Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations

# California State University, Chico Master Plan


Prepared for California State University, Chico

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**SCH # 2019049168**
NOVEMBER **2020**

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# California State University, Chico
# Master Plan
# Findings of Fact and
# Statement of Overriding Considerations

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# Findings of Fact

## 1 Introduction

This statement of Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations (Findings) addresses the environmental effects associated with the California State University, Chico (CSU, Chico) Master Plan (proposed Master Plan or project). These Findings are made pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Sections 21081, 21081.5, and 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code and Sections 15091 and 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines, Title 14, Cal. Code Regs. 15000, et seq (CEQA Guidelines). The potentially significant impacts were identified in both the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the Final EIR, as well as additional facts found in the complete record of proceedings.

Public Resources Code 21081 and Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines require that the lead agency prepare written findings for identified significant impacts, accompanied by a brief explanation for the rationale for each finding. The California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees is the lead agency responsible for preparation of the EIR in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines states, in part, that:

a) a) No public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an EIR has been certified which identifies one or more significant environmental effects of the project unless the public agency makes one or more written findings for each of those significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each finding. The possible findings are:

    1) Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

    2) Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.

    3) Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR.

In accordance with Public Resource Code 21081 and Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines, whenever significant impacts cannot be mitigated to below a level of significance, the decision-making agency is required to balance, as applicable, the benefits of the proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse effects may be considered "acceptable." In that case, the decision-making agency may prepare and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations, pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines.

Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines state that:

b) CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable."

c) When the lead agency approves a project which will result in the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons to support its action based on the final EIR and/or other information in the record. The statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record.

d) If an agency makes a statement of overriding considerations, the statement should be included in the record of the project approval and should be mentioned in the notice of determination. This statement does not substitute for, and shall be in addition to, findings required pursuant to Section 15091.

The Final EIR for the proposed Master Plan identified potentially significant effects that could result from implementation. However, the CSU Board of Trustees finds that the inclusion of certain mitigation measures as part of the project approval would reduce most, but not all, of those effects to less than significant levels. Those impacts that are not reduced to less than significant levels are identified and overridden due to specific project benefits in a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

In accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, the CSU Board of Trustees adopts these Findings as part of its certification of the Final EIR for the proposed Master Plan. Pursuant to Section 21082.1(c)(3) of the Public Resources Code, the CSU Board of Trustees also finds that the Final EIR reflects the Board's independent judgment as the lead agency for the project. As required by CEQA, the CSU Board of Trustees, in adopting these Findings, also adopts a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the proposed Master Plan. The CSU Board of Trustees finds that the MMRP, which is incorporated by reference and made a part of these Findings, meets the requirements of Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code by providing for the implementation and monitoring of measures intended to mitigate potentially significant effects of the project.

## 1.1 Organization and Format of CEQA Findings of Fact

Section 1 contains a summary description of the proposed Master Plan and background facts relative to the environmental review process.

Section 2 discusses the CEQA findings of independent judgment.

Section 2.1 describes the environmental effects determined not to be significant during the Notice of Preparation (NOP) scoping process and therefore were not discussed in the EIR.

Section 2.2 identifies the project's potential environmental effects that were determined not to be significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation measures.

Section 2.3 identifies the potentially significant effects of the project that would be mitigated to a less than significant level with implementation of the identified mitigation measures.

Section.2.4 identifies the significant impacts of the project that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level, even though all feasible mitigation measures have been identified and incorporated into the project.

Section 3 identifies the feasibility of the project Alternatives that were studied in the EIR.

Section 4 discusses findings with respect to mitigation of significant adverse impacts, and adoption of the MMRP.

Section 5 describes the process of certification of the EIR.

Section 6 contains the Statement of Overriding Considerations, which presents the Board of Trustees' views on the balance between the project's significant environmental effects and the merits and objectives of the proposed Master Plan.

## 1.2 Summary of Project Description

The proposed Master Plan is a long-range planning document intended to guide future development of the campus to accommodate increased enrollment of up to 18,600 FTES at buildout. To accommodate this enrollment growth, the proposed Master Plan provides for an anticipated increase in demand for academic facilities, student residential housing, recreation and athletics facilities, and other support facilities and services on campus through 2030. Implementation of the proposed Master Plan would include approximately 531,536 GSF of new academic facilities and approximately 156,000 GSF of student support space. Master Plan implementation would demolish approximately 447,538 GSF of existing facilities and construct approximately 921,932 net new GSF, for a campus-wide square footage total of approximately 3,645,314 GSF at buildout.[1] Net student beds would increase by 1,461 and net parking would increase by 310 spaces.

The proposed Master Plan proposes to transform the CSU, Chico campus core, or "hub", into a more socially vibrant, student-centered space; provide more opportunities for student dining and activities after hours and on weekends; integrate student housing and residential life into the central academic and social fabric of the campus rather than on the campus perimeter; distribute student support space in a more balanced fashion throughout the campus; develop a distinct arts and culture district that consolidates the currently scattered visual and performing arts facilities; expand and enhance outdoor gathering spaces, particularly within the north campus and the plaza in front of the Wildcat Recreation Center; and better integrate the campus perimeter with downtown Chico.

To accomplish this, the proposed Master Plan would redevelop portions of the campus core as well as increase density in underdeveloped areas of campus through the replacement of outdated and inefficient

[1] These development numbers do not include the University Farm.

facilities and redevelopment of existing surface parking lots. The EIR evaluates phased buildout of the proposed Master Plan building program at a "program level" per the State CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14, § 15168). When CSU, Chico is ready to proceed with planning and construction of these projects, they will be subject to additional project-specific review to determine the need for and appropriate type of subsequent CEQA compliance.

## 1.3 Project Objectives

CEQA requires the statement of a project's objectives to be clearly written so as to define the underlying purpose of a project in order to permit development of a reasonable range of alternatives and aid the lead agency in making findings when considering a project for approval. The underlying purpose of the proposed Master Plan project is to guide campus development in a manner that supports the University's Strategic Vision 2019-2024 and a 2030 enrollment target of 18,600 FTES and accompanying faculty and staff growth, while preserving and enhancing the campus environment and quality of life.

The following project objectives are based on the goals and organizing principles of the proposed Master Plan, and support the underlying purpose of the project:

1. Transform the campus core into a strong, activated "HUB" focused on instructional space, student housing, and student support programs.

2. Consolidate student housing and residential life within three distinct neighborhoods in close proximity to the "HUB" or campus core.

3. Increase opportunities for first-year freshmen to live on campus.

4. Enhance the visibility and accessibility of the campus's current decentralized arts and culture district through the enhancement of existing performing arts spaces and consolidation of museum programs at a new campus gateway on Esplanade.

5. Provide new and renovated facilities and open space to reflect today's students' need for additional informal space for collaborative learning.

6. Improve and expand services and facilities for counseling, health and wellness, to include physical and mental health.

7. Improve and expand facilities and support in the west campus for experiential (hands-on) learning and recreational opportunities and campus athletics.

8. Maximize existing academic space to improve the academic and research environment by updating and improving facilities for today's learners and educators. This includes flexible learning environments that can adapt to different styles of learning and pedagogy.

9. Provide a campus and regional amenity by constructing an indoor venue for athletics and special events.

10. Preserve important farmland on the University Farm while enhancing its ability to support the University's academic mission as well as the region's existing and future agricultural industries, through the modernization of aging buildings and facilities, development of new classroom, laboratory, and support space for agricultural programs, infrastructure upgrades, creation of a new Farm Store, provision of on-site student housing, and improved road and parking facilities.

11. Improve pedestrian and bicycle access on campus through extending the bicycle path to have a more contiguous east-west corridor that also enhances pedestrian safety.

12. Relocate and consolidate existing parking facilities on the campus perimeter to free up limited campus space for academic, student support, and residential uses.

13. Improve the safety and character of the Ivy/Warner corridor through development of an enlivened Rio Chico residential neighborhood, comprising new student residence halls through a potential public-private partnership redevelopment opportunity, expanded Wildcat Recreation Center (WREC), improved south campus gateway, and improved pedestrian connections between off-campus Ivy/Warner Street and the campus core.

14. Implement carbon reduction strategies with the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 through tactics such as onsite renewable energy, electrification of utilities, and improved alternative transportation infrastructure.

15. Increase the resiliency of campus utility systems by creating utility redundancy and decentralization of the central plant combined with onsite renewable energy.

16. Improve landscape and stormwater function and aesthetic.

## 1.4 Environmental Review Process

### Notice of Preparation

In accordance with CEQA (Public Resources Code Section 21092) and the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15082), CSU, Chico issued a NOP on April 29, 2019. CSU, Chico circulated the NOP to responsible and trustee agencies, organizations, and interested individuals to solicit comments on the proposed project. CSU, Chico followed required procedures with regard to distribution of the appropriate notices and environmental documents to the State Clearinghouse. The NOP was received by the State Clearinghouse (State Clearinghouse No. 2019049168) and a 30-day public review period ended on May 29, 2019. Two public scoping meetings were conducted by CSU, Chico on May 6, 2019. In accordance with CEQA (Public Resources Code Sections 21000-21177) and the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Sections 15000-15387), CSU, Chico prepared a Draft EIR (which is the subject of these Findings) to address the potentially significant environmental effects associated with the proposed Master Plan. The Draft EIR addresses the following potentially significant environmental issues:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources

- Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology, Soils, and Paleontology
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards, Hazardous Materials, and Wildfire
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems

## Draft EIR

CSU, Chico published the Draft EIR for public and agency review on August 12, 2020 for a 45-day public review period that ended on September 25, 2020. During the public review period, the Draft EIR was accessible online at https://www.csuchico.edu/fms/planning.shtml. Due to current circumstances associated with COVID-19, the CSU, Chico campus and local public libraries were not accessible to the public for review of hard copies of the Draft EIR; however special arrangements were made for those with limited digital access. In lieu of a public meeting, a live virtual Town Hall meeting was held to provide an overview of the proposed Master Plan and the Draft EIR on September 2, 2020. During the Draft EIR public review period, CSU, Chico received two letters from state agencies, one letter from the City of Chico, and six letters from individuals. All comment letters received in response to the Draft EIR were reviewed and included in the Final EIR, and responses to these comments relevant to CEQA were addressed in the Final EIR in compliance with the CEQA Guidelines (Sections 15088, 15132).

## Final EIR

Section 15088 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that the Lead Agency responsible for the preparation of an EIR evaluate comments on environmental issues and prepare written response addressing each of the comments. The intent of the Final EIR is to provide a forum to address comments pertaining to the information and analysis contained within the Draft EIR, and to provide an opportunity for clarifications, corrections, or revisions to the Draft EIR as needed and as appropriate. The Final EIR assembles in one document all the environmental information and analysis prepared for the proposed project, including comments on the Draft EIR and responses by CSU, Chico to those comments. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15132, the Final EIR for the proposed project consists of:

(i) The Draft EIR and subsequent revisions;

(ii) Comments received on the Draft EIR;

(iii) A list of the persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR;

(iv) Written responses to significant environmental issues raised during the public review and comment period and related supporting materials; and

(v) Other information contained in the EIR, including EIR appendices.

The Final EIR was released on November 6, 2020 and was made available for review by commenting agencies in accordance with CEQA requirements. The Final EIR was also made available to the public online at https://www.csuchico.edu/fms/planning.shtml.

# 2 CEQA Findings of Independent Judgment

## 2.1 Effects Determined Not to Be Significant

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were, therefore, not discussed in detail in the EIR. Based on the discussion of Agricultural and Mineral Resources in Section 5.4 of the Draft EIR, Effects Found Not to be Significant, which discussed issues not evaluated in detail in the Draft EIR, as well as on findings for specific issues within the technical sections of Chapter 3, Environmental Setting and Impacts, implementation of the proposed Master Plan was determined to result in no potentially significant impacts related to the issues listed below. The Board of Trustees therefore finds that, based upon substantial evidence in the record, including information in the Final EIR, the following impacts have been determined not to be significant and no mitigation is required pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(a) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a):

### Aesthetics

*Scenic Highways (Impact AES-2).* While there are no state-designated scenic highways or roads within the City, the Chico General Plan has designated Vallombrosa Avenue, E. 8th Street, the Esplanade, Chico Canyon Road, Centennial Avenue, Manzanita Avenue, Humboldt Road, and Bidwell Avenue as scenic roads in need of specialized treatment when performing roadway improvements. The Master Plan proposes a series of transportation improvements. CSU is not subject to local government planning or ordinances and is thus not subject to County or City designated scenic roads. Nevertheless, the proposed improvements would be consistent with existing campus design and would be designed to visually enhance the area, per the proposed Master Plan Design Guidelines. Thus, there would be no impact related to damage of scenic resources within a state scenic highway or locally designated scenic corridor.

### Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The main campus and University Village do not contain farmland. The University Farm includes farmland. However, the proposed development area of the University Farm is a defined area of previously disturbed land. The proposed Master Plan development would occur within this footprint that does not contain farmland. In addition, an exterior biofence would be constructed around the perimeter of the University Farm. Farming does not currently occur on the edge of the property; therefore, improved fencing would not reduce the amount of farmland. The Master Plan area does not contain forestland or timberland.

### Biological Resources

*Tree Preservation Policy or Ordinance (Impact BIO-5).* CSU, Chico is not subject to local government planning or ordinances, such as the general plans and ordinances for the City of Chico and Butte County. See Section 3.10 of the EIR, Land Use and Planning for an evaluation of environmental impacts due to conflicts with any land use plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. There would be no impact.

*Habitat Conservation Plan (Impact BIO-6).*The proposed Master Plan would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. The proposed Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP) has not yet been adopted. CSU, Chico is not a participant of the proposed BRCP and there are no adopted habitat conservation plans or other regional or state conservation plans in the vicinity of the Master Plan area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

### Geology and Soils

*Risk of Loss, Injury or Death Involving Fault Rupture, Seismic Ground Shaking, Seismic-related Ground Failure, or Landslides (Impact GEO-1).* The project is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Furthermore, construction and operation of the project would not directly or indirectly cause fault rupture or exacerbate existing fault rupture risks. For these reasons, the project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving surface rupture of a known earthquake fault, and no impact would occur.

### Land Use and Planning

*Divide Established Community (Impact LU-1).* The Master Plan does not propose any new linear features such as roadways that would physically divide the Rio Chico properties, College Park, or any other established communities. With respect to the University Farm, the Master Plan does not propose any development outside the existing university-owned property; all proposed improvements would be implemented within the University Farm itself. Thus, proposed Master Plan implementation would have no impact related to physical division of any established communities.

*Conflict with Land Use Plans (Impact LU-2).* The Master Plan proposes new development that would provide 400 additional student housing beds on the privately-owned Rio Chico properties via a public-private partnership. As the Rio Chico properties total 2.8 acres, the proposed 400 student beds proposed under the Master Plan would result in the equivalent of 50.5 dwelling units per acre (assuming 2.83 beds per dwelling unit, based on the average household occupancy rate cited in Section 4.11, Population and Housing). This would correspond to the General Plan's High Density Residential (HDR) density allowance of between 20 and 70 dwelling units per acre. However, this higher density would be compatible with surrounding University land uses, including the proposed student housing buildings to the north, the WREC to the south, academic buildings to the east, and the FMS yard to the west. As previously described, Rio Chico is currently surrounded by University uses and is essentially an "island" within the campus, and student housing would be consistent with the range of University land uses that exist on the main campus.

