 beds, we think it is important to highlight the sites that were mysteriously absent from the report. There are other viable sites for housing that are already University-owned and could provide higher yields in terms of units of housing, but are not being explored sufficiently. A few of these sites are listed below.

Clark Kerr Campus: 2601 Warring St.

The Clark Kerr campus is currently a site of student housing, but it is not providing nearly as many beds as it has the potential to. The entire campus is Spanish missionary-style dorms, with each building standing **only two stories tall and providing a limited number of students with extremely expensive, luxury suites and rooms**. The Clark Kerr Campus was constructed in the 1930s and **over half of its buildings are currently not in use** because they are in a state of decay and are not up to code. We have been told that a barrier to building on Clark Kerr campus is a covenant between the UC and the Claremont Elmwood Neighborhood Association (CENA) which restricted development there, which constructing on that space would violate. However, the covenant is supposed to end in 2032, and with the developing on Oxford Tract projected to be a 10-year long project, developing Clark Kerr appears to be a feasible option that would provide a high number of beds. Additionally, this would not require relocation of any facilities that are currently in use for other purposes.

Proposed Hotel Development Site: 2161 University Ave., 1990 Oxford St.

Last year, the University had plans to build an “up-scale”, full-service hotel extremely close to the Berkeley campus. The plans ended up falling through because of difficulties with funding, but the University has already bought out the businesses that are currently on the property, and also have all of the necessary research done in preparation for development. This seems to be an ideal site for

new housing, yet it was not one of the options on the Housing Survey that was distributed in spring of last year.

Out-of-Use BAMPFA Building: 2625 Durant Ave.

Previously known as Woo Han Fai Hall, this structure housed the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Archive (BAMPFA) before it relocated. This enormous building still stands untouched, even though it is **seismically unsafe and cannot be used**. The space is directly across the street from campus, making it an ideal location for new dorm spaces. This space however was not presented as a possible site to put new student housing, and the University has not been at all transparent about what the space will eventually be used for. We have been told that it is being tentatively reserved for some sort of administrative building, but in the face of a housing crisis we have to wonder why this space is not even considered in the Housing Task Force Report.

These are just a few of the sites that we believe should have been considered more seriously for development into student housing. Overall, they demonstrate a trend of the University not exploring all possible options, and instead choosing sites such as Oxford Tract that already provide an extremely important service to our community.

Original Housing Task Force Report:

http://evcp.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/housing_master_plan_task_force_final_draft_january_2017.pdf