UC SANTA CRUZ
DIVISION OF FINANCE, OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION
University of California, Santa Cruz

May 12, 2026

Dear VEST Commission Members:

Thank you for your correspondence dated April 13, 2026. We appreciate the feedback provided by VEST regarding the parking and programs proposal announced earlier this year. This dialogue is essential to our process, and I will try to address the Commission's concerns and provide additional context regarding the proposal.

We acknowledge concerns regarding the consultation timeline. Under our Collective Bargaining Agreements, we are contractually required to provide formal notice to labor unions before engaging broader campus stakeholders. Please note that this initiative remains a proposal; consultation is ongoing, and final decisions regarding rate adjustments and specific infrastructure projects—including pedestrian improvements—have not yet been reached.

Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS) operates as a self-supporting auxiliary enterprise. It relies entirely on user revenues and receives no state funding or tuition revenue. This revenue supports the full spectrum of campus mobility, including infrastructure maintenance, parking operations, and critical Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs. Our TDM initiatives—such as the Vanpool, Employee METRO bus passes, Safe Ride, and bicycle infrastructure (including BCycle)—are vital to meeting the university's sustainability and safety goals.

Parking rate adjustments are necessitated by significant economic shifts. Since our last rate increase in FY19, cumulative inflation and the resulting increased costs have reached approximately 30%. In contrast, TAPS gross revenues for FY25 were only 7% higher than FY19 levels. This modest growth is insufficient to cover the rising costs of labor, materials, and the new operational expenses TAPS has resumed post-COVID.

The proposal outlines a tiered approach to rate increases to mitigate the impact on students. While most permits will follow the schedule indicated in your letter, undergraduate-eligible permits (R and C) will see lower annual increases based on our current projections:

- Through FY30: 7% annual increase
- Through FY35: 6% annual projected increase
- Thereafter: 5% annual projected increase

Regarding the Student Transit Fee, it is important to clarify that this fee is independent of the current proposal and does not fund parking operations rather campus shuttles and Santa Cruz Metro access. Further details on its specific allocations can be found here.

Regarding the Core West debt service: TAPS resumed responsibility for these payments effective July 1, 2025. While the campus briefly assumed this debt starting in 2021 to provide pandemic-related financial relief, returning this obligation to parking revenue is consistent with the garage's original funding model. Leaving this cost in central funds would have necessitated further budget cuts to essential campus services. Although R and C permits are restricted in Core West during peak hours, the facility serves the broader campus community, including the student body through options such as ParkMobile, Night Commuter, and Motorcycle parking.

We appreciate the feedback and recognize the impact of the proposed rate changes on campus events. TAPS is collaborating with the Arts Division and has worked with the Seymour Center to implement affiliate rates that support their education and outreach missions. TAPS acknowledges the importance of supporting the teaching, research and public engagement mission of the university and remains open to partnerships with other stakeholders.

While we understand the broader challenges of the cost of living, parking rates are designed to manage campus parking and TDM programs rather than address housing affordability. However, increased revenue allows us to augment programs like Vanpool, which directly reduces commute costs for our community.

TAPS remains committed to innovation. Recent shifts, such as prioritizing R permit access for off-campus students and implementing virtual parking permits and Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR), demonstrate our focus on efficiency. Continued investment will allow us to further leverage technology to improve the campus experience.

Thank you again for your engagement. We look forward to our future work together.

Sincerely,



Edward D. Reiskin
Chief Financial Officer & Vice Chancellor for Finance, Operations, and Administration

cc: Cynthia Larive, Chancellor
Clement Stokes, Associate Vice Chancellor, Risk and Safety Service
Dan Henderson, Executive Director, Transportation and Parking Services