CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared by California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) to evaluate potential environmental effects that would result from implementation of the proposed California State University, Long Beach Master Plan Update (Master Plan Update, proposed project, or project). This EIR has been prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA) statutes (California Public Resources Code Section 2100 et. seq., as amended) and its implementing guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 et. seq.). The Board of Trustees of the California State University (CSU) is the lead agency responsible for certification of this EIR.

1.1   Purpose of the EIR

CEQA requires preparation of an EIR when there is substantial evidence supporting a fair argument that a proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment. The purpose of an EIR is to provide decision makers, public agencies, and the general public with an objective and informational document that fully discloses the environmental effects of a proposed project. Additionally, the EIR process is intended to identify the ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced; identify feasible mitigation measures and alternatives that might prevent significant, avoidable damage to the environment; and disclose to the public why a governmental agency approves a project if significant environmental effects are involved. This EIR provides information about the potential effects of the proposed project.

As the lead agency for the proposed project, the CSU Board of Trustees is required to consider the information in the EIR, along with any other relevant information, in making its decisions about the project. Although an EIR does not determine the ultimate decision that will be made regarding implementation of a project, CEQA requires lead agencies to consider the information in the EIR and make findings regarding each significant effect identified therein. The CSU Board of Trustees has sole authority to consider and certify the Final EIR, approve the proposed project, and adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, Findings of Fact, and Statement of Overriding Considerations, if warranted. Other agencies may also use this EIR in their review and approval processes, as indicated in Chapter 2, Project Description.

1.2   Scope of the EIR

Each of the 23 universities within the CSU system is required by the CSU Board of Trustees to prepare and periodically update a physical Master Plan. CSULB is proposing a comprehensive update of the current campus Master Plan to accommodate student enrollment growth, campus population growth, and physical development of the campus through the horizon year 2035. The project that is analyzed in this EIR includes specific development projects identified in the Master Plan Update that are expected to be developed in the near-term (0-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (11 years or more). Thus, this EIR for the Master Plan Update evaluates development on the campus at both the program and project levels.

Pursuant to Section 15168 of the State CEQA Guidelines, a program EIR may be prepared for a series of actions that can be characterized as a single large project and are related geographically; or as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions; or in connection with the issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program; or as individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental impacts that can be mitigated in similar ways. A program

EIR is the appropriate type of EIR to evaluate the proposed project because the Master Plan Update includes an overall program of projects developed over a multi-year planning horizon within the CSULB campus and meets all the requirements of Section 15168 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

As individual projects analyzed at the program level in this EIR are proposed for implementation, each development embarked on by CSULB during the lifespan of the Master Plan Update would be individually reviewed for consistency with the Master Plan Update EIR and approved for implementation. Project changes, changes in a project's circumstances, or the potential for new or more severe impacts may require additional environmental review, as necessary. Any additional environmental review will be conducted in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(c), which states that later activities in the program must be examined in the light of the program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared. The additional CEQA environmental review for these future projects would occur after the CSU Board of Trustees approval of the Master Plan Update and certification of this EIR.

In addition, analyses at the project level have been prepared for projects that would be implemented within the foreseeable future (0-10 years) and for which enough detailed development information is available. The EIR will examine all phases of these development components at a site-specific level, including planning, construction, and operation and is intended to provide comprehensive environmental clearance for these projects.

1.2.1   Resource Areas Analyzed in this EIR

In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15143, this EIR focuses on the environmental impacts identified as potentially significant during the Initial Study process, including comments received as part of the public scoping process. The Initial Study and comments received as part of the public scoping process are included in Appendix A of this EIR. Based on the findings of the Initial Study, it was determined that impacts related to agriculture and forestry resources, hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, mineral resources, and wildfire did not require further evaluation as part of the EIR. These resource areas are briefly addressed in Chapter 4, Other CEQA Considerations, of this EIR. Thus, the resource areas analyzed in detail in this EIR include the following:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology and Water Quality

- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Energy

This EIR also includes a discussion of other CEQA-mandated issues, including cumulative impacts, significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, and alternatives.

1.3   EIR Process

1.3.1   Notice of Preparation and Initial Study

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was published for the proposed project on April 21, 2022, to notify responsible and trustee agencies, stakeholders, and other interested parties that CSULB planned to prepare a Draft EIR and to request input regarding the scope and content of the environmental analysis and information to be included in the Draft EIR. The NOP and Initial Study were circulated for a 30-day comment period from April 21, 2022, to May 20, 2022. The NOP was sent to approximately 80 agencies, stakeholders, and other interested parties and over 2,600 residences and businesses. Additionally, the NOP was posted in the Long Beach Press-Telegram on April 21, 2022. The NOP and Initial Study were also made available for review online at: www.csulb.edu/beach-building-services/california-environmental-quality-act-ceqa-compliance and through the proposed project's virtual open house that was available at www.csulb-cmp-eir.com through the NOP comment period.

Two public scoping meetings were held to obtain input on the scope of the contents of the EIR. The meetings consisted of one virtual meeting hosted on the Zoom platform on April 28, 2022, and one in-person meeting held at The Pointe, located in the Walter Pyramid at CSULB, on May 4, 2022. Nine individuals attended the virtual meeting and ten individuals attended the in-person meeting. A total of 17 individual written comments were received from public agencies and members of the general public. The NOP, Initial Study, and all comments received on the NOP and Initial Study are provided in Appendix A.

1.3.2   Public Review of the Draft EIR

This Draft EIR is being circulated for a 45-day public review and comment period from September 1, 2023, to October 16, 2023. During this public review period, comments on the adequacy of the Draft EIR can be submitted by agencies, stakeholders, and other interested parties to the following contact by mail, e-mail, in-person, or online, **no later than 11:59pm on October 16, 2023**:

Mail:	Melissa Soto, Manager of Capital Program Development California State University, Long Beach Design & Construction Services 1331 Palo Verde Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90815
E-mail:	CSULB-CommunityEngagement@csulb.edu (please include "Master Plan Update EIR Comments" in the subject line)
Online:	Provide your comments online by scanning the QR code located on the Notice of Availability or accessing the website here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X3CSYLT.
In-Person Meeting:	Provide comments in writing at the in-person Draft EIR Public Meeting to be held on September 13, 2023, at 6pm at The Pointe, located in the Walter Pyramid at CSULB.
Virtual Meeting:	Provide comments in writing at the virtual Draft EIR Public Meeting to be held on September 14, 2023, at 6pm. Zoom Conference: https://zoom.us/j/95666519969 Meeting ID: 956 6651 9969 Join by Phone: +1 (669) 444-9171 / Meeting ID: 956 6651 9969

The Draft EIR will be made available for public review during the public review period at: www.csulb.edu/beach-building-services/california-environmental-quality-act-ceqa-compliance. In addition, a limited number of hard copies of the Draft EIR can be provided to persons who are unable to access the online version.

Two public review meetings will be held to obtain comments on the Draft EIR – one in-person meeting on September 13, 2023, and one virtual meeting on September 14, 2023. The presentation will provide an overview of the proposed Master Plan Update, conclusions of the Draft EIR, and information about how to submit written public comments on the adequacy of the information presented in the Draft EIR. CSULB encourages agencies, stakeholders, and other interested parties to provide written comments on the Draft EIR prior to the end of the 45-day public review period.

1.3.3   Final EIR/Project Approval

Following the close of the public and agency comment period on the Draft EIR, all comments will be included in the project's administrative record for consideration as part of the proposed project approval process. Draft EIR text will be updated as necessary, and responses will be prepared for comments received during the public review period that raise CEQA-related environmental issues regarding the proposed Master Plan Update in accordance with Section 15088(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines. The responses will be published in the Final EIR. As required by CEQA Section 21092.5 and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(b), written responses to comments submitted by public agencies will be provided to those agencies for review at least 10 days prior to the consideration of certification of the EIR. The EIR will be considered by the CSU Board of Trustees in a public meeting anticipated for January 2024 and will be certified if it is determined to be compliant with CEQA. Upon certification of the EIR, the CSU Board of Trustees will consider the project for approval during the same public meeting.

1.3.4   Adoption of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15097, a lead agency is required to adopt a program for monitoring or reporting on mitigation measures required to mitigate or avoid significant environmental effects as part of the project approval process. The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program will be prepared following preparation of the Final EIR so that it reflects any changes or revisions to mitigation measures made in response to public comments on the Draft EIR. Upon approval of the proposed Master Plan Update or an alternative to the proposed Master Plan Update, the lead agency will be responsible for the implementation of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

1.3.5   Relationship with Other University Planning Efforts

The Master Plan is intended to guide the physical campus development necessary to support the needs of the current student, faculty, and staff campus populations as well as projected student enrollment and campus population growth. To support the Master Plan Update, several past and concurrent planning efforts are closely related to and expand upon the 2035 Master Plan. These planning efforts are intended to be complementary to and consistent with the 2035 Master Plan. They are described below and provide more detail about specific university plans and programs.

Beach 2030 Strategic Plan

The Beach 2030 Strategic Plan is a roadmap for the vision of the future of CSULB for the next 10 years. The plan includes five strategic priorities to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the next decade, inspire action across the University and its stakeholders; focus resources

(energy, time, and attention), guide collective action towards long-term goals, and amplify institutional values. The strategic priorities are to: engage all students, expand access, promote intellectual achievement, build community, and cultivate resilience. The action plans to achieve the strategic priorities are to: build an equitable and empowering culture; be a student-ready University; reimagine faculty; reimagine staff; build a growth strategy; advance partnerships for a public good; and be a future-ready University. The Master Plan Update focuses on the physical changes necessary to achieve the priorities in the Beach 2030 Strategic Plan.

Academic Master Plan

In addition to the strategic plan, each CSU university has an Academic Master Plan. The Academic Master Plan outlines the university president's vision as it relates specifically to academic programs. The plan lists existing degree programs, projected (planned) programs, and program-review schedules for authorized degree programs. Updated Academic Master Plans are submitted each March for review by the CSU Board of Trustees. The most recent version of the Academic Master Plan for all CSU universities is for 2022-2023 and projects degree programs through 2031-2022.

Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) outlines a flexible roadmap for CSULB to eliminate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from campus operations in line with CSULB's commitment to carbon neutrality and adapt to the negative impacts of climate change with a goal to decarbonize campus operations by 2030 and commute-related emissions by 2040. The CAAP serves as a guiding document to help CSULB achieve its climate goals by identifying mitigation focus areas and adaptation focus areas. The mitigation focus areas emphasize specific actionable steps to take in order to achieve a reduction in GHG emissions, such as reinvesting in buildings and preparing infrastructure for low- to no-carbon energy systems, optimizing and advancing renewable energy and electric infrastructure on- and off-campus, and eliminating and reducing emissions related to air travel, commuting, and waste generation. The adaptation focus areas identify approaches for building resiliency into the physical campus, such as a strategy to fund, prepare, educate, and communicate sustainability, climate adaptation, and emergency preparedness; programs to address food and housing insecurity; a program to enhance the campus urban forest, optimize landscape design and maintenance, and improve irrigation water efficiency; and dedicated actions to further curriculum, increase climate literacy, and expand academic programs related to sustainability and climate. The Master Plan Update identifies sustainability topic areas that align with the university's commitments to climate action and resilience.

Space Utilization and Optimization Study

The purpose of the Space Utilization and Optimization Study is to provide a comprehensive space usage assessment based on data and exploratory findings, and identify space optimization strategies to address space needs on campus. The study informed the Master Plan Update and assisted in prioritizing future projects by looking at space on campus to identify underutilized space to reclaim and re-purpose for the overall enhancement of the University. The study identified five distinct types of space, each with distinct metrics for assessment and utilization:

- Instructional Space - utilization based on scheduled use and station occupancy; assessed for physical condition, and functionality.

- Office & Administration Space - utilization based on square foot per person (square foot per person), workstation size, work environment and meeting room utilization.

- Research & Creative Activity Space - research metrics are suggested; utilization based on student involvement, publications/ presentations, grant dollars per square foot, etc.

- Student Oriented Spaces - utilization based on stations and activity level.

- Auxiliary Spaces - types of spaces include large conference venue use, Student Union, Book Store, Cafeteria, and the Foundation Building; metrics dependent on specific space type.

The study identified approximately 70,000 square feet of campus space as "low/no usage" and available for immediate use with minor physical improvements. Additionally, the study identified 600,000 square feet as "opportunity areas" where utilization could be increased through various strategies. The study recommended operational changes, new standards, and physical space modifications (modernization or renovation) for each of the five types of space.

Utility Master Plan

The Utility Master Plan evaluated the existing utility systems by physical conditions, capacity, functionality, reliability, ease of maintenance, age, and its ability to serve the present and future needs of the university. The Utility Master Plan identifies improvements to utility infrastructure throughout the campus including those for water, sanitary sewer, storm drain, irrigation water, chilled and heating hot water systems, natural gas system, electrical, and telecommunications.

Housing Capacity Expansion Plan

The Housing Capacity Expansion Plan outlines a strategy for the redevelopment of housing and residential life facilities on campus. The study focuses on potential opportunity sites for Beachside, Parkside, and Hillside Colleges student residential villages, and includes a university-wide strategy for current and future student housing at CSULB, including a physical framework by college for the campus. The strategy is based on several criteria, including connection to the core of the campus; equitable distribution of housing choices; variety of open spaces; enhanced activity along Bouton Creek; enhanced activity along Beach Drive; enhanced orientation at the intersection of Determination Drive (formerly Earl Warren Drive) and Bouton Creek; linked colleges; distinctive college identities; minimizing the beds temporarily offline at any given time; potential cost; and parking construction cost. The study also determines site approaches for additional housing to meet identified needs and considers sustainability, impacts to parking and dining services, and infrastructure and utility needs.

1.4   Organization of this EIR

This EIR is organized as follows:

Executive Summary: provides an overview of the information provided in detail in subsequent chapters. It consists of an introduction; brief descriptions of the proposed project background, location and setting, purpose, need, and objectives, and proposed project characteristics; a description of the alternatives to the project; a discussion of issues raised by the public and agencies relative to the project construction and operations; and a table that summarizes the potential environmental impacts in each issue area, the significance determination for those impacts, mitigation measures, and significance after mitigation.

Chapter 1, Introduction: provides a description of the purpose, scope, and process of the EIR, and a description of the organization of the EIR.

Chapter 2, Project Description: provides a description of the proposed project. A summary of the campus history and background are provided. Project purpose, need, and objectives are identified and information on the proposed project characteristics, including individual near-, mid-, and long-term projects, is provided. This chapter also includes a description of the intended uses of the EIR and public agency actions related to the proposed project.

Chapter 3, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures: analyzes the potential environmental effects of implementing the proposed project under each of the environmental issue areas. Each environmental issue area includes a discussion of the regulatory requirements, existing environmental setting, methodology and approach of the analysis, thresholds of significance, impact analysis, mitigation measures, level of significance after mitigation, and cumulative impacts.

Chapter 4, Other CEQA Considerations: presents the other mandatory CEQA sections, including significant unavoidable impacts, significant and irreversible environmental changes, and growth-inducing impacts.

Chapter 5, Alternatives: describes and evaluates the comparative merits of a reasonable range of project alternatives that would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the proposed project and avoid or substantially lessen potentially significant project-related impacts. This chapter also describes the analysis and rationale for selecting the range of alternatives discussed in the EIR and identifies the alternatives considered by CSULB that were rejected from further detailed analysis during the planning process. Chapter 5 also includes a discussion of the environmental effects of the No Project Alternative and identifies the environmentally superior alternative.

Chapter 6, List of Preparers and Persons Consulted: identifies those persons responsible for the preparation of this EIR.

Chapter 7, References: provides a bibliography of reference materials used in the preparation of this EIR.