Within the College Park area, the Master Plan proposes the redevelopment of the College Park properties with athletic fields, a 4,000-seat arena, and surface parking. The College Park properties not owned by the University are currently designated Low Density Residential (LDR). Only the two remaining privately-owned properties are subject to this designation. Once acquired by the University, the ownership of these properties by CSU, Chico would supersede the City's land use designation. While the new arena, sporting fields, and parking facilities would not be consistent with the City's LDR land use designation for those two properties, they would be physically compatible with the existing University uses to the west and south, and Chico High School to the east. The soccer practice fields proposed to the north of the arena would provide a buffer between the arena and the rest of the campus to the south and The Avenues residential

neighborhood north of West Sacramento Avenue. As discussed above, Master Plan implementation would not divide existing neighborhoods or create "islands" of potentially incompatible land uses. No change in land use at University Village is proposed as part of the Master Plan. Improvements proposed for the University Farm are consistent with Butte County's General Plan designation of the land for agricultural use.

For the reasons stated above, proposed Master Plan implementation would have no impact related to conflicts with land use plans.

### Mineral Resources

The main campus and University Village do not contain locally or state-wide important minerals. Butte County has not been mapped by the State Geologist; therefore it is undermined whether important mineral resources exist on the University Farm site (Butte County 2010). However, the proposed Master Plan would not result in land use changes at the University Farm that would result in the loss of availability of a locally or state-wide important mineral resource.

### Hazards and Hazardous Materials

*Airport Hazards (Impact HAZ-5).* Because the Master Plan Area is not located within 2 miles of a public use airport, nor does it fall within an airport land use plan, there would be no impact.

*Emergency Response or Evacuation Plans (Impact HAZ-6).* Project construction and operation is not expected to interfere with adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. The two major evacuation routes for Chico are State Route 32 and Highway 99, both of which are located outside the Master Plan Area. The Master Plan Area would continue to operate as a college campus. Therefore, no impact would occur.

*Risk of Loss, Injury, or Death Involving Wildland Fires (Impact HAZ-7).* Future development on the CSU, Chico campus under the proposed Master Plan would occur within a developed environment that does not contain forestland or other wildland fuels and is not near forested areas; therefore, the project would not expose people or new buildings to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fire. Thus, no impact would occur.

## 2.2 Less Than Significant Impacts

The Board of Trustees finds that, based upon substantial evidence in the record, including information in the Final EIR, the following impacts have been determined be less than significant and no mitigation is required pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(a) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a):

### Aesthetics

#### *Scenic Vistas (Impact AES-1)*

There are no significant viewpoints of scenic vistas from the Master Plan area that would be impacted. While areas of the project site would potentially be visible from higher-elevation points in the foothills, such as Butte Creek Canyon, views of the project site areas would not be particularly distinct amid other surrounding developments. Therefore, impacts related to scenic views would be less than significant.

*Visual Character (Impact AES-3)*

While the University is not subject to local zoning regulations, both the main campus and University Village are consistent with current zoning code development standards and would continue to be consistent upon buildout of the proposed Master Plan components. Implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the Master Plan area and its surroundings. Impacts would be less than significant.

*Light and Glare (Impact AES-4)*

The proposed Master Plan update would include additional interior and exterior building, parking lot, and path lighting. Additional lighting would only be installed for illumination to the extent necessary, such as for nighttime pedestrian use, and all lights would be shielded and/or downward-facing in order to minimize light pollution (per the proposed Design Guidelines). Overall, it is not expected that the proposed Master Plan would create substantial light or glare such that day or nighttime views would be substantially affected. Thus, the incremental increase in light and glare levels posed by new development occurring over the planning horizon for the Master Plan would result in a less than significant impact related to light or glare.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with aesthetics, and no mitigation measures are required.

Air Quality

*Air Quality Plan (Impact AQ-1)*

An air quality modeling analysis that identified the impacts of Master Plan implementation on air quality was performed. It was determined that Master Plan buildout would not result in construction emissions or long-term operational emissions that would exceed the respective Butte County Air Quality Management District (BCAQMD) significance thresholds for ROG, NOx, PM10, and PM2.5. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of BCAQMD's *Northern Sacramento Valley Planning Area 2018 Triennial Air Quality Plan* and this impact would be less than significant.

*Ambient Air Quality Standard (Impact AQ-2)*

Buildout of the proposed Master Plan is anticipated to occur between approximately 2021 and 2030 and would result in the addition of pollutants to the local airshed caused by on-site sources (i.e., off-road construction equipment, soil disturbance, and ROG off-gassing) and off-site sources (i.e., on-road haul trucks and worker vehicle trips). An air quality modeling determined that maximum daily construction emissions associated with proposed Master Plan projects would not exceed the BCAQMD significance thresholds for ROG, NOx, PM10 or PM2.5. Standard construction measures would be required for construction activities. A Grading Plan would also be required for submittal to the BCAQMD prior to the start of any construction activity for which a grading permit is required. As such, implementation of the required fugitive dust control measures would ensure air quality and fugitive dust-related impacts associated with construction would be less than significant.

Project-related operational sources of air pollutant emissions would include natural gas combustion, on-road vehicles, and area sources (i.e., use of consumer products, architectural coatings for repainting, and landscaping equipment). Only particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) would increase as a result of Master Plan buildout. The daily operational emissions for PM10 and PM2.5 would not exceed the BCAQMD significance thresholds. As such, proposed project operational impacts would be less than significant.

*Sensitive Receptors (Impact AQ-3)*

Due to the relatively short period of exposure at any individual sensitive receptor and minimal particulate emissions generated, toxic air contaminants (TACs) emitted during construction would not be expected to result in concentrations causing significant health risks, therefore, impacts would be less than significant. With regard to long-term operations, the proposed project could result in TAC emissions from on-site generators. On-site generators would result in TAC emissions; however, stationary sources, such as these generators, would be required to comply with the BCAQMD permitting process, which would ensure that potential health risks would be less than significant before issuing a permit to operate. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations during long-term operations and impacts would be less than significant.

Projects contributing to adverse traffic impacts may result in the formation of carbon monoxide (CO) hotspots. The construction associated with buildout of the Master Plan would be temporary and would not be a source of daily, long-term mobile-source emissions. However, operation of the proposed project would result in additional vehicle trips to the campus resulting from buildout of the Master Plan. As discussed in Chapter 3.14, Transportation, the proposed project would be required to implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies as part of mitigation measure MM-TRA-1. In addition, due to continued improvement in vehicular emissions at a rate faster than the rate of vehicle growth and/or congestion, the potential for CO hotspots in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB) is steadily decreasing. Based on these considerations, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to air quality with regard to potential CO hotspots.

*Odors (Impact AQ-4)*

Odors would be potentially generated from vehicles and equipment exhaust emissions during proposed project construction. Such odors would disperse rapidly from the proposed project sites and generally occur at magnitudes that would not affect substantial numbers of people. Therefore, impacts associated with odors during construction would be less than significant. Typical odors generated from operation of the proposed project would include vehicle exhaust generated by students, employees, or visitors traveling to and from the project site, through the periodic use of landscaping or maintenance equipment, from the temporary storage of typical solid waste (refuse), and from the dining facilities. Any odors produced would be minimal, would be similar to the existing uses, and would be confined to the immediate vicinity. Overall, implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not result in odors that would affect a substantial number of people and this impact would be less than significant.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to air quality, and no mitigation measures are required.

## Cultural Resources

### *Tribal Cultural Resources (Impact CUL-4)*

A Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File Search and California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) records search failed to identify any previously recorded cultural resources of Native American origin within the Master Plan Area or a surrounding half-mile area. No prehistoric Native American resources were identified within the Master Plan Area were identified during intensive-pedestrian archaeological survey. CSU, Chico notified tribes traditionally associated with the Master Plan Area and having requested notice under AB 52 on December 17, 2019.

Government to government consultation initiated by CSU, Chico, acting in good faith and after a reasonable effort, has not resulted in the identification of a TCR within or near the project area. No known geographically-defined TCRs were identified within, or in the immediate vicinity of, the project area through consultation. As such, no TCRs have been identified in the Master Plan Area. No mitigation measures are required.

### *Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to tribal cultural resources, and no mitigation measures are required.

## Energy

### *Wasteful or Unnecessary Consumption (Impact ENG-1)*

The proposed project is subject to statewide mandatory energy requirements as outlined in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations. CSU, Chico would ensure that the proposed project would meet Title 24 requirements applicable at the time of construction of specific components, as required by state regulations and provided in the Project Design Features (PDFs) discussed in Section 2.6. For these reasons, the electricity consumption of the proposed project would not be considered inefficient or wasteful, and impacts would be less than significant.

As with electricity demand, natural gas demand for the proposed project would comply with and would at minimum meet the current Title 24 standards at the time of development. The natural gas consumption of the proposed project would not be considered inefficient or wasteful, and impacts would be less than significant.

Because petroleum use during construction would be temporary and relatively minimal, and would not be wasteful or inefficient, impacts would be less than significant. The proposed project would decrease petroleum use during operation as a result of students, employees, and visitors commuting to the site, as well as delivery trucks, the use would be a small fraction of the statewide use and, due to efficiency increases, would diminish over time. Given these considerations, petroleum consumption associated with the proposed project would not be considered inefficient or wasteful and would result in a less than significant impact. Furthermore, Chapter 3.14, Transportation includes mitigation measures required to be implanted by the proposed project including MM-TRA-1, which requires implementation of Transportation

Demand Management (TDM) strategies, MM-TRA-2, which would increase available housing in walking distance of campus, and MM-TRA-3, which would provide fair share contribution to improve available transit. Implementation of these measures would help to reduce would help reduce petroleum use during operation.

*Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency Plans (Impact ENG-2)*

In accordance with Title 24 Part 11 mandatory compliance, the proposed project would have: (a) 50 percent of its construction and demolition waste diverted from landfills; (b) mandatory inspections of energy systems to ensure optimal working efficiency; (c) low-pollutant-emitting exterior and interior finish materials, such as paints, carpets, vinyl flooring, and particle boards; and (d) a 20 percent reduction in indoor water use. In addition, the proposed project would include PDFs, which would help the campus become more sustainable. The proposed Master Plan strategies would relate to topics such as transportation and energy efficiency. Implementation and compliance with these PDFs would minimize the consumption of electricity, natural gas, and petroleum. For the reasons stated, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to energy, and no mitigation measures are required.

Geology and Soils

*Risk of Loss, Injury or Death Involving Fault Rupture, Seismic Ground Shaking, Seismic-related Ground Failure, or Landslides (Impact GEO-1)*

The project is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Compliance with the California Building Code (CBC) and the CSU Seismic Requirements, including preparation and implementation of geotechnical investigations, would help to offset potential risks to structures and people associated with a major earthquake event. The project would not exacerbate the potential for seismic activity to occur and therefore would not directly or indirectly cause potential adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking and seismic-related ground failure. Therefore, the seismic-related impacts during renovation, new construction, and operation of near-term projects, long-term projects, and related utility infrastructure under the proposed Master Plan would be less than significant.

The Master Plan area is in an area that is seismically active with known Holocene-active faults traversing the region. As previously discussed, project development would comply with the CBC and the CSU Seismic Requirements, including preparation and implementation of geotechnical investigations, which would help to offset potential risks to structures and people associated with a major earthquake event. In addition, the project would not exacerbate the potential for seismic activity to occur and therefore would not directly or indirectly cause potential adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. Therefore, the seismic-related impacts during renovation, new construction, and operation of near-term projects, long-term projects, and related utility infrastructure of the proposed Master Plan would be less than significant.

There are no known landslides on or near the main campus, the University Farm, or University Village. Based on the relatively flat to gently sloping topography, the potential for slope instability is low. In addition, as previously discussed, development proposed under the Master Plan would be required to comply with the CBC, which outlines specific design, engineering, and development standards for structures proposed in areas with unstable soils. Additionally, all new buildings would be subject to review and plan approval by CSU building officials, prior to and during construction. Therefore, landslide-related impacts during renovation and new construction of near-term projects, long-term projects, and related utility infrastructure of the proposed Master Plan would be less than significant.

*Soil Erosion (Impact GEO-2)*

As the project proposes new construction primarily in developed areas, erosion would be minimized. During demolition activities, new construction, and building renovation, CSU, Chico would be required to implement erosion control measures stipulated in a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP), pursuant to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) discharge requirements (see Section 3.9, Hydrology and Water Quality for details regarding SWPPPs). Therefore, during renovation and construction of near-term projects, long-term projects, and related utility infrastructure, erosion induced stormwater discharges would be reduced to levels that are less than significant.

*Unstable Soils or Geology (Impact GEO-3)*

As previously discussed, project development would comply with the CBC and the CSU Seismic Requirements, including preparation and implementation of geotechnical investigations, which would help to offset potential risks to structures and people associated with geologic hazards. In addition, the project would not exacerbate the potential for seismic activity, subsidence, or collapse to occur. Therefore, impacts related to unstable soils during renovation, new construction, and operation of near-term projects, long-term projects, and related utility infrastructure of the proposed Master Plan would be less than significant.

*Expansive Soil (Impact GEO-4)*

The main campus, the University Farm, and University Village are all underlain by a moderate to highly expansive soils. Project development would comply with the CBC, including preparation and implementation of geotechnical investigations, which would mitigate potential risks to proposed structures associated with expansive soils. Therefore, impacts related to expansive soils during renovation, new construction, and operation of near-term projects, long-term projects, and related utility infrastructure of the proposed Master Plan would be less than significant.

*Septic Tanks or Alternate Wastewater Disposal Systems (Impact GEO-5)*

The University Farm utilizes an existing septic/leach field system and animal waste lagoons for wastewater disposal. Based on the presence of an existing septic/leach field wastewater disposal system, it is assumed that onsite soils are capable of adequately supporting this wastewater disposal system. The existing wastewater disposal system would potentially be expanded as a result of proposed development at the University Farm. Based on the existing septic/leach field system, onsite project soils would be considered adequate in supporting the use of similar wastewater disposal systems in association with project buildout. Impacts would be less than significant.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to risk of loss, injury or death involving fault rupture, seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, or landslides, soil erosion, unstable soils, or expansive soils, and no mitigation measures are required.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

*Generate Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Impact GHG-1)*

The existing campus operations is estimated to generate 104,739 MT CO2e per year. Based on a service population of 19,583 people (19,651 students plus 2,232 faculty and staff), the existing scenario would result in GHG emissions of approximately 5.35 MT CO2e per service population per year. Comparatively, estimated annual proposed project-generated GHG emissions would be approximately 88,510 MT $CO_2e$ per year as a result of project operations only. With amortized construction emissions, the proposed project would result in approximately 88,640 MT $CO_2e$ per year. Based on a proposed project's service population of 21,883 people (17,488 students plus 2,095 faculty and staff), the proposed project would result in GHG emissions of approximately 4.05 MT $CO_2e$ per service population per year. Thus, the proposed project would result in a net reduction of approximately 1.30 MT $CO_2e$ per service population per year, which would not exceed the calculated efficiency significance threshold of 0.8 MT $CO_2e$ per service population per year. Therefore, the proposed project would not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that would have a significant impact on the environment. The impact would be less than significant.

*Conflict With Plans, Policies, or Regulations (Impact GHG-2)*

CSU, Chico's population growth associated with the proposed Master Plan would represent less than 1% of the total projected population in Butte County in 2030 (285,534 people). Therefore, the proposed project would not result in significant population growth that would substantially exceed the Butte County Area Government's (BCAG) growth projections for the County.

The Scoping Plan (approved by the California Air Resources Board [CARB] in 2008 and updated in 2014 and 2017) provides a framework for actions to reduce California's GHG emissions and requires CARB and other state agencies to adopt regulations and other initiatives to reduce GHGs. The proposed project would comply with all regulations adopted in furtherance of the Scoping Plan to the extent required by law and to the extent that they are applicable to the proposed project.

The proposed project would result in a net reduction of approximately 19,157 MT CO2e per year. In addition, as demonstrated previously, the proposed project would not conflict with the CSU, Chico Climate Action Plan (CAP), CSU Sustainability Policy, the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), and CARB's Scoping Plan. As such, the proposed project would not generate GHG emissions that may interfere with the implementation of GHG reduction goals for 2030 and 2050.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to greenhouse gas emissions, and no mitigation measures are required.

### Hazards and Hazardous Materials

*Routine Transport, Use, or Disposal of Hazardous Materials (Impact HAZ-1)*

A hazardous building materials survey would be conducted prior to any building renovation or demolition activities in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations. Proper handling, transportation, and disposal of any hazardous materials in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations would avoid or minimize effects during renovation and construction of near-term projects, long-term projects, and related utility infrastructure identified in the proposed Master Plan. Although the project would introduce commercially available potentially hazardous materials to future residents, employees, and visitors of the Master Plan Area, the use of these substances would be subject to applicable federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations that are intended to minimize health risk to the public associated with hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts of near-term projects, long-term projects, and related utility infrastructure would be less than significant.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to hazards from routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials, and no mitigation measures are required.

### Hydrology and Water Quality

*Water Quality (Impact HYD-1)*

Incorporation of required best management practices (BMPs) for materials and waste storage and handling, and equipment and vehicle maintenance and fueling, would reduce the potential discharge of polluted runoff from construction sites, consistent with the General Construction Permit and California Green Building Standards Code. Compliance with existing regulations would prevent violation of water quality standards and minimize the potential for contributing sources of polluted runoff. In addition, requirements outlined in the General Waste Discharge Requirements, Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Water, would prevent adverse impacts to surface water quality associated with construction dewatering. Therefore, impacts to water quality from demolition and construction activities associated with the proposed project would be less than significant.

Each project completed under the proposed Master Plan would incorporate low impact development (LID) features that, if properly implemented, would greatly improve the quality of stormwater runoff, restore the infiltration of water to the underlying aquifer, eliminate costs associated with conventional drainage systems, and reduce development impacts such as erosion and flooding. Implementation of stormwater BMPs and incorporation of LID designs into individual project designs would minimize potential on- and off-site surface water quality impacts and contribute to a reduction in water quality impacts within all new

development associated with the CSU Chico Master Plan. Therefore, project operations would not directly or indirectly violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water quality and the impact would be less than significant.

*Groundwater Supplies and Recharge (Impact HYD-2)*

Cal Water expects that under all hydrologic conditions, its groundwater supply would be able to fully meet future demands. Storage in the groundwater basins provide a buffer against years with decreased precipitation while wetter years will recharge natural supplies. In addition, Butte County has a 27,000 acre-feet per year entitlement to State Water Project water. It is possible that Cal Water could enter into an agreement that would make this water available to the customers in the Chico-Hamilton District. This State Water Project water could be treated and delivered directly to Cal Water customers or could be used for groundwater replenishment. Therefore, the project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies and impacts would be less than significant.

*Alter Existing Drainage Pattern (Impact HYD-3)*

Although internal drainage patterns would be somewhat altered as a result of project development, a water quality/hydrology report would be completed as part of individual project design. As a result, each project completed under the proposed Master Plan would incorporate relevant LID features These LID features would encourage on-site retention and reduce stormwater flows, reducing the potential for erosion and siltation to occur on- or off-site. In addition, CSU, Chico operates a 5-year maintenance permit and is required to maintain the Big Chico Creek edge, which is highly prone to erosion. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

As previously described, individual project designs completed under the proposed Master Plan would incorporate LID features, which would reduce the rate and amount of surface runoff. Continued installation of such LID features in association with individual projects would prevent substantial increases in the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

The drainage system would mimic existing conditions and would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff. In addition, LID features would lower the potential for the incidental release of contaminants to the environment such as oil and grease, nutrients, heavy metals, and certain pesticides, including legacy pesticides. As a result, the project would not create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

None of the proposed building projects associated with the Master Plan are located in a Special Flood Hazard Area, or 100-year flood zone. As a result, proposed construction associated with the proposed Master Plan would not impede or redirect flood flows such that there would be any adverse downstream flooding-related impacts. Flood related impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

*Project Inundation (Impact HYD-4)*

As previously described, proposed Master Plan development would not occur within a Special Flood Zone Hazard Area, or 100-year flood plain. The project is not located within a dam inundation or tsunami zone

and is not located next to a standing body of water susceptible to a seiche. Furthermore, the proposed project would not be industrial in nature, thus minimizing the potential for release of pollutants due to possible project inundation. The use, storage, and transport of hazardous materials and hazardous wastes would be subject to all applicable federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations that are intended to minimize health risk to the public and the environment associated with hazardous materials. As a result, flood-related hazardous materials impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

*Water Quality Control Plan or Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan (Impact HYD-5)*

A groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) has not been established for the West Butte and Vina Subbasins, as the basins priority has not been determined. Further, the project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. As a result, the project would not conflict with or obstruct this sustainable groundwater management plan. Impacts are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to hydrology and water quality, and no mitigation measures are required.

Noise

*Groundborne Vibration or Noise (Impact NOI-2)*

Pile driving and blasting is not currently expected to be utilized in the construction of the elements of the proposed Master Plan. The elements of the proposed Master Plan do not include elements that would generate ground-borne vibration associated with the long-term operation of the Master Plan. As such, groundborne vibration and noise impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Master Plan are considered less than significant.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to groundborne vibration or noise, and no mitigation measures are required.

Population and Housing

*Unplanned Population Growth (Impact POP-1)*

The CSU Board of Trustees requires each campus to take the necessary steps to accommodate additional system-wide enrollment increases, which includes the preparation of a Master Plan that accommodates a specified enrollment at an estimated planning horizon. This is prepared based on annual enrollment targets prepared by campuses in consultation with the CSU Chancellor's Office, and following CSU Board of Trustee approval of those Master Plans, campuses are required to manage their enrollments within a small margin

of error around those targets. Thus, campus enrollment growth, including that projected for the CSU, Chico campus under the proposed Master Plan, does not constitute unplanned growth. Development under the proposed Master Plan would allow for increased campus population, thereby increasing student and faculty/staff population. With an increase of nearly 2,200 FTES and buildout of approximately 1,400 student beds from the proposed Master Plan, there would be 800 remaining FTES, along with 91 faculty and 46 staff, that would need to find off-campus housing. Based on the 2019 BCAG forecast, there would be an increase in 4,936 housing units, meaning available housing for approximately 5,500 additional residents in the City of Chico between 2019 and 2030. As such, housing in the City is anticipated to fully accommodate the additional population from the Master Plan over the 2030-year horizon. Therefore, the proposed Master Plan would not induce any construction of housing in the surrounding community that would potentially induce indirect population growth.

Thus, the project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly, such that there would be significant environmental effects. Impacts from the proposed Master Plan would be less than significant.

*Displace People or Housing (Impact POP-2)*

Assuming the 13 residences (two in College Park and 11 in Rio Chico) would all be demolished, using the DOF average occupancy of 2.83 persons per household, redevelopment by a private developer for student housing would displace approximately 40 individuals. However, as discussed in Impact POP-1, the proposed Master Plan would create beds for approximately 1,400 students and would therefore result in a net increase in student housing.

Based on this analysis, implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not displace significant numbers of existing people or housing such that construction of additional housing would be needed. Impacts would be less than significant.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to population and housing, and no mitigation measures are required.

Public Services and Recreation

*New or Physically Altered Facilities (Impact PUB-1)*

Master Plan implementation on the main campus would be adequately serviced by existing Fire Stations 1 and 2. University Village would also continue to be served by Fire Stations 1 and 2. The University Farm is within Butte County jurisdiction, and is primarily served by the Butte County Fire Department's Station 44 and Chico Fire Station 1, if needed. Therefore, Master Plan implementation is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in demand for City or County fire protection services such that the construction of new or physically altered facilities would be warranted, which could result in environmental impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.

The primary police protection responsibility would continue to be assumed by the University Police Department (UPD), which has primary jurisdiction over properties owned, leased, operated, controlled, or administered by the University. This includes the main campus, University Farm, and University Village Housing. UPD also patrols a one-mile radius around the exterior main campus boundary, sharing jurisdiction with CPD. Enrollment growth and the increase in developed square footage that would occur as a result of proposed Master Plan implementation would primarily impact UPD rather than the Chico Police Department (CPD). Therefore, Master Plan implementation is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in demand for City police protection services such that the construction of new or physically altered facilities would be warranted, which could result in environmental impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.

The conservative estimate for additional TK 12th grade students resulting from the project is 45 students. Given the increase in capacity from the 2016 Facilities Master Plan Update, which would accommodate an extra 674 elementary school students and an additional 201 middle school students, as well as the existing extra capacity for 1,104 high school students, the increase of 45 students from the project would be minimal. As such, adequate capacity within existing schools is available to serve the potential needs of the proposed Master Plan, and no construction of additional facilities or expansion of existing facilities is anticipated to be necessary as a result of the proposed Master Plan. Thus, impacts related to the need for new or physically altered school facilities would be less than significant.

The proposed Master Plan would result in an estimated net increase of 91 faculty members and 46 staff. It would also support an increase of the on-campus student enrollment to 18,600 FTES (an increase of approximately 2,200 FTES from fall 2018 enrollment) over the next 10 years. The proposed Master Plan would include 1,400 new student housing beds. This would conservatively result in 800 students, 91 faculty, and 46 staff (937 individuals total) living off-campus and utilizing City parks. With an increase in 937 individuals over the 10-year horizon, as well as implementation of the Chico Area Recreation District's (CARD's) recommendations in the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP), it is not expected that new City parks and recreational facilities would need to be constructed to accommodate the population increase from the proposed Master Plan. The increase in population associated with implementation of the proposed Master Plan in and of itself would not create a significant impact on City parks such that there would be a need for new or expanded parks. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

*Deterioration of Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities (Impact PUB-2)*

As discussed above, the proposed Master Plan would result in an estimated net increase of 91 faculty members and 46 staff. It would also support an increase of the on-campus student enrollment to 18,600 FTES (an increase of approximately 2,200 FTES from fall 2018 enrollment) over the next 10 years. The proposed Master Plan would include 1,400 new student housing beds. This would conservatively result in 800 students, 91 faculty, and 46 staff (937 individuals total) living off-campus and utilizing City parks. With an increase in 937 individuals over the 10-year horizon, as well as implementation of CARD's recommendations in the 2019 PRMP, it is not expected that increase in population associated with implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not create a significant impact on City parks such that there would be substantial deterioration. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

*Construction or Expansion of Recreation Facilities (Impact PUB-3)*

The proposed near-term projects of the Master Plan include athletic field improvements and the Wildcat Recreation Center (WREC) expansion. Long-term recreational development projects of the proposed Master Plan involve replacement and expansion of athletic fields in the northernmost part of the main campus, including a 4,000-seat arena/event center for basketball and other events (e.g., convocations, academic conferences, public lectures, and concerts). Overall, the Master Plan proposes active recreational and athletic facilities as well as passive open space and pedestrian facilities intended to meet the demand of future enrollment growth. Growth from the proposed Master Plan would not require the construction or expansion of off-site recreational facilities elsewhere in the City, as the Master Plan itself includes recreational facilities projects to meet new demands. Impacts would be less than significant.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to public services and recreation, and no mitigation measures are required.

Transportation

*Conflict with Plans Addressing the Circulation System (Impact TRA-1)*

The proposed Master Plan would not conflict with applicable transportation plans. As described above, proposed campus growth is slightly lower, and housing slightly higher, than the growth forecasts used in the regional transportation plan. While local plans do not apply to CSU, the proposed Master Plan would not conflict with roadway, transit, or bicycle/pedestrian plans. Proposed improvements to Warner/Ivy would be coordinated with the City and would be supportive of both CSU, Chico and City of Chico objectives of improving bicycle and pedestrian circulation while maintaining adequate vehicular circulation. The proposed Master Plan would include bicycle/pedestrian improvements that would create better circulation and connectivity with the City of Chico system. The project is transit-supportive, as the University works with the transit provider to maximize student usage and provides supplementary transit service. Impacts related to plan conflict would be less than significant.

*Hazards Due to a Geometric Design Feature (Impact TRA-3)*

The development included in the proposed Master Plan is infill development consistent with the existing land use context. As such, it will generate a mix of traffic that is similar to existing conditions. With more students and employees, the volume of traffic across modes will increase and this may result in slower travel speeds for some modes. These changes do not cause conditions that warrant modification of the existing network as part of the proposed Master Plan other than the addition of a new bike path. This path will be designed and constructed to applicable design standards to avoid creating a geometric hazard. Improvements are anticipated on Warner/Ivy Street to improve compatibility of transportation modes (automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian). The impact would be less than significant.

*Emergency Access (Impact TRA-4)*

The development described in the proposed Master Plan would not interfere with existing emergency access. No existing rights of way or emergency access routes would be closed. This impact would be less than significant.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to conflict with plans addressing the circulation system, hazards due to a geometric design feature, or emergency access, and no mitigation measures are required.

### Utilities and Service Systems

*Expansion or Relocation of Facilities (Impact UTL-1)*

The proposed project would not require any additional off-site infrastructure to meet project water demand. The project itself includes improvements to address water supply and demand, such as conversion of natural fields to a synthetic turf, infrastructure upgrades to improve water usage efficiency, and installation of water metering for buildings and irrigation zones. There would be no infrastructure work at University Village or the University Farm, as neither would increase project water demand. Additionally, there are no water treatment plants in the Chico portion of the District; water is treated via well head treatment with chlorine injections. As such, the project is not expected to require or result in the relocation or construction or new or expanded water facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

The Chico Water Pollution Control Plant WPCP has a 12 million gallons per day (MGD) capacity with future expandability to 15 MGD. The proposed Master Plan would increase wastewater flows in the campus and the City due to increased student, faculty and staff population. The increase in domestic water use is estimated to be 15.8 million gallons per year. In terms of wastewater flow, that would be an average daily increase of 0.4 MGD by 2030. The buildout of the proposed Master Plan would not result in wastewater flows reaching current, or future, available capacity of the WPCP.

As the proposed Master Plan would not result in capacity issues at the WPCP, there would be no need for new or expanded wastewater facilities. Impacts regarding new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities would be less than significant.

The proposed project would adhere to BMPs established by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). BMPs include treatment requirements, operating procedures, and practices to control site runoff from impervious surfaces. Phase II Small MS4 Permit requirements would ensure that the project implements appropriate structural improvements and hydromodification standards to address runoff. Additionally, the project includes a variety of utility infrastructure improvements, including implementation of LID strategies to reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality. With adherence to relevant BMPs to address stormwater site runoff, as well as implementation of LID strategies and other required measures, the project would not require the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities on the main campus or the University Farm. No changes are proposed for University Village as part of the proposed Master Plan and site conditions would remain the same. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

As discussed in Chapter 3.5 of the EIR, the proposed Master Plan would not increase electricity usage such that new or expanded off-site electric power facilities would be needed, due to improved infrastructure and campus building energy efficiency improvements. Additionally, as part of the proposed Master Plan, more photovoltaic arrays are planned which would add approximately 1,450 kW to the campus power supply. Energy metering would also be added to monitor facilities energy usage. The proposed Master Plan would include energy efficiency and infrastructure improvements that would address new project demands. As such, new or expanded off-site electric power facilities would not be needed as a result of the project. Impacts would be less than significant.

An analysis of the existing campus natural gas distribution system revealed that improvements to PG&Es infrastructure would be needed to support buildout of the proposed Master Plan. Currently, some sections of the main campus system are experiencing leakage and/or are at the end of their useful life. Further, older buildings on campus do not have earthquake valves installed and do not meet current building codes. However, the University ultimately plans to phase out natural gas in support of adopted climate neutrality goals. While improvements are needed, natural gas usage would not increase such that PG&E would need to build new or expanded facilities to accommodate the proposed Master Plan. As such, impacts would be less than significant related to new or expanded natural gas facilities.

Any improvements needed to the telecommunications system would be completed as part of the proposed Master Plan within the campus and would not result in the need for new or expanded off-site telecommunications facilities. Additionally, the campus is moving toward implementing VOIP in all buildings which would allow calls to be made through the internet rather than traditional telecommunications connections. As such, impacts from the proposed Master Plan would be less than significant related to new or expanded telecommunications facilities.

*Water Supplies During Normal, Dry, and Multiple Dry Years (Impact UTL-2)*

The 2015 Urban Water Master Plan (UWMP) includes an analysis of water supply reliability projected through 2040. Based on the analysis, Cal Water would be capable of providing adequate water supply to its service area under normal, single dry-year, and multiple dry-year supply and demand scenarios, through 2040. Implementation of the proposed Master Plan would increase water usage from 177.3 acre-feet per year (AFY) to 225.9 AFY. According to the Cal Water 2015 UWMP, the water demand in 2030 is projected to be 33,981 AF. Accordingly. the CSU, Chico campus' water demand at Master Plan buildout would represent approximately 0.6 % of Cal Water's total projected water demand, which is a nominal percentage. Therefore, impacts to water supplies would be less than significant.

*Wastewater Treatment Capacity (Impact UTL-3)*

As discussed previously, the WPCP's existing capacity is 12 MGD with future expandability to 15 MGD. As of 2019, average daily dry weather wastewater flows were 6.9 MGD. The proposed Master Plan is not expected to increase wastewater flows such that the capacity of the WPCP is exceeded. The proposed Master Plan would result in an additional 0.4 MGD at full buildout. The projects' increase in demand for wastewater treatment would not exceed the capacity of the WPCP and would not necessitate expansion of the WPCP. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

*Solid Waste (Impact UTL-4)*

Project construction would generate significantly higher amounts of solid waste than project operation due to renovation and demolition of buildings and associated construction activities. The exact amount of solid waste that would be generated from construction/demolition activities is not known. However, through recycling and reuse of construction/demolition materials, the campus diverts the vast majority of its construction/demolition waste from the landfill. It is expected a majority of the solid waste generated during construction activities would be recycled and would not generate solid waste in excess of existing landfill capacity.

Conservatively assuming that the increase in 2,200 FTES, 91 faculty, and 46 staff would generate 4.51 pounds of waste per day, the proposed project would generate a total of 10,540 pounds of municipal solid waste over the 10-year horizon. Given the Neal Road Landfill's maximum permitted throughput of 1,500 tons per day, maximum permitted capacity of 25,271,900 cubic yards, and remaining capacity of 20,847,970 cubic yards as of 2009, the net increase in solid waste generation from project operation would not exceed the capacity of local infrastructure. Additionally, a percentage of the solid waste generated would be diverted from the landfill through recycling, reuse, and composting. CSU also has sustainability policies related to sustainable procurement, including encouraging the use of products that minimize trash sent to landfills or incinerators, and promoting the use of suppliers and vendors that reduce waste, re-purpose recycled material, or support other environmentally friendly practices in the provision of goods and services. It is anticipated that Master Plan implementation would not generate solid waste in excess of applicable State standards or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, nor would it otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Master Plan implementation would comply with applicable federal and state statutes and regulations related to solid waste management and reduction. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

*Finding*

The Board of Trustees finds, based upon substantial evidence in the record, that the proposed Master Plan would not result in potential significant impacts associated with adverse effects related to utilities and service systems, and no mitigation measures are required.

## 2.3 Potentially Significant Impacts That Can Be Mitigated Below A Level of Significance

Pursuant to Section 21081(a) of the Public Resources Code and Section 15091(a)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines, the CSU Board of Trustees finds that, for each of the following significant effects identified in the Final EIR, changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the proposed project which mitigate or avoid the identified significant effects on the environment to less than significant levels. These findings are explained below and are supported by substantial evidence in the record of proceedings.

## Biological Resources

### *Candidate, Sensitive, or Special Status Species (Impact BIO-1)*

Implementation of the proposed Master Plan could result in impacts to special-status plants, including plants that could become special-status species within the 10-year master plan period. Impacts could include the destruction of individual plants or populations of plants that may become established in the construction footprint prior to ground disturbance. This is a potentially significant impact. Preconstruction surveys for special-status plants conducted in accordance with MM-BIO-1 would ensure impacts to special-status plant species would be reduced to a less than significant level.

implementation of the proposed Master Plan could result in impacts to valley elderberry longhorn beetle. Impacts could include direct destruction of habitat as a result of vegetation removal or trimming in the riparian woodland along Big Chico Creek. This impact would be potentially significant. Preconstruction surveys and flagging elderberry shrubs for avoidance prior to any ground disturbance in the riparian woodland, in accordance with MM-BIO-2, would avoid and/or minimize significant impacts to valley elderberry longhorn beetle.

No direct impacts to steelhead or Chinook salmon are anticipated. However, indirect impacts resulting from construction activities within the riparian woodland habitat of Big Chico Creek would be potentially significant. In accordance with MM-BIO-9, temporarily disturbed areas in the riparian woodland would be revegetated following construction and prior to the first rain event, and contractors would be responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate BMPs prior to, during, and following ground disturbance in the riparian woodland. As such, indirect impacts to steelhead and Chinook salmon via direct impacts to their critical habitat would be avoided. If maintenance of existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings or utility crossings above and/or below the creek become necessary, the aquatic habitat may be impacted by the placement of fill material. This impact would be potentially significant. MM-BIO-10 would require consultation with relevant resource agencies for potential impacts to the Central Valley steelhead DPS and Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon ESU.

Given the presence of habitat and nearby records, implementation of the proposed Master Plan could result in impacts to western pond turtle. Direct impacts could include mortality or injury to turtles if present in the riparian corridor prior to vegetation removal or other ground-disturbing activities. Indirect impacts to western pond turtle could result from a temporary reduction of cover following vegetation removal activities in the riparian woodland. The direct or indirect effects could result in a potentially significant impact. With implementation of MM-BIO-3 and MM-BIO-11, which require preconstruction plant and construction monitoring to ensure the avoidance of the species, to this species would be reduced to less than significant level. If maintenance of existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings or utility crossings above and/or below the creek become necessary, MM-BIO-10 would involve obtaining a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), which would stipulate protection measures for western pond turtle.

Implementation of the proposed Master Plan could result in impacts to burrowing owl. Direct impacts could include mortality or injury to owls or destruction of burrows/nests if nesting in or adjacent to a construction site prior to ground-disturbing activities. In addition, loud construction activities could cause an adult owl to abandon an active nest that is in close proximity to construction, which could lead to nest failure. This

impact would be potentially significant. Implementation of MM-BIO-4 and MM-BIO-11, which involve worker environmental awareness training (WEAT) and preconstruction surveys for active burrowing owl nests, would avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to this species.

Direct and indirect impacts to Swainson's hawk would be similar to those described above for burrowing owl. This would be a potentially significant impact. Implementation of MM-BIO-5 and MM-BIO-11, which involve WEAT training and preconstruction surveys for active Swainson's hawk nests, would avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to this species.

Direct and indirect impacts to loggerhead shrike, yellow warbler, and other nesting and migratory birds and birds of prey would be similar to those described above for burrowing owl. This would be a potentially significant impact. Implementation of MM-BIO-6 and MM-BIO-11, which involve WEAT training and preconstruction surveys for nesting birds (during the nesting season March through August), would avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to this species.

Indirect impacts to native bats could include noise-related disturbance or destruction of roost sites, and direct impacts could include mortality or injury to bats roosting in a tree that is removed or a structure that is demolished. This would be a potentially significant impact. Implementation of MM-BIO-7 and MM-BIO-11, which involve WEAT training, limited operating periods, and preconstruction surveys for roosting bats, would avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to these species.

Indirect impacts to American badger could include noise-related disturbance or destruction of burrow sites, and direct impacts could include mortality or injury to badgers occupying burrows in an area subject to disturbance. This would be a potentially significant impact. Implementation of MM-BIO-8 and MM-BIO-11, which involve WEAT training and a preconstruction surveys for occupied badger dens, would avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to this species.

The proposed bike path along the north side of Big Chico Creek may require seasonal tree or vegetation trimming to prevent encroachment onto the path. This maintenance activity has a potential to impact nesting special-status birds and bats, if present during vegetation disturbance. This impact would be potentially significant. Implementation of MM-BIO-6 and MM-BIO-7, which involve preconstruction surveys for active bird nests or bat maternity roosts if trimming is conducted during nesting or roosting seasons (between March through August), would avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to this species.

*Riparian Habitat or Other Sensitive Natural Community (Impact BIO-2)*

Indirect impacts to the riparian woodland include potential runoff and siltation during and immediately after construction, which would be avoided and/or minimized with the implementation of appropriate BMPs prior to any ground disturbance at the project site. This would be a potentially significant impact. Vegetation removal, if any, from this community would be minimized to maintain the erosion control functions that these species provide. Implementation of MM-BIO-9 and MM-BIO-10 would avoid and/or minimize direct and indirect effects.

Within the main campus, operation and maintenance activities associated with the proposed Master Plan are not expected to be substantially different then operations and maintenance under existing conditions. The proposed bike path along the north side of Big Chico Creek may require seasonal tree or vegetation trimming to prevent encroachment onto the path. Although vegetation disturbance has a potential to impact

the riparian woodland, the impact would be temporary, minimal, and localized to the segment of riparian corridor immediately adjacent to the proposed path. Therefore, any sensitive natural community impacts resulting from vegetation management along the bike path would be less than significant.

*Protected Wetlands (Impact BIO-3)*

The proposed Master Plan includes removal of an abandoned stilling well. Removal of the landward support structures for the stilling well are not expected to result in impacts to Big Chico Creek. However, the stilling well is of older construction and it is not certain whether it can be removed without interacting with jurisdictional portions of Big Chico Creek. Therefore, these or other construction activities affecting Big Chico Creek or the seasonal pond could result in a potentially significant impact. Such activities would require permit authorization from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), RWQCB, and/or CDFW in accordance with **MM-BIO-10**.

The two settling ponds present on the farm are not considered jurisdictional waters of the U.S. Similar to the irrigation ditches, the setting ponds are exempt from regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act in accordance with Regulatory Guidance Letter No. 87-09 – Section 404(f)(1)(c) Exemptions for Construction or Maintenance of Farm or Stock Ponds.

In accordance with **MM-BIO-9**, temporarily disturbed areas in the riparian woodland would be revegetated following construction and prior to the first rain event, and contractors would be responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate BMPs prior to, during, and following ground disturbance in the riparian woodland. As such, indirect impacts to Big Chico Creek from sedimentation or incidental spills would be avoided.

*Native Resident or Migratory Wildlife Species/Corridors (Impact BIO-4)*

Implementation of the proposed Master Plan could result in potentially significant indirect impacts to Big Chico Creek and its associated riparian woodland habitat. With the implementation of **MM-BIO-4, MM-BIO-5, MM-BIO-6, MM-BIO-7, MM-BIO-8, MM-BIO-9, and MM-BIO-10**, potential impacts to native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or native wildlife nursery sites, such as active bird nests, bat maternity roosts, and badger dens, would be avoided and/or minimized.

*Mitigation Measures*

**MM-BIO-1** **Rare Plant Survey.** Prior to ground-disturbance in the riparian woodland on the main campus, a qualified botanist shall conduct surveys during the appropriate blooming period for potentially occurring special-status plant species. The purpose of the survey shall be to delineate and flag populations of special-status plant species for avoidance. Special-status plant populations identified during the pre-construction survey shall be mapped using a hand-held GPS unit and avoided where possible. Plant individuals or populations plus a 10-foot buffer shall be temporarily fenced during construction activities with high-visibility fencing or prominently flagged. If complete avoidance of populations is infeasible, further measures, as described below, shall be necessary.

If avoidance of special-status plant species is not feasible, a Rare Plant Salvage and Translocation Plan shall be prepared by a qualified botanist and approved by CSU prior to

implementation. The Rare Plant Salvage and Translocation Plan shall include, at a minimum: identification of occupied habitat to be preserved and removed; identification of on-site or off-site preservation, restoration, or enhancement locations; methods for preservation, restoration, enhancement, and/or translocation; goals and objectives; replacement ratio and success standard of 1:1 for impacted to established acreage; a monitoring program to ensure mitigation success; adaptive management and remedial measures in the event that the performance standards are not achieved; and financial assurances and a mechanism for conservation of any mitigation lands required in perpetuity.

MM-BIO-2 **VELB Protection and Habitat Avoidance.** Per the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service *Framework for Assessing Impacts to the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (Desmocerus californicus dimorphus)* (Framework; USFWS 2017), the below measures shall be implemented to avoid and minimize potential impacts to VELB. These measures apply to all construction and maintenance work with the potential to affect elderberry shrubs located along Big Chico Creek on the main campus.

1. All areas to be avoided during construction activities shall be fenced and/or flagged as close to construction limits as feasible.
2. Activities that may damage or kill an elderberry shrub (e.g., trenching, paving, etc.) may need an avoidance area of at least 6 meters (20 feet) from the drip-line of elderberry shrubs, depending on the type of activity.
3. A qualified biologist shall provide training for all contractors, work crews, and any onsite personnel on the status of the VELB, its host plant and habitat, the need to avoid damaging the elderberry shrubs, and the possible penalties for noncompliance.
4. A qualified biologist shall monitor the work area at project appropriate intervals to assure that all avoidance and minimization measures are implemented. The amount and duration of monitoring shall depend on the project specifics and should be discussed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist.
5. As much as feasible, all activities that could occur within 50 meters (165 feet) of an elderberry shrub, shall be conducted outside of the flight season of the VELB (March - July).
6. Trimming may remove or destroy VELB eggs and/or larvae and may reduce the health and vigor of the elderberry shrub. In order to avoid and minimize adverse effects to VELB, trimming shall only occur between November and February and shall avoid the removal of any branches or stems that are ≥ 1 inch in diameter. Measures to address regular and/or large scale maintenance (trimming) should be established in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist.
7. Herbicides shall not be used within the drip-line of the shrub. Insecticides shall not be used within 30 meters (98 feet) of an elderberry shrub. All chemicals shall be applied using a backpack sprayer or similar direct application method.
8. Mechanical weed removal within the drip-line of the shrub shall be limited to the season when adults are not active (August - February) and shall avoid damaging the elderberry.

9. Erosion control shall be implemented and the affected area shall be re-vegetated with appropriate native plants.
10. For all unavoidable adverse impacts to VELB or its habitat, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shall be necessary to determine the appropriate type and amount of compensatory mitigation. Per Tables 1 and 2 of the Framework, suitable riparian habitat may be replaced, at a minimum of 3:1 for all acres that will be permanently impacted by the project. Suitable non-riparian habitat may be replaced, at a minimum of 1:1 for all acres that will be permanently impacted by the project.

MM-BIO-3 **Preconstruction Surveys for Western Pond Turtle.** A qualified biologist shall conduct a survey for western pond turtle within 48 hours prior to the start of construction activities within areas near the riparian woodland on the main campus. Concurrently with the preconstruction survey, searches for nest sites shall be conducted and any identified sites shall be delineated with high-visibility flagging or fencing and avoided during construction activities. If avoidance is not possible, the nest and/or turtle shall be removed by a qualified biologist and relocated to an appropriate location in coordination with California Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists.

If turtles and/or nests are encountered during the preconstruction survey, a qualified biologist shall be present during grubbing and clearing activities in suitable habitat to monitor for western pond turtle. If a turtle is observed in the active construction zone, construction shall cease and a qualified biologist will be notified. Construction may resume when the biologist has either relocated the turtle to nearby suitable habitat outside the construction zone, or, after thorough inspection, determined that the turtle has moved away from the construction zone.

MM-BIO-4 **Preconstruction Surveys for Burrowing Owl.** A qualified biologist shall conduct surveys for burrowing owl within 30 days prior to ground-disturbing activities in undeveloped areas of the University Farm. The survey shall cover the limits of ground disturbance and potentially suitable nesting habitat within 300 feet. If ground-disturbing activities are delayed, then additional surveys shall be conducted such that no more than 7 days elapse between the survey and ground-disturbing activities.

If non-nesting burrowing owls are observed in or adjacent to the construction footprint during the survey, construction shall be postponed until the qualified biologist can fully implement a California Department of Fish and Wildlife-approved burrow exclusion plan (to be prepared by the qualified biologist). The exclusion plan shall be conducted in accordance with the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (CDFW 2012). Once owls have been successfully excluded and unoccupied burrows evacuated, construction in the area may proceed.

If nesting burrowing owls are observed during the survey, construction activities within 300 feet of occupied burrows shall be delayed until young owls have fledged and are independent of the burrow, as determined by a qualified biologist. The qualified biologist may reduce the 300-foot buffer based on the type, timing, extent, and intensity of the construction activity and other

factors such as site topography and vegetation cover between the construction activity and the burrow. Once all young have fledged and are no longer dependent upon the nest burrow, the same burrow exclusion procedure described above shall be implemented prior to resuming construction activities in the area.

MM-BIO-5 **Preconstruction Surveys for Swainson's Hawk.** A qualified biologist shall conduct surveys for Swainson's hawk prior to tree removal or building demolition activities on the University Farm, if undertaken during the Swainson's hawk nesting season (March 1 – August 31). The surveys shall be conducted in accordance with the Swainson's Hawk Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) *Recommended Timing and Methodology for Swainson's Hawk Nesting Surveys in California's Central Valley* (TAC 2000). The survey shall cover the limits of construction and suitable nesting habitat within 500 feet. If an active nest is observed in the survey area, construction within 500 feet of the nest shall be delayed until young hawks have fledged and are independent of the nest, as determined by a qualified biologist. In consultation with California Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists, the qualified biologist may reduce the 500-foot buffer based on the type, timing, extent, and intensity of the construction activity and other factors such as site topography and vegetation cover between the construction activity and the nest. Construction within 500 feet of the nest may reinitiate once all young have fledged and are no longer dependent upon the nest.

MM-BIO-6 **Preconstruction Surveys for Nesting Birds (including Yellow Warbler and Loggerhead Shrike).** A qualified biologist shall conduct a survey for nesting birds approximately two days prior to vegetation removal activities on the main campus, University Village and University Farm conducted during the nesting season (March through August). The survey shall cover the limits of vegetation removal and suitable nesting habitat within 500 feet for raptors and 100 feet for other nesting birds.

If any active nests are observed during surveys, a qualified biologist shall establish a suitable avoidance buffer from the active nest. The buffer distance, to be determined by the qualified biologist, will typically range from 50 to 300 feet, and shall be determined based on factors such as the species of bird, topographic features, intensity and extent of the disturbance, timing relative to the nesting cycle, and anticipated ground disturbance schedule. Limits of construction to avoid active nests shall be established in the field with flagging, fencing, or other appropriate barriers and shall be maintained until the chicks have fledged and the nests are no longer active, as determined by the qualified biologist.

If vegetation removal activities are delayed, additional nest surveys shall be conducted such that no more than 7 days elapse between the survey and vegetation removal activities.

MM-BIO-7 **Preconstruction Surveys for Roosting Bats.** If feasible, building demolition and tree removal activities shall be conducted outside of the bat maternity season (March 1 – August 31) to avoid potential impacts to maternity colonies.

If building demolition and tree removal activities must occur during the bat maternity season, a qualified biologist (i.e., biologist with knowledge of California bat species, as well as experience conducting bat surveys and preparing and implementing bat exclusion plans) shall conduct a survey for maternity roosts within 14 days prior to construction. The survey shall include a visual inspection of potential roosting features (bats need not be present) and presence of guano in the construction footprint and within 50 feet. Potential roosting features found during the survey shall be flagged or marked. If a bat roosting or maternity colony cannot be completely avoided, the individuals shall be safely evicted under the direction of the qualified bat biologist. If individuals cannot be safely evicted due to factors such as lack of alternative roosting sites or the young still being reliant on adults, as determined by the qualified bat biologist, ground-disturbing activities within a specified distance of the roost (specified distance to be determined by the bat biologist, based on surroundings and vulnerability of roost site, etc.) shall be postponed or halted until conditions are suitable for safe eviction or the roost has vacated naturally.

MM-BIO-8 **Preconstruction Surveys for American Badger.** A qualified biologist shall conduct focused surveys for American badger dens within 2 weeks prior to ground-disturbing activities in undeveloped areas of the University Farm. The survey shall cover the limits of ground disturbance and a 100-foot buffer. Any winter or natal American badger dens located during the survey shall be evaluated (typically with remote cameras) to determine activity status.

Prior to construction, the qualified biologist shall establish a 100-foot no-disturbance buffer (e.g., mesh exclusion fencing, flagging, or similar) around any active American badger natal dens identified during the survey. The buffer shall be maintained until the qualified biologist determines that the den is no longer active and the young are no longer dependent upon the den for survival.

If construction occurs during the non-breeding period (typically from June through February) and an active non-natal den is found in or adjacent to the construction footprint, a qualified biologist (with the appropriate permits and credentials) shall attempt to trap or flush the individual and relocate it to suitable habitat away from construction. If no dens are observed, and/or after a trapping or flushing effort is completed, and/or after it is confirmed that a natal den is no longer active, the vacated or unoccupied den can be excavated and construction can proceed.

MM-BIO-9 **Riparian Woodland and Creek Protection.** Prior to the initiation of ground-disturbing activities in the riparian woodland on the main campus, the limits of disturbance and avoided habitat shall be fenced (e.g., mesh exclusion fencing, flagging, or similar). No construction, staging, or other ground-disturbing activities shall be permitted beyond the construction fence. Construction contractors shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) prior to, during, and following ground disturbance in the riparian woodland. Implementation of MM-BIO-11 would also ensure riparian woodland and creek protection during construction.

Temporarily disturbed areas in the riparian woodland shall be revegetated following construction and prior to the first rain event (more than one half inch of precipitation in a 24-hour period). Reseeded areas shall be covered with a biodegradable erosion control fabric to prevent erosion and downstream sedimentation. The project engineer shall determine the specifications needed for erosion control fabric (e.g., sheer strength) based on anticipated maximum flow velocities and soil types. No seed of nonnative species shall be used unless certified to be sterile.

MM-BIO-10 **Contingency Plan for In-Water Work.** If CSU, Chico facilities staff determines that a project has the potential to impact Big Chico Creek or other aquatic habitat by the placement of fill material, an individual or nationwide permit from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) shall be obtained prior to such activity. As part of the ACOE permit, compensatory mitigation may be required, at a ratio to be determined by the ACOE, to offset the loss of wetland/waters habitat. If so, and as part of the permit application process, a qualified biologist shall draft a mitigation and monitoring plan to address implementation and monitoring requirements under the permit to ensure that the project would result in no net loss of habitat functions and values. The plan shall contain, at a minimum, mitigation goals and objectives, mitigation location, a discussion of actions to be implemented to mitigate the impact, monitoring methods and performance criteria, extent of monitoring to be conducted, actions to be taken in the event that the mitigation is not successful, and reporting requirements. The plan shall be approved by ACOE and compensatory mitigation shall take place either on site or at an appropriate off-site location as approved by the ACOE.

Concurrent with the ACOE permit, CSU shall also obtain a Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB, subject to the same mitigation plan requirements stated above. Any work within the bed or bank of Big Chico Creek, or within the abutting riparian woodland, or within the seasonal pond at the University Farm, would require authorization from CDFW under a California Fish and Game Code Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement. Trimming or removal of riparian vegetation may also require compensatory mitigation.

MM-BIO-11 Worker Environmental Awareness Training. For activities that require preconstruction surveys for special-status species, CSU shall retain a qualified biologist to provide worker environmental awareness training (WEAT) for all construction workers and field inspectors. The WEAT may also be conducted through a video or electronic presentation created by a qualified biologist specifically for the project. The WEAT shall instruct workers on how to recognize all special-status plant and wildlife species and their preferred habitat potentially present in the project site, applicable laws and regulations regarding each species, actions to take if a special-status species is observed during construction activities including the name/contact information of the monitoring biologist, and the nature and purpose of protective measures including best management practices and other required mitigation measures. They shall also be instructed as to sensitive resource areas, including wetlands or other water, to avoid impacts within the project site other than where impacts have been authorized, and regarding relevant laws and regulations for each resource.

*Finding*

The CSU Board of Trustees finds that the above mitigation measures are feasible, will reduce the potential biological resources impacts of the project to less-than-significant levels, and are adopted by the CSU Board of Trustees. Accordingly, the CSU Board of Trustees finds, that pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(a)(1), and the CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(1), changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

*Rationale*

The proposed mitigation measures involve preconstruction surveys for special-status plants and wildlife, WEAT training for construction activities with potential to impact species and their habitats, and habitat avoidance and protection via the use of BMPs and/or avoidance fencing, as appropriate. If special-status species or common wildlife are encountered during construction, measures would be taken to avoid harming these species. In addition, preconstruction surveys would ensure avoidance of biological resources such as elderberry shrubs, active bird nests, or roosting bats, if present, prior to vegetation removal or ground-disturbing activities. With implementation of the above discussed mitigation measures, potential impacts to biological resources in the Master Plan Area would be mitigated to less than significant levels.

Cultural Resources

*Historic Resources (Impact CUL-1)*

The main campus contains several buildings that qualify as historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. In addition to the three historical resources discussed in the context of near-term Master Plan projects (Sapp Hall, Deen House, and Meriam Library), five historical resources were previously recorded on the main campus: Sierra Hall, Warrens Center, Laxson Auditorium, Trinity Hall, and Kendall Hall. Implementation of the Master Plan includes renovation of Laxson, Trinity, and Kendall, and therefore may have a potentially significant impact on historical resources. In addition, four houses within the Rio Chico neighborhood (which is not within the boundaries of the campus but is analyzed as part of the Master Plan buildout) have been previously identified as potentially eligible for local listing and are therefore considered CEQA historical resources. Construction of new student housing in the Rio Chico neighborhood could potentially impact these previously identified resources. Implementation of the Master Plan would not include demolition or relocation of these resources. Impacts associated with the future potential renovation of historical resources will be considered less than significant if project design plans can demonstrate conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (MM-CUL-1 below).

Future master-planned projects could also potentially impact buildings and structures 45 years old or older that have not been identified as historical resources. Properties that meet the 45-year threshold and have not been evaluated under National Register of Historic Places/California Register of Historical Resources (NRHP/CRHR) criteria should be further studied for potential impacts to historical resources in the event they are included in a future project. Consequently, these future activities could result in significant impacts to previously unidentified CEQA historical resources in the Master Plan area. Implementation of mitigation measure MM-CUL-2 requires that properties 45 years old or older be evaluated for historical significance prior to initiation of any project-related activities that could result in impacts. Master-planned projects that

may affect a historical resource, either identified herein or as a result of MM-CUL-2, would be subject to **MM-CUL-1**.

*Archaeological Resources (Impact CUL-2)*

One archaeological site intersects the area of direct impact (ADI) for the WREC Expansion, a Near Term Project. This historic-era archaeological site consists of the various ruined features and foundations for the Chico Soda Works, the Manufactured Gas Plant of Chico Gas Works, and the abandoned railroad tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad, all of which were roughly occupied from 1880s to the mid-1910s. The site has been subject to previous monitoring and evaluation efforts, and is understood to not be eligible for CRHR/NRHP listing. However, this site is considered sensitive and the additional investigation is warranted. Implementation of **MM-CUL-3** addresses this potentially significant impact.

Implementation of the proposed Master Plan, including Near-Term Projects, would avoid all other areas with documented potentially significant archeological resources.

*Human Remains (Impact CUL-3)*

Per Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are discovered during project construction, no further work shall occur in the immediate vicinity of the discovered remains until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to the origin of the remains. Furthermore, pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(b), remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until recommendations for treatment have been made. These regulations are incorporated into **MM-CUL-5**. Compliance with existing regulations would reduce potential impacts to human remains to less than significance.

*Mitigation Measures*

**MM-CUL-1** Subsequent technical work must be conducted prior to the start of new construction, additions, renovations (including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance work), or site improvements, involving work that could possibly constitute a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource by means of physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings, such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5) within or adjacent to CEQA historical resources. The subsequent technical work must include preparation of a report where the proposed project design plans and/or schematics are analyzed in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SOIS) for the Treatment of Historic Properties, specifically, the Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. As CSU Chico is subject to PRC 5024 and 5024.5 regulations which results in requiring consultation with SHPO on state owned historical resources, this SOIS analysis of the proposed project plans will also need to be reviewed and approved by SHPO. Further, all proposed ADA compliance work shall reference both the "Accessibility Considerations" section of the Rehabilitation Guidelines and National Park Service Preservation Brief 32, Making Historic Properties Accessible to ensure that ADA compliance work minimizes changes to historic materials and features. The project plan/schematic design review (technical report) shall be completed by a qualified architectural historian or historic

preservation specialist who meets the SOIS Professional Qualifications for Architectural History. Upon review, the qualified specialist and SHPO may recommend changes/revisions to project plans in order to obtain conformance with the Standards for Rehabilitation. Alternatively, CSU, Chico may choose to work with a preservation architect who meets the SOIS Professional Qualifications.

As part of this subsequent technical reporting, if the subject building is located within an existing historic district or directly adjacent to a historical resources possible indirect impacts to those buildings will need to be addressed. If deemed necessary, an appropriate level of protection shall be provided for those buildings adjacent to historical resources during proposed new construction and renovation activities. A preservation plan shall be developed to provide these details. At a minimum, protective fencing shall be used during construction activities so historic buildings are not inadvertently impacted. The preservation plan shall also examine the potential effects of vibration resulting from nearby demolition and construction activities. The final preservation plan shall be appended to the final set of construction plans. All SHPO consultation, subsequent reporting on the project meeting the SOIS guidelines, and any necessary preservation plans must be completed prior to the start of construction.

**MM-CUL-2** Implementation of the Master Plan will result in future project-level activities that involve construction and ground disturbing activities within the Master Plan areas. As such, future projects involving these types of activities could constitute a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource by means of physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings, such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5). To mitigate the potential impacts of future projects developed under the Master Plan, CSU, Chico shall be required to ensure that potential impacts to historical resources be assessed as part of planning and environmental clearance for their individual project(s). Prior to the initiation of any construction and/or ground disturbing activities, subsequent identification and impact analysis, including consideration of previously identified historical resources and evaluation of buildings and structures over the age 45 years old that have not been previously identified for historical significance in accordance with the guidance of the State of California Office of Historic Preservation, shall be conducted. As such, a Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) report must be prepared. If the HRE identifies the presence of CEQA historical resources and impacts cannot be avoided through project redesign (MM-CUL-1) than more documentation may be required and mitigation will be necessary. A qualified architectural historian, meeting the SIOS Professional Qualifications, shall conduct all work related to the preparation of a HRE, impact analyses, mitigation recommendations (if deemed necessary), and/or subsequent technical reports, should the proposed construction and implementation of the Facilities Master Plan result in potential impacts to CEQA historical resources. MM-CUL-1 would apply to resources found to be historical under CEQA.

**MM-CUL-3** Prior to initiation of WREC Expansion work, and subsequent to development of the plans for this activity, previous findings associated with CA-BUT-003000H should be reviewed by a

qualified archaeologist. If appropriate, a monitoring and treatment plan may be required prior to project construction.

MM-CUL-4 In the event that archaeological resources (sites, features, or artifacts) are exposed during construction activities for the proposed project, all earth-disturbing work occurring in the vicinity (generally within 100 feet of the find) shall immediately stop. The archaeologist shall evaluate the significance of the find and determine whether or not additional study is warranted. If the discovery proves significant under California Environmental Quality Act (14 CCR 15064.5(f); PRC Section 21082) or Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR 60.4), additional work such as preparation of an archaeological treatment plan, testing, or data recovery may be warranted.

MM-CUL-5 In compliance with California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5, if human remains are discovered in any place other than a dedicated cemetery, no further disturbance or excavation of the site or nearby area reasonably suspected to contain human remains can occur until the County coroner has examined the remains (California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5b). Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98, also outlines the process to be followed in the event that remains are discovered. If the County coroner determines or has reason to believe the remains are those of a Native American, the coroner must contact the California NAHC within 24 hours (California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5c). The NAHC will notify the Most Likely Descendant. With the permission of the landowner, the Most Likely Descendant may inspect the site of discovery. The inspection must be completed within 48 hours of notification of the Most Likely Descendant by the NAHC. The Most Likely Descendant may recommend means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and items associated with Native Americans.

*Finding*

The CSU Board of Trustees finds that the above mitigation measures are feasible, will reduce the potential cultural resource-related impacts of the project to less-than-significant levels, and are adopted by the CSU Board of Trustees. Accordingly, the CSU Board of Trustees finds, that pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(a)(1), and the CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(1), changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

*Rationale*

Mitigation measures would ensure adherence to applicable measures of the Secretary's Standards and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer s for projects pertaining to the preservation, rehabilitation, and/or maintenance of historic properties on the CSU, Chico campus. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3), generally, a project that follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, shall be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historical resource. Mitigation measures would also ensure construction and

ground-disturbing activities would halt in the event previously unknown cultural resources or human remains are unearthed, and such resources would be properly identified, documented, and managed.

### Geology and Soils

*Unique Paleontological Resources or Geologic Features (Impact GEO-6)*

The majority of the Master Plan area is underlain by the Modesto Formation. Excavations completed within the Modesto Formation, at any depth below native topsoil and artificial fill, have the potential to encounter important and unique paleontological resources. Repair and replacement of utility lines and activities affecting non-native fill would have no impact, as these soils have been previously disturbed and consist of artificial fill. However, excavation beneath native topsoil, which is generally the upper 1 to 3 feet, or artificial fill, which can be to any depth, has the potential to encounter important and unique paleontological resources. This is a potentially significant impact. Projects, such as expansion or replacement of buildings within previously disturbed soils, are less likely to encounter important and unique paleontological resources. These projects are subject to **MM-GEO-1A**, which addresses unanticipated discoveries. For projects that involve mass grading within undisturbed Modesto Formation, **MM-GEO-1B** shall be implemented. Near-Term Projects that would be subject to MM-GEO-1B include Creekside Housing, the WREC Expansion, and the Forensic Anthropology/Admin/Office Building. The other Near-Term Projects consist of reconstruction, expansion, or replacement within the same site, and are not likely to affect previously undisturbed Modesto Formation sediments.

*Mitigation Measures*

**MM-GEO-1A** In the event that paleontological resources (e.g., fossils) are encountered during grading/excavations, the paleontological monitor shall temporarily halt and/or divert grading activity to allow recovery of paleontological resources. The area of discovery shall be roped off with a 50-foot-radius buffer. Once documentation and collection of the find is completed, the monitor shall allow grading/excavations to recommence in the area of the find.

**MM-GEO-1B** Prior to commencement of any construction project within the scope of the proposed Master Plan that may affect previously undisturbed Modesto Formation sediments, CSU shall retain a qualified paleontologist per the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) (2010) guidelines. Previously undisturbed Modesto Formation sediments would constitute those sediments anywhere within Master Plan area boundaries, beneath native topsoil (i.e., generally the upper 1 to 3 feet) and artificial fill, as determined by a qualified geologist/paleontologist. The geologist/paleontologist shall be consulted prior to project grading and excavations to determine whether Modesto Formation sediments may be encountered during construction.

In the event that it is determined that Modesto Formation sediments may be encountered during grading/excavations, a paleontologist shall prepare a Paleontological Resources Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) for the project.

The PRIMP shall be consistent with the SVP (2010) guidelines and shall outline requirements for the following:

- Preconstruction meeting attendance and worker environmental awareness training,
- Where monitoring is required within the project area based on construction plans and/or geotechnical reports,
- Procedures for adequate paleontological monitoring and discoveries treatment, and paleontological methods (including sediment sampling for microvertebrate fossils), and
- Reporting, and collections management.

Pursuant to the PRIMP, the qualified paleontologist may attend the preconstruction meeting and a paleontological monitor shall be required to be on-site during rough grading and other ground-disturbing activities in previously undisturbed Modesto Formation sediments. Activities such as repair and replacement of utility lines and activities affecting non-native fill are generally exempt from this requirement.

*Finding*

The CSU Board of Trustees finds that the above mitigation measures are feasible, will reduce the potential geology and soils related impacts of the project to less-than-significant levels, and are adopted by the CSU Board of Trustees. Accordingly, the CSU Board of Trustees finds, that pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(a)(1), and the CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(1), changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

*Rationale*

Mitigation measures would ensure construction and ground-disturbing activities would halt in the event previously unknown paleontological resources are unearthed, and such resources would be properly identified, documented, and managed. Areas of high sensitivity as described in the measure would undergo additional evaluation prior to ground disturbance to develop a monitoring plan to ensure the protection of potential paleontological resources.

### Hazards and Hazardous Materials

*Upset and Accident Conditions (Impact HAZ-2)*

During demolition and construction activities, grading and site excavation may be required. As discussed in Section 3.8.1.4, there are multiple hazardous material release sites on or near the Master Plan Area, and there is a potential that contaminated soil, groundwater, and soil vapor could be present on the Master Plan Area. There are also areas discussed in Section 3.8.1.2 that have historical uses that could have caused environmental contamination, such as the railroad yard and turntable and prior agricultural activities. While these sites may not be a direct threat to human health or the environment in their current state, construction activities that include disturbance of soil, groundwater, or soil vapor at these locations could potentially release hazardous materials into the environment. Additionally, three sites near the Master Plan Area have groundwater impacts that have extended onto the Master Plan Area. Construction and disturbance of soil, groundwater, or soil vapor at locations impacted by these sites could potentially create an upset or accident condition by releasing hazardous materials into the environment resulting in a

potentially significant impact. To avoid upset and accident conditions by disturbance and release of contaminated materials, a hazardous materials contingency plan (HMCP) would be completed and followed in accordance with **MM-HAZ-1**.

The University Farm has been operated by CSU, Chico since 1960. Ongoing use and storage of pesticides and herbicides has likely occurred since farm operations began. With ongoing agricultural use and storage of pesticides and herbicides, there is a potential for elevated levels of pesticides and herbicides to be present in surface soils resulting in a potentially significant impact. To avoid upset and accident conditions by disturbance and release of potentially contaminated soils, a soil sampling plan would be completed and soil sampling implemented prior to any soil excavation, grading, or other construction activities in the University Farm. Should levels of pesticides and/or herbicides be present above regulatory levels that could impact human health or the environment, remediation procedures would need to be determined prior to construction activities in accordance with **MM-HAZ-2.**

The three offsite hazardous material release sites have ongoing groundwater remediation monitoring as required by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). Some of the active monitoring wells are located within the boundaries of the Master Plan Area. Removal, damage, or disturbance of these or any other remaining monitoring wells, which may include disturbance of the well, casing, monitoring area, accessibility, or other activity that could otherwise affect the monitoring program required for that monitoring well, could create an upset or accident condition and would be in violation of the existing environmental restrictions and general orders enforced on these sites. This is a potentially significant impact. A protection and/or replacement plan would be required in accordance with **MM-HAZ-3** prior to construction activities which could disturb the wells. A separate plan would be required for each site's monitoring wells to be submitted to DTSC. This plan would be submitted to DTSC and other applicable regulatory agencies for approval prior to construction or demolition activities which could disturb the monitoring wells. The plan, and applicable permits and permissions from the regulatory agency(ies), would be followed during construction and demolition activities in accordance with **MM-HAZ-3.**

*Hazardous Emissions or Materials Within One-Quarter Mile of a School (Impact HAZ-3)*

As discussed above, there are multiple hazardous materials release sites on or near the Master Plan Area, and there is a potential that contaminated soil, groundwater, and soil vapor could be present on the Master Plan Area. Construction and disturbance of soil, groundwater, or soil vapor at these locations could potentially create hazardous emissions near existing schools resulting in a potentially significant impact. A hazardous materials contingency plan (HMCP) would be completed and followed in accordance with **MM-HAZ-1**. Thus, any potential hazardous materials encountered on-site during demolition and construction activities would be properly mitigated in accordance with **MM-HAZ-1**.

*Hazardous Materials Sites (Impact HAZ-4)*

As discussed in Section 3.8.1.4 of the EIR, Table 3.8-1 identifies documented hazardous material releases on the Master Plan Area, seven of which are Cortese List sites under Government Code 65962.5. While the Cortese List sites have been remediated and received regulatory closure, contamination has been allowed to remain in place at some of the sites in accordance with low-threat regulatory closure procedures. Thus, these sites could still affect construction activities associated with the project. Table 3.8-2 of the EIR identifies three nearby hazardous material sites, two of which are Cortese List sites that have groundwater

contamination that could extend onto the Master Plan Area. Construction and demolition activities may encounter contaminated soils, groundwater, and soil vapor within these known areas of contamination, thereby creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment. This is a potentially significant impact. As discussed above, to avoid a significant hazard to the public or the environment, a hazardous materials contingency plan (HMCP) would be completed and followed in accordance with MM-HAZ-1. Additionally, contaminated materials (soil, groundwater, soil vapor) would be handled, transported, and disposed of in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations, thereby reducing the potential hazards to the public or the environment. Potential hazardous materials encountered on-site during demolition and construction activities would be properly mitigated in accordance with MM-HAZ-1.

The three offsite hazardous materials sites have active monitoring wells located on the main campus and University Farm. As discussed above, removal, damage, or disturbance of these or any other remaining wells could create a hazard to the public or the environment and would be in violation of the existing environmental restrictions and general orders applied to these sites. This is considered a potentially significant impact. A protection and/or replacement plan would be required for each site's monitoring wells in accordance with MM-HAZ-3 prior to construction activities which could disturb the wells. This plan would be submitted to the regulatory agency (DTSC and others, as applicable) for approval prior to construction or demolition activities which could disturb the monitoring wells. The plan, and applicable permits and permissions from the regulatory agency(ies), would be followed during construction and demolition activities in accordance with MM-HAZ-3.

Project operation includes new construction of public uses in areas with known soil and groundwater contamination. The groundwater contamination, caused by nearby Cortese List sites and sites with low-threat regulatory closure, contains volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which could create a vapor intrusion concern for future residential and public use areas. This is considered a potentially significant impact. In accordance with MM-HAZ-4, soil vapor conditions would be assessed prior to construction of any proposed buildings to determine if a hazardous condition is present due to known subsurface contamination. Should hazardous conditions be present that could create a significant hazard to the public or the environment, vapor MM-HAZ-4 would be implemented during construction and operation.

*Mitigation Measures*

MM-HAZ-1 **Hazardous Materials Contingency Plan.** Prior to commencement of any building renovation, demolition or other construction activities, a Hazardous Materials Contingency Plan (HMCP) shall be developed that addresses potential impacts to soil, soil vapor, and groundwater from releases on or near the Master Plan Area, as well as the potential for existing hazardous materials onsite (e.g. drums and tanks). The HMCP shall include training procedures for identification of contamination. The HMCP shall describe procedures for assessment, characterization, management, and disposal of hazardous constituents, materials and wastes, and notification and decommissioning procedures for tanks, in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Contaminated soils and/or groundwater shall be managed and disposed of in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations. The HMCP shall include health and safety measures, which may include, but are not limited to, periodic work breathing zone monitoring and monitoring for volatile organic compounds using a handheld organic vapor analyzer in the event

impacted soils are encountered during excavation activities. The University and its contractors shall implement the HMCP during project construction activities.

MM-HAZ-2 **Soil Sampling.** Prior to construction and development activities on the University Farm Development Area, a soil sampling plan shall be prepared by the University or its contractors and soil samples shall be collected and analyzed for pesticides, herbicides, and metals, which are commonly associated with historical pesticide and herbicide use on agricultural properties. Should contaminants of concern be identified in surface soils above regulatory screening levels which would indicate a potential impact to human health and/or the environment, a remediation plan shall be developed prior to commencement of construction and development activities. Coordination with the overseeing regulatory agency(ies), including DTSC and the RWQCB, may be required if contamination is discovered above regulatory levels.

MM-HAZ-3 **Monitoring Well Decommissioning/Protection.** The monitoring wells on the Master Plan Area associated with the three hazardous materials sites may require removal, protection or replacement if proposed construction would disturb the well, casing, monitoring area, accessibility, or otherwise affect the monitoring program required by the overseeing regulatory agency. Prior to construction activities that may affect a monitoring well, a monitoring well management plan shall be prepared by the University or its contractors following consultation with the well owner. A separate plan shall be prepared for monitoring wells associated with each individual site, as each site is managed separately by the State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). The plan(s), which may include decommissioning, destruction, protection, and/or replacement procedures, shall be written in accordance with applicable state and local laws, and submitted to DTSC and other agencies, as applicable, for approval. The approved plan(s) shall be followed and onsite wells shall be removed and/or protection measures emplaced prior to construction in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

MM-HAZ-4 **Vapor Mitigation.** Prior to construction of residential, educational, or commercial buildings, a soil vapor investigation shall be conducted within the proposed building footprint. This applies to construction in areas with known or suspected contamination, including but not limited to the sites of concern identified in this EIR. Should contamination be identified during construction, this measure will be applied and building plans adjusted, as required. If concentrations of contaminants in soil vapor are above regulatory screening levels within the footprint of a proposed building or enclosed structure, vapor mitigation measures shall be implemented in accordance with the State Department of Toxic Substances Control Vapor Intrusion Mitigation Advisory (DTSC, 2011). The construction contractor shall develop vapor mitigation measures that adequately mitigate potential vapor intrusion in buildings and enclosed structures. Typical vapor mitigation measures shall include installation of a sub-slab geomembrane or vapor barrier installed throughout the entire footprint of the building. Optional blowers can be connected to the vent piping at the roofline for conversion of a passive venting system into an active system, if necessary. Functionality of these features shall be maintained and monitored once the building is operational, to continue protection from vapor intrusion.

*Finding*

The CSU Board of Trustees finds that the above mitigation measures are feasible, will reduce the potential hazards and hazardous materials related impacts of the project to less-than-significant levels, and are adopted by the CSU Board of Trustees. Accordingly, the CSU Board of Trustees finds, that pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(a)(1), and the CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(1), changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

*Rationale*

Mitigation measures would ensure appropriate prevention of exposure to any hazards or hazardous materials during design and construction activities associated with individual projects under the proposed Master Plan through implementation of an HMCP, soil sampling, monitoring well decommissioning/protection, and vapor mitigation.

Noise

*Increase in Ambient Noise Levels (Impact NOI-1)*

Noise levels for typical construction activities are predicted to generate maximum noise levels ranging from 76 to 86.5 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, depending on construction phase. Noise from localized point sources (e.g., heavy construction equipment, mobile-source construction noise, stationary-source construction noise) typically decrease at a rate of 6 dB to 7.5 dB with each doubling of distance between the noise source and the receptor. Applying the threshold of 83 dBA at a distance of 25 feet from any construction noise source, and conservatively assuming an attenuation rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance, construction operations and related activities would have the potential to generate exterior noise levels exceeding the threshold for all phases of construction, with the exception of the architectural coating phase. This impact would be considered potentially significant. This impact would be lessened by implementation of MM-NOI-1.

Based upon building square-footages, the estimated cooling-capacity, and assuming that the acoustical center for the mechanical equipment would be located near the center of each building' rooftop, rooftop mechanical noise levels were calculated at the noise-sensitive receptor nearest the building. The rooftop mechanical systems were assumed to operate throughout daytime and nighttime hours, average noise levels were calculated to range from approximately 36 to 68 dBA Leq at the nearest noise-sensitive receptor locations outside of the Master Plan boundary. This would exceed the daytime and nighttime stationary noise source criteria of 55 dBA Leq and 50 dB Leq, respectively. As a result, on-site mechanical noise impacts would be potentially significant. This impact would be lessened by implementation of MM-NOI-2.

Sound sources associated with the long-term operation of proposed improvements to the sports complex and athletic fields would include sporting activity participants communicating, whistles and calls from game officials, spectators cheering and interacting, and announcements or music playback over amplified speaker systems. The most prominent noise sources being spectators cheering. As such, the softball stadium would be the primary noise source associated with the proposed improvements to the sports complex and athletic fields. Dudek recently performed sporting event noise level monitoring for a college level football tournament, with approximately 1,200 spectators in attendance (Dudek 2019). Sound levels

generated by the spectators cheering had and average maximum level of 70 dBA at a distance of 200 feet from the acoustical center of the bleachers. Assuming an attenuation rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance, the average maximum noise levels associated with spectator cheers would be approximately 62.4 dB Lmax.

The City of Chico General Plan non-transportation noise standards for intermittent levels are 75 dBA (Lmax) during daytime hours (7 AM to 10PM) and 65 dBA (Lmax) during nighttime periods (10 PM to 7 PM). However, for noise sources consisting primarily of speech, the thresholds are reduced by 5 dB, to 70 dBA and 60 dBA Lmax, respectively. As a result, the predicted noise levels from athletic field activities would exceed the threshold and would be potentially significant. This impact would be lessened by implementation of MM-NOI-3.

*Mitigation Measures*

MM-NOI-1 The following measures shall be implemented as part of construction activities within the Master Plan area, in order to reduce the effects of noise levels generated from construction operations.

- Construction operations and related activities within the plan area shall be limited to the weekday hours of 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM and the Sunday or holiday hours of 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM. For construction activity taking place between June 15th and September 15th, construction hours shall be limited to the weekday hours of 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM and the Sunday or holiday hours of 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.
- Construction equipment and vehicles shall be fitted with efficient, well-maintained mufflers that reduce equipment noise emission levels at the project site. Internal combustion powered equipment shall be equipped with properly operating noise suppression devices (e.g., mufflers, silencers, wraps) that meet or exceed manufacture specifications. Mufflers and noise suppressors shall be properly maintained and tuned to ensure proper fit, function and minimization of noise.
- Pumps that are not submerged and above-ground conveyor systems shall be located within acoustically treated enclosures.
- Portable and stationary site support equipment (such as generators, compressors, rock crushers, and cement mixers) shall be located as far as possible from nearby noise-sensitive receptors.
- Impact tools shall have the working area/impact area shrouded or shielded, with intake and exhaust ports on power equipment muffled or suppressed. This may necessitate the use of temporary or portable, application specific noise shields or barriers.
- Construction equipment shall not be idled for extended periods (e.g., 15 minutes or longer) of time in the immediate vicinity of noise-sensitive receptors.
- A disturbance coordinator shall be designated by the general contractor, which will post contact information in a conspicuous location near the entrance of the subject construction sites so that it is clearly visible to nearby receivers most likely to be disturbed. The coordinator shall manage complaints resulting from the construction noise. Reoccurring disturbances shall be evaluated by a qualified acoustical consultant retained by the project proponent to ensure compliance with applicable standards.

**MM-NOI-2** Operational noise levels shall be minimized through project-site design, equipment selection, construction of a localized barriers or parapets, as presented below. For on-site academic and residential buildings, the standard is a 45 dBA interior noise level. For off-site residential land uses, the standards for daytime and nighttime stationary noise source are 55 dBA Leq and 50 dB Leq, respectively.

- All localized heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment shall be located within mechanical equipment rooms wherever possible.
- Selection of mechanical equipment shall consider radiated outdoor sound pressure levels and select equipment with lower sound generation levels whenever possible.
- Localized noise barriers or rooftop parapets shall be constructed around the HVAC equipment so that line-of-site to the noise source from the property line of the noise-sensitive receptors is blocked.
- As project specific site plans and specifications become available, projects incorporating mechanical equipment that have the potential to generate substantial noise levels shall demonstrate compliance with applicable noise thresholds at the nearest sensitive receptor. Demonstration of compliance may be proven by documenting acceptable manufacturer noise levels or an assessment of the project by a qualified acoustical consultant.

**MM-NOI-3** Minimize Athletic Event Spectator Noise Levels through Project-site design and construction of a localized barriers or solid-backed seating areas.

Softball Stadium spectator seating shall be designed to direct the majority of the sound levels generated by spectators to the south, towards the softball play field. This may be accomplished through the construction of localized noise barriers partially surrounding the spectator seating. Barriers would need to be constructed of materials having an STC rating of 29 or greater and block line-of-site from the seating area to the noise-sensitive receptors north of the Plan Area. To minimize event noise levels in the surrounding community, further environmental noise analysis shall be performed by a qualified acoustical consultant when design-level site plans are available.

*Finding*

The CSU Board of Trustees finds that the above mitigation measures are feasible, will reduce the potential noise related impacts of the project to less-than-significant levels, and are adopted by the CSU Board of Trustees. Accordingly, the CSU Board of Trustees finds, that pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(a)(1), and the CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(1), changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

*Rationale*

Application of noise control techniques affecting and controlling the construction noise at the source (i.e., heavy equipment, pumps) and limiting hours of construction would substantially reduce temporary noise

effects. Incorporation of specific design criteria would avoid operational noise impacts associated with mechanical equipment and the proposed athletic fields.

## 2.4 Potentially Significant Impacts That Cannot Be Mitigated Below a Level of Significance

This section identifies the significant unavoidable impacts that require a statement of overriding considerations to be issued by the CSU Board of Trustees, pursuant to Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines if the project is approved. Based on the analysis contained in the Final EIR, the following impacts have been determined to be significant and unavoidable:

### Transportation

***Reduce VMT by 15% Compared to the Forecasted Baseline Conditions and Cumulative Year VMT for the Master Plan Area (Impact TRA-2)***

Implementation of the 2019 Master Plan would decrease vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per student by less than 15 percent compared to the forecasted baseline and cumulative year VMT for the Master Plan area. Despite the implementation of **MM-TRA-1**, this impact would not be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

*Mitigation Measures*

**TRA-1 Implement TDM strategies to reduce the number of project vehicle trips or reduce trip lengths to achieve VMT per student reduction of 15 percent below baseline conditions.**

Using the CSU TDM Manual (CSU 2012) as a guide, CSU, Chico shall develop and implement a TDM plan to reduce daily trips and VMT generated by campus faculty, employees, and students to achieve a 15 percent VMT per student reduction under 2019 Baseline Plus 2019 Master Plan conditions and 2030 Cumulative Plus 2019 Master Plan conditions (note that this calculation represents total VMT generated by all trip generation sources on campus and is expressed as an efficiency metric that is divided by the number of students). TDM measures best suited for college towns generally include measures intended to reduce driving on campus such as subsidized transit passes, improved transit and shuttles, parking management, encouraging bicycle and pedestrian travel, and locating student housing on-campus. TDM policies that could reduce vehicle trip generation and VMT include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Eliminate on-campus parking for students residing in new campus housing (long term)
- Phase out existing on-campus parking for students residing in campus housing or residing within walking distance of campus (short term)
- Provide remote long-term parking for students in campus housing or residing within walking distance, as an alternative to on-campus parking to allow students to have vehicles without incentivizing commute driving (long term)
- Price parking to provide incentives for increasing travel in modes other than single-occupancy vehicles (short term)
- Work with the City of Chico to implement parking restrictions to limit commuter parking in nearby neighborhoods (short term)

- Work with B-Line to develop and fund improvements to better align transit routes serving CSU, Chico with class schedules and increase route frequency (short term)
- Provide additional bicycle connections through the campus core, in addition to the planned bike path, especially in the north-south direction (short term)
- Work with the City to implement planned bicycle facilities on streets adjacent to the campus, consistent with the Chico Bicycle Plan (long term)
- Provide more options for remote learning to reduce the need for students to travel to campus (long term)
- Increase benefits and incentives for carpooling, including preferred parking and reduce permit prices (short term)
- Replace front-wheel bike racks with racks that provide more secure locking and increased ease of use (short term)
- Market programs to educate students and employees about alternatives to driving (short term)
- Develop policies and incentives for use of electric bicycles and scooters as an alternative to driving (short term)

Short-term actions are feasible for implementation in five years or less. Long-term actions may be implemented after five years.

The TDM plan shall be updated to include a schedule for adoption of policies and a plan for funding improvements. The plans shall also include an ongoing monitoring program to track effectiveness. Monitoring shall occur once every two years to determine the effectiveness of the implemented actions.

*Finding*

The CSU Board of Trustees finds that implementation of the identified mitigation measure would reduce the number of project vehicle trips or reduce trip lengths to achieve VMT reductions. The amount of reductions created by the TDM strategies cannot be quantified to a degree of accuracy that would ensure a reduction of 15% compared to the baseline condition. In addition, the effectiveness of individual TDM strategies may vary, depending on factors such as the location and affordability of housing, quality of transit services, and funding mechanisms for alternative transportation measures. Therefore, it is conservatively assumed that the proposed Master Plan would still decrease VMT per student by less than 15 percent compared to the forecasted baseline and cumulative year VMT for the Master Plan area. Therefore, impacts from operational emissions would be significant and unavoidable.

# 3 Findings Regarding Alternatives

Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines requires the discussion of "a reasonable range of alternatives to a project, or the location of a project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives." The Final EIR identified and considered the following reasonable range of feasible alternatives to the proposed project which would be capable, to varying degrees, of reducing identified impacts:

- Alternative 1: No Project Alternative
- Alternative 2: Expanded Housing Alternative
- Alternative 3: Modified Footprint Alternative

These alternatives are evaluated for their ability to avoid or substantially lessen the impacts of the proposed project identified in the Final EIR, as well as consideration of their ability to meet the basic objectives of the proposed project as described in the Final EIR.

## 3.1 No Project Alternative Description

As required by the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR's alternatives analysis must include consideration of the No Project Alternative. The "No Project" analysis discusses the existing conditions as well as what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the Project was not approved (Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14, § 15126.6 (e)(2) and (3)(A)).

The current master plan, Master Plan 2005, is the existing long-range plan for the campus and would continue to be in effect if the proposed Master Plan is not approved. Master Plan 2005 planned for the physical development of the main campus and the University Farm to accommodate 15,800 FTES. The campus currently has 16,437 FTES (Fall 2018) and is currently developed with approximately 2,187,026 gross square feet (GSF) in non-residential buildings. Student housing consists of 2,260 beds in multiple buildings, totaling 536,356 GSF.

Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed enrollment ceiling increase to 18,600 FTE students would not be adopted, and the proposed program of new development and infrastructure improvements intended to accommodate that enrollment increase would not be implemented. While Master Plan 2005 planned for fewer FTES than are currently enrolled at CSU, Chico, there are still several projects identified in Master Plan 2005 that have not yet been realized but which could be constructed under the No Project Objective. These include:

- Butte Hall renovation
- Modoc II and Child Care Center on the Aymer J. Hamilton site
- New residence halls and parking structure on the College Park site

- Rio Chico PE and Aquatics Center on the Rio Chico site

Under the No Project Alternative, the University would not be able to undertake other capital improvements without additional approvals, apart from routine maintenance and minor improvements such as utility upgrades. In accordance with CSU administrative policy, subject to additional approvals including CEQA compliance, the University may also request consideration by the Board of Trustees of one Major Master Plan Revision each calendar year, which may comprise multiple projects (CSU 1995).

### Finding

The CSU Board of Trustees rejects the No Project-No Development Alternative as undesirable as it would not achieve the underlying purpose of the proposed Master Plan, which is to guide physical campus development through the year 2030 in ways that support anticipated enrollment growth and changes in academic and support programs, energy supplies and use, utility infrastructure, and transportation. The No Project Alternative would not accommodate additional enrollment. By constructing additional academic and residential facilities, it would achieve only two of the project objectives (objectives 3 and 8).

### Rationale

By not focusing development on the campus core, reinforcing learning neighborhoods, and reinvesting in infrastructure and sustainability, the No Project Alternative would fail to achieve the remaining 12 project objectives. Additionally, the No Project Alternative would also result in significant and unavoidable transportation impacts related to VMT, and because less student housing would be constructed, impacts would be greater than those of the proposed Master Plan.

## 3.2 Expanded Housing Growth Alternative Description

The proposed Master Plan provides for construction of 1,800 new student beds. Accounting for the demolition of 339 beds, on-campus housing would increase from 2,260 to 3,721. Increasing on-campus housing (or off-campus housing within a walkable distance) generally has a favorable effect on transportation, energy, air quality, and greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the VMT per student. This alternative is designed to reduce the significant VMT impact associated with the proposed project. While VMT is reduced under the proposed Master Plan, the reduction falls well short of the 15% goal identified in the CSU's revised transportation guidelines. Due to limitations in the regional transportation model, it is not possible to calculate the direct effect that each additional student housed on campus would have on VMT. However, it is well understood to be a positive relationship, and that increased housing growth would reduce VMT associated with the University.

The proposed Master Plan would potentially allow for the housing of most first-year students on campus. This alternative would approximately double the proposed increase in student beds, to a build-out of 4,450 student beds. This would allow the University to house all first-year and over one-third of second year students. In order to accomplish this a major increase in residential density would be required, resulting in taller, denser residence halls. Residential space in the north campus would be greatly increased. In addition to the proposed residence hall at the Butte Hall site, some expansion of Shasta and/or Lassen Hall would also be necessary. The proposed Creekside Housing project and Rio Chico (public-private partnership) project would also be increased in density. Creekside would be taller, and or add an additional building,

which would reduce the outdoor athletic space. The proposed Rio Chico development would be denser, which would result in either an increase in height, or a footprint expansion that could adversely affect the potential historical houses on the north side of the block.

### Finding

The CSU Board of Trustees rejects the Expanded Housing Growth Alternative as undesirable as it would not achieve all of the project objectives, may not be financially feasible. While potentially reducing or avoiding a potentially significant transportation impact, the alternative would result in a potentially significant visual impact.

### Rationale

Objective 7 would not be fully achieved, as the west campus area would be more densely developed with housing at the expense of recreational opportunities and athletic facilities. The remaining 15 objectives would be achieved.

While the alternative would have a beneficial effect on VMT by increasing the amount of on-campus housing, it is unknown if the reduction in VMT would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. This alternative would have a potentially greater impact on visual resources (potentially creating a new significant impact related to building height) as compared to the proposed project. Utilities demands would be greater, but with construction of more water and energy efficient buildings, it is not likely that this would result in new significant utilities impacts. The project would not achieve the object of improving and expanding services and facilities and support in the west campus for experiential learning, recreational opportunities, and campus athletics (objective 7) as the west campus area would need to develop more student housing.

On-campus housing is a popular choice for incoming first-year students, and there are social and academic advantages for new students to live on campus. The proposed project therefore provides sufficient on-campus student housing to house most or all first-year students. However, due to the affordability of the Chico housing market, on-campus housing is more expensive for students who are willing to live off-campus. The financial feasibility of housing students in excess of the proposed project may be financially infeasible at this time.

## 3.3 Modified Footprint Alternative Description

This alternative would provide for approximately the same amount of new developed square footage for both student housing and other academic and support uses but would revise the distribution of land uses across the campus. Master Plan 2005 identified the College Park area east of Konkow, Mechoopda, and Esken Hall as student residential development, with an associated parking structure. The Modified Footprint alternative would site residential uses in this area and not demolish the existing Konkow, Mechoopda, and Esken residence halls. Additionally, this alternative would not construct additional housing at the Creekside site or Rio Chico. Redevelopment of the current Butte Hall site with student housing would still be implemented, as proposed under the Master Plan project, to meet student housing goals.

The proposed Arena would be moved to the Rio Chico neighborhood, closer to downtown Chico and farther away from the residential neighborhoods north of West Sacramento Avenue. Rio Chico is selected as the only area large enough to house the Arena and has adequate surface street access (via Walnut Street/Nord Avenue and Ivy/Warner Street) and a nearby University parking structure.

Academic and support uses would be developed similar to the proposed project.

### Finding

The CSU Board of Trustees rejects the Modified Footprint Alternative as undesirable as it would not achieve all of the project objectives and would substantially increase the impact to cultural resources. By maintaining a large portion of student housing on the northern edge of the campus, this alternative would not achieve objectives 1 and 2. The remaining 14 objectives would be achieved.

### Rationale

The proposed project objectives include objective 1, to transform the campus core into a strong, activated "HUB" focused on instructional space, student housing, and student support programs, and objective 2, to consolidate student housing and residential life within three distinct neighborhoods in close proximity to the "HUB" or campus core. The Modified Footprint Alternative would retain the current College Park student residential area and would not construct additional housing at the Creekside site or Rio Chico. Thus, the Modified Footprint Alternative would not be conducive to the goal of establishing an activated "HUB" within close proximity to student housing. By constructing academic buildings on the Rio Chico site, the alternative would result in a significant and unavoidable impact to cultural resources.

# 4 General CEQA Findings

## 4.1 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Based on the entire record before the CSU Board of Trustees and having considered the unavoidable significant impacts of the project, the CSU Board of Trustees hereby determines that all feasible mitigation within the responsibility and jurisdiction of CSU, Chico has been adopted to reduce or avoid the potentially significant impacts identified in the Final EIR, and that no additional feasible mitigation is available to further reduce significant impacts. The feasible mitigation measures are discussed above and are set forth in the MMRP. Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code requires the CSU Board of Trustees to adopt a monitoring or compliance program regarding the changes in the project and mitigation measures imposed to lessen or avoid significant effects on the environment. The MMRP for the proposed Master Plan is hereby adopted by the CSU Board of Trustees because it fulfills the CEQA mitigation monitoring requirements: The MMRP is designed to ensure compliance with the changes in the project and mitigation measures imposed on the project during project implementation; and Measures to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment are fully enforceable through conditions of approval, permit conditions, agreements or other measures.

## 4.2 CEQA Guidelines Sections 15091 and 15092 Findings

Based on the foregoing findings and the information contained in the administrative record, the CSU Board of Trustees has made one or more of the following findings with respect to each of the significant effects of the project: 1. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment; 2. Those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and such changes have been adopted by such other agency, or can and should be adopted by such other agency; and 3. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including considerations for the provision of employment opportunities for highly-trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the Final EIR. Based on the foregoing findings and the information contained in the administrative record, and as conditioned by the foregoing: 1. All significant effects on the environment due to the project have been eliminated or substantially lessened where feasible; and 2. Any remaining significant effects that have been found to be unavoidable are acceptable due to the overriding considerations set forth herein.

## 4.3 CSU Board of Trustees Independent Judgment

The Final EIR for the proposed Master Plan reflects the CSU Board of Trustees' independent judgment. The CSU Board of Trustees has exercised independent judgment in accordance with Public Resources Code 21082.1(c)(3) in retaining its own environmental consultant in the preparation of the EIR, as well as reviewing, analyzing and revising material prepared by the consultant. Having received, reviewed, and considered the information in the Final EIR, as well as any and all other information in the record, the CSU Board of Trustees hereby makes findings pursuant to and in accordance with Sections 21081, 21081.5, and 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code.

## 4.4 Nature of Findings

Any findings made by the CSU Board of Trustees shall be deemed made, regardless of where it appears in this document. All language included in this document constitutes findings by the CSU Board of Trustees, whether or not any particular sentence or clause includes a statement to that effect. The CSU Board of Trustees intends that these findings be considered as an integrated whole and, whether or not any part of these findings fail to cross-reference or incorporate by reference any other part of these findings, that any finding required or committed to be made by the CSU Board of Trustees with respect to any particular subject matter of the Final EIR, shall be deemed to be made if it appears in any portion of these findings.

## 4.5 Reliance on Record

Each and all of the findings and determinations contained herein are based on substantial evidence, both oral and written, contained in the administrative record relating to the project.

### Record of Proceedings

In accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21167.6(e), the record of proceedings for the CSU Board of Trustees' decision on the project includes the following documents:

- The NOP for the project and all other public notices issued in conjunction with the project;
- All comments submitted by agencies or members of the public during the comment period on the NOP;
- The Draft EIR for the project and all appendices;
- All comments submitted by agencies or members of the public during the comment period on the Draft EIR;
- The Final EIR for the project, including comments received on the Draft EIR, responses to those comments, and appendices;
- Documents cited or referenced in the Draft EIR and Final EIR;
- The MMRP for the project;
- All findings and resolutions adopted by the Trustees in connection with the project and all documents cited or referred to therein;
- All reports, studies, memoranda, maps, staff reports, or other planning documents relating to the project prepared in compliance with the requirements of CEQA and with respect to the Trustees' action on the project;
- All documents submitted by other public agencies or members of the public in connection with the project, up through the close of the final public hearing;

- Any minutes and/or verbatim transcripts of all information sessions, public meetings, and public hearings held in connection with the project;
- Any documentary or other evidence submitted at such information sessions, public meetings, and public hearings;
- Any and all resolutions adopted by the CSU regarding the project, and all staff reports, analyses, and summaries related to the adoption of those resolutions;
- Matters of common knowledge, including, but not limited to federal, state, and local laws and regulations;
- Any documents expressly cited in these findings and any documents incorporated by reference, in addition to those cited above;
- Any other written materials relevant to the CSU Board of Trustees' compliance with CEQA or its decision on the merits of the project, including any documents or portions thereof, that were released for public review, relied upon in the environmental documents prepared for the project, or included in the CSU Board of Trustees non-privileged retained files for the EIR or project;
- Any other materials required for the record of proceedings by Public Resources Code Section 21167.6(e); and
- The Notice of Determination.

The CSU Board of Trustees intends that only those documents relating to the project and its compliance with CEQA and prepared, owned, used, or retained by the CSU Board of Trustees and listed above shall comprise the administrative record for the project. Only that evidence was presented to, considered by, and ultimately before the CSU Board of Trustees prior to reviewing and reaching its decision on the EIR and project.

### Custodian of Records

The custodian of the documents or other material that constitute the record of proceedings upon which the CSU Board of Trustees' decision is based is identified as follows:

Facilities Management and Services
California State University, Chico
400 West First Street
Chico, CA 95926-0925

### Recirculation Not Required

CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 provides the criteria that a lead agency is to consider when deciding whether it is required to recirculate an EIR. Recirculation is required when "significant new information" is added to the EIR after public notice of the availability of the Draft EIR is given, but before certification. (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15088.5(a).) "Significant new information," as defined in CEQA Guidelines

Section 15088.5(a), means information added to an EIR that changes the EIR so as to deprive the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment on a "substantial adverse environmental effect" or a "feasible way to mitigate or avoid such an effect (including a feasible project alternative) that the project's proponents have declined to implement."

An example of significant new information provided by the CEQA Guidelines is a disclosure showing that a "new significant environmental impact would result from the project or from a new mitigation measure proposed to be implemented;" that a "substantial increase in the severity of an environmental impact would result unless mitigation measures are adopted to reduce the impact to a level of insignificance;" or that a "feasible project alternative or mitigation measure considerably different from others previously analyzed would clearly lessen the significant environmental impacts of the project, but the project's proponents decline to adopt it" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5(a)(1)-(3)).

Recirculation is not required where "the new information added to the EIR merely clarifies or amplifies or makes insignificant modifications in an adequate EIR" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5(b)). Recirculation also is not required simply because new information is added to the EIR — indeed, new information is oftentimes added given CEQA's public/agency comment and response process and CEQA's post-Draft EIR circulation requirement of proposed responses to comments submitted by public agencies. In short, recirculation is "intended to be an exception rather than the general rule" (Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of University of California (1993) 6 Cal.4th 1112, 1132).

In this legal context, the CSU Board of Trustees finds that recirculation of the Draft EIR prior to certification is not required. In addition to providing responses to comments, the Final EIR includes revisions to expand upon information presented in the Draft EIR; explain or enhance the evidentiary basis for the Draft EIR's findings; update information; and to make clarifications, amplifications, updates, or helpful revisions to the Draft EIR. The Final EIR's revisions, clarifications and/or updates do not result in any new significant impacts or increase the severity of a previously identified significant impact.

In sum, the Final EIR demonstrates that the project will not result in any new significant impacts or increase the severity of a significant impact, as compared to the analysis presented in the Draft EIR. The changes reflected in the Final EIR also do not indicate that meaningful public review of the Draft EIR was precluded in the first instance. Accordingly, recirculation of the EIR is not required as revisions to the EIR are not significant as defined in Section 15088.5 of the CEQA Guidelines.

# 5 Certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report

The CSU Board of Trustees certifies that the Final EIR, dated November 2020, has been completed in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, that the EIR was presented to the CSU Board of Trustees, and that the Board reviewed and considered the information contained therein before approving the proposed Master Plan, and that the EIR reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Board (CEQA Guidelines Section 15090).

# 6 Statement of Overriding Considerations

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(b) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15093(a) and (b), the CSU Board of Trustees is required to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological or other benefits of the project, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, those effects may be considered "acceptable" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093 (a)). CEQA requires the agency to support, in writing, the specific reasons for considering a project acceptable when significant impacts are not avoided or substantially lessened. Those reasons must be based on substantial evidence in the Final EIR or elsewhere in the administrative record (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093(b)).

Courts have upheld overriding considerations that were based on a variety of policy considerations including, but not limited to, new jobs, stronger tax base, and implementation of an agency's economic development goals, growth management policies, redevelopment plans, the need for housing and employment, conformity to community plan, and provision of construction jobs (see Towards Responsibility in Planning v. City Council (1988) 200 Cal App. 3d 671; Dusek v. Redevelopment Agency (1985) 173 Cal App. 3d 1029; City of Poway v City of San Diego (1984) 155 Cal App. 3d 1037; Markley v. City Council (1982) 131 Cal App.3d 656).

In accordance with the requirements of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, the CSU Board of Trustees finds that the mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR and the MMRP, when implemented, will avoid or substantially lessen many of the significant effects identified in the Final EIR for the proposed CSU, Chico proposed Master Plan (hereinafter, proposed Master Plan). However, one significant impact of the proposed Master Plan are unavoidable even after incorporation of all feasible mitigation measures. This significant unavoidable impact is the project effect on vehicle miles travelled (VMT). The Final EIR provides detailed information regarding these impacts (see Section 2.4, Potentially Significant Impacts that Cannot Be Mitigated Below A Level of Significance, of this document).

The CSU Board of Trustees finds that all feasible mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR within the purview of the CSU will be implemented with implementation of the proposed Master Plan, and that the remaining significant unavoidable effect is outweighed and found to be acceptable due to the following specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits based upon the facts set forth above, the Final EIR, