

# 1 INTRODUCTION

This draft environmental impact report (Draft EIR) evaluates the environmental impacts of the proposed California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly) 2035 Master Plan (2035 Master Plan or project). This Draft EIR has been prepared under the direction of California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees (Trustees) in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines. This chapter of the Draft EIR provides information on the following:

- ▶ project requiring environmental analysis (synopsis);
- ▶ type, purpose, and intended uses of the Draft EIR;
- ▶ scope of the Draft EIR;
- ▶ agency roles and responsibilities; and
- ▶ standard terminology.

## 1.1 PROJECT REQUIRING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The following is a synopsis of the project characteristics. For further information on the 2035 Master Plan, see Chapter 2, Project Description.

The Trustees require every CSU campus to have a Master Plan depicting existing and anticipated facilities “necessary to accommodate a specified enrollment at an estimated planning horizon, in accordance with approved educational policies and objectives” (CSU 2012a). Master Plans are based on annual full-time-equivalent-student (FTES) college year enrollment targets prepared by each campus in consultation with the CSU Chancellor’s Office (CSU 2012b). The 2035 Master Plan is a long-range planning document that guides the development and use of campus lands to accommodate growth in student enrollment and in fulfillment of Cal Poly’s academic mission. As a long-term guide for development of the campus, the 2035 Master Plan is intended to address future enrollment capacity rather than specific enrollment fluctuations on a year-to-year basis.

To that end, the 2035 Master Plan identifies new/improved academic facilities, additional housing, recreation and athletics facilities, and other support facilities and services on campus that are necessary to accommodate the projected increase in enrollment at Cal Poly and academic needs through 2035. This would include approximately 7,200 new student beds; an additional 1.29 million gross square feet (gsf) of new academic, administrative, and support space; 380 residential units intended primarily for faculty/staff with supporting uses (retail and recreational space); and a 200-unit University-Based Retirement Community. In addition, 455,000 gsf of existing academic, administrative, and support space would be replaced with new facilities, for a total of 1.75 million gsf of new or replaced academic, administrative, and support space.

The 2035 Master Plan includes anticipated projects and improvements through the 2035 planning horizon, identifying the land use pattern and forecasting the facilities needs of the campus as enrollment grows and programs adapt, to meet the needs of the changing campus. Although it is a long-range planning document, it needs to be revisited periodically for adjustments and amendments as University interests change. The University anticipates that the 2035 Master Plan would be revisited and updated periodically to ensure it is still on track with University goals.

The 2035 Master Plan also includes goals that help shape Cal Poly’s future image within the academic setting, the community, and the environment. The underlying purpose of the 2035 Master Plan, as developed by Cal Poly’s leadership, is to “lay out the land use, circulation, and physical development of the campus to educate a future

student enrollment of 25,000 headcount and 22,500 full-time-equivalent students (FTES).<sup>1</sup> While the expression of a physical master plan is most easily seen in maps and accompanying diagrams, those visual elements are based on numerous ideas about what a campus should look like and how it should function. Those ideas have been largely articulated in the 2035 Master Plan as guiding principles. In addition to guiding principles, the planning process involved the development of more detailed "Master Plan Principles." Development of the 2035 Master Plan Principles came from the work of six advisory committees appointed by the President and assigned to focus on different topics.

## 1.2 PURPOSE AND INTENDED USES OF THE ~~DRAFT~~ EIR

As noted above, this ~~Draft~~ EIR has been prepared under the Trustees' direction in accordance with the requirements of CEQA (PRC Sections 21000-21177) and the State CEQA Guidelines (CCR Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000-15387). The Trustees serve as the lead agency under CEQA for consideration of certification of this EIR and potential project approval; CCR Section 151367 defines the lead agency as the agency with principal responsibility for carrying out and approving a project. Cal Poly is part of the CSU, a constitutionally created entity of the state of California with the power to consider and provides authority for all land use decisions on property owned or controlled by the CSU that are in furtherance of the CSU's education purposes.

According to CEQA, preparation of an EIR is required whenever it can be fairly argued, based on substantial evidence, that a proposed project may result in a significant environmental impact. An EIR is an informational document used to inform public-agency decision makers and the general public of the significant environmental impacts of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant impacts, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project while substantially lessening or avoiding any of the significant environmental impacts. Public agencies are required to consider the information presented in the EIR when determining whether to approve a project. This ~~Draft~~ EIR has been prepared to meet the requirements of a program EIR as defined by Section 15168 of the State CEQA Guidelines. As described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(a), a program EIR may be prepared for a series of action that can be characterized as one large project and are related either:

- (1) geographically;
- (2) as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions;
- (3) in connection with the issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program; or
- (4) as individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental impacts which can be mitigated in similar ways."

A program EIR can be used as the basic, general environmental assessment for an overall program of projects developed over a multi-year planning horizon, and therefore is an appropriate review document for the 2035 Master Plan. A program EIR has several advantages. For example, it provides a basic reference document to avoid unnecessary repetition of facts or analysis in subsequent project-specific assessments. It also allows the lead agency to consider the broad, regional impacts of a program of actions before its adoption and eliminates redundant or contradictory approaches to the consideration of regional and cumulative impacts.

As noted in Chapter 2, "Project Description," this ~~Draft~~ EIR evaluates the entire program/plan and also identifies several near-term projects that would likely be developed in the first 10 years of plan implementation. This ~~Draft~~ EIR also identifies alternatives to the 2035 Master Plan that would reduce or avoid potential adverse environmental effects. Mitigation measures are identified in this EIR which, if adopted, would be implemented to reduce and minimize physical environmental effects of the 2035 Master Plan components, where feasible. Implementation of

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<sup>1</sup> The FTES calculation is based on the assumption that full-time undergraduate and graduate students are expected to enroll in 15 units and 12 units, respectively, each quarter. FTES, as a metric, is lower than headcount because not all students take full-time loads each term. "Academic Year FTES" (AY FTES) refers to the average FTES for the fall, winter, and spring terms.

mitigation measures will be monitored to ensure implementation as the 2035 Master Plan moves forward in a manner consistent with the Final EIR.

## 1.3 SCOPE OF THE DRAFT EIR

The Draft EIR includes an evaluation of the following 14 environmental issue areas as well as other CEQA-mandated issues (e.g., cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, significant unavoidable impacts, alternatives):

- ▶ Aesthetics;
- ▶ Agriculture and Forestry Resources;
- ▶ Air Quality;
- ▶ Archaeological, Historical, and Tribal Cultural Resources;
- ▶ Biological Resources;
- ▶ Energy;
- ▶ Geology and Soils;
- ▶ Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
- ▶ Hydrology and Water Quality;
- ▶ Noise;
- ▶ Population and Housing;
- ▶ Public Services and Recreation;
- ▶ Transportation; and
- ▶ Utilities and Service Systems.

Under the CEQA statutes and the State CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency may limit an EIR's discussion of environmental effects when such effects are not considered potentially significant (PRC Section 21002.1[e]; State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15128, 15143). A determination of which impacts would be potentially significant was made for this project based on review of the information presented in the Initial Study (IS) prepared for the project (see Appendix A of this Draft EIR), comments received as part of the public scoping process, as well as additional research and analysis of relevant project data during preparation of the Draft EIR. Based on the findings of the IS, it was determined that impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, and mineral resources did not require further evaluation as part of the Draft EIR.

## 1.4 RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

Under CEQA, responsible agencies are state and local public agencies other than the lead agency that have the authority to carry out or approve a project or that are required to approve a portion of the project for which a lead agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR. Trustee agencies are state agencies with legal jurisdiction over natural resources affected by a project that are held in trust for the people of the state of California.

The following agencies may have responsibility for or jurisdiction over implementation of elements of the project. The following list also identifies potential permits and other approval actions that may be required before implementation of certain project elements. The list is not intended to imply that specific permits or actions would occur; rather, it lists agencies that *may* have responsibilities over project components and the potential associated reasons. Chapter 3 of this EIR provides detailed analysis that explores further the potential for the need for responsible agency action.

This EIR and any environmental analysis relying on this EIR are expected to be used to satisfy CEQA requirements of the listed responsible and trustee agencies. Further, this analysis is anticipated to provide useful information for any federal agency that may issue a permit in support of 2035 Master Plan development.

### FEDERAL AGENCIES

- ▶ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Section 404 Permit.
- ▶ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Compliance with federal Endangered Species Act for potential take of listed species (if needed).

## STATE AGENCIES

- ▶ California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement and compliance with California Endangered Species Act for potential take of listed species (if needed).
- ▶ California Department of Transportation: Encroachment Permit.
- ▶ California Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams: Permitting related to expanded storage reservoirs
- ▶ California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC): Permitting for grade separated crossings of UPRR tracks.
- ▶ State Fire Marshal: Future facility fire safety review and approval.

## REGIONAL AND LOCAL AGENCIES

- ▶ City of San Luis Obispo: Encroachment Permits for work within City's streets and rights-of-way.
- ▶ County of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department: Encroachment Permits, e.g., Stenner Creek Road.
- ▶ Regional Water Quality Control Board: Section 401 Certification and Storm Water Discharge Permits.
- ▶ San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (APCD): Air Quality Construction and Operational. Permits.
- ▶ San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA): Approval of any future regional bus service improvements.

## 1.5 EIR PROCESS

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) was distributed on October 3, 2016, to responsible agencies, interested parties, and organizations, as well as private organizations and individuals that may have an interest in the project. The purpose of the NOP and the scoping meeting was to provide notification that an EIR for the 2035 Master Plan was being prepared and to solicit input on the scope and content of the environmental document. As a result of the review of existing information and the scoping process, it was determined that each of the issue areas listed above should be evaluated fully in this Draft EIR. The NOP and responses to the NOP are included as an Appendix BA of this Draft EIR.

It should be noted that in November 2017, a Draft EIR was released for public review for an update to Cal Poly's 2001 Master Plan. After reviewing the comments on the Draft EIR, the CSU and Cal Poly decided to amend the Master Plan and that a new and fully revised Draft EIR should be recirculated for public comment. The decision to recirculate the EIR was primarily based upon the need to revise the Master Plan to reflect emerging priorities and to expand the discussion of Master Plan impacts relating to public services and recreation, utilities, transportation and circulation, and water supply.

This Draft EIR ~~was~~ being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 45 days. During this period, comments from the general public as well as organizations and agencies on environmental issues ~~were~~ may be submitted to the lead agency.

Upon completion of the public review and comment period, a Final EIR ~~was~~ will be prepared ~~and that will~~ included comments on the Draft EIR received during the public-review period, responses to those comments, and any revisions to the Draft EIR made in response to public comments. The Draft EIR and Final EIR will comprise the EIR for the project.

Before adopting the 2035 Master Plan, the lead agency is required to certify that the EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, that the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information in the EIR, and that the EIR reflects the independent judgment of the lead agency.

## 1.5.1 Relationship with Other Campus Planning Efforts

The 2035 Master Plan represents one of many planning efforts by Cal Poly but, as noted above, serves as an overall umbrella of campus planning and development activities. The 2035 Master Plan is a guiding document for the development of land and physical facilities in the Master Plan Area, including the organization, placement, sizing, and type of development to aid Cal Poly in implementing other campus planning efforts. Of the other campus planning efforts conducted by Cal Poly, three types of planning efforts (strategic plans, the capital improvement program, and sustainability planning) are closely related to the 2035 Master Plan, and the 2035 Master Plan is intended to be consistent and in coordination with these planning efforts. The three types of planning efforts are described below.

### STRATEGIC PLAN

Cal Poly's Strategic Plan, of which the 2035 Master Plan is a part, establishes the direction for university decisions, funding priorities, and actions based on anticipated changes in higher education trends for Cal Poly, as part of the CSU system. The Strategic Plan is comprised of Vision 2022, the Academic Plan, and the Master Plan. Vision 2022, adopted in 2014, sets the overarching framework by which Cal Poly will provide the tools and ability for students to succeed academically. The Academic Plan, adopted in 2016, focuses on improving the academic rigor and quality of Cal Poly, while enhancing the interrelationships and efficiency of its various colleges and programs. The Master Plan, as evaluated within this document, focuses on the physical changes necessary to achieve Vision 2022, consistent with the Academic Plan.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Capital planning is a continuous and iterative process that evaluates the capital funding needs identified by academic plans (such as the Strategic Plan) and land use plans (2035 Master Plan) and assesses alternatives to meet such needs in the context of anticipated capital resources. Capital planning anticipates investments necessary to provide new facilities and infrastructure and to maintain the quality of campus assets. Specific types of improvements include:

- ▶ teaching, research, student service, and administrative facilities;
- ▶ student housing and other student life activity centers and programs;
- ▶ utility infrastructure, including water, sewer, building heating and cooling, telecommunications, and other systems;
- ▶ energy-conservation projects; and
- ▶ roadways, bike paths and public spaces.

Cal Poly is currently preparing an update to its Utility Master Plan, based on the development proposed as part of the 2035 Master Plan, that will act as a detailed guide outlining the technical and other specifications for necessary utility infrastructure improvements/projects within the Master Plan Area.

### SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS AND PLANS

Consistent with the Cal Poly's focus on sustainability, including implementation of the CSU Sustainability Policy, Cal Poly has implemented and is continuing to implement a number of energy conservation and sustainability programs throughout campus. The CSU Sustainability Policy established the following goals:

- ▶ Reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.
- ▶ Reduce GHG emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2040.
- ▶ Procure 33 percent of energy supply from renewable sources by 2020.
- ▶ Increase on-site energy generation from 44 to 80 megawatts by 2020.
- ▶ Reduce per-capita landfill waste by 50 percent by 2016 and 80 percent by 2020.
- ▶ Reduce water use 10 percent by 2016 and 20 percent by 2020.

- ▶ Promote use of alternative fuels and transportation programs.
- ▶ Procure goods that are recycled, recyclable, or reusable.
- ▶ Procure 20 percent local/organic/free trade food by 2020.
- ▶ Integrate sustainability across the curriculum.

Campus conservation programs focus on behavior-based programs that encourage faculty/staff/students to reduce energy and water consumption and waste generation, such as the Zero Waste Ambassadors Program. Campus energy efficiency programs include both the implementation of energy conservation programs, attaining a greater percentage of renewable energy on-campus, and the development of tools for expanding energy efficiency. Cal Poly has also undertaken various other planning efforts, including the 2016 Climate Action Plan, that set the vision for campus actions, strategies and efforts to enable the campus to achieve the CSU Sustainability Policy goals. Refer to Section 3.6, "Energy," Section 3.8, "Greenhouse Gas Emissions," and Section 3.14, "Utilities and Service Systems," for further information regarding Cal Poly sustainability planning efforts.

## 1.6 DRAFT EIR ORGANIZATION

The Draft EIR is organized into chapters, as identified and briefly described below. Chapters are further divided into sections (e.g., Chapter 3, "Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures" and Section 3.6, "Energy"):

**Executive Summary:** This chapter introduces the 2035 Master Plan; provides a summary of the environmental review process, effects found not to be significant, and key environmental issues; and lists significant impacts and mitigation measures to reduce significant impacts to less-than-significant levels, where feasible.

**Chapter 1, "Introduction":** This chapter provides a description of the lead and responsible agencies, the legal authority and purpose for the document, and the public review process.

**Chapter 2, "Project Description":** This chapter describes the location, background, and goals and objectives for the 2035 Master Plan and describes the project elements in detail.

**Chapter 3, "Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures":** This chapter evaluates the expected environmental impacts generated by the 2035 Master Plan, arranged into sections by subject area (e.g., Hydrology and Water Quality, Air Quality). Within each subsection of Chapter 3, the regulatory background, existing conditions, analysis methodology, and thresholds of significance are described. The anticipated changes to the existing conditions after development of the project are then evaluated for each subject area. For any significant or potentially significant impact that would result from project implementation, mitigation measures are presented and the level of impact significance after mitigation is identified. Environmental impacts are numbered sequentially within each section (e.g., Impact 3.2-1, Impact 3.2-2, etc.). Any required mitigation measures are numbered to correspond to the impact numbering; therefore, the mitigation measure for Impact 3.2-2 would be Mitigation Measure 3.2-2.

**Chapter 4, "Cumulative Impacts":** This chapter provides information required by CEQA regarding cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the 2035 Master Plan together with other past, present, and probable future projects.

**Chapter 5, "Alternatives":** This chapter evaluates alternatives to the 2035 Master Plan, including alternatives considered but eliminated from further consideration, the No Project Alternative, and three alternative development options. The environmentally superior alternative is identified.

**Chapter 6, "Other CEQA Sections":** This chapter evaluates growth-inducing impacts and irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources and discloses any significant and unavoidable adverse impacts.

**Chapter 7, "Report Preparers":** This chapter identifies the preparers of the document.

**Chapter 8, "References":** This chapter identifies the organizations and persons consulted during preparation of the Draft EIR and the documents and individuals used as sources for the analysis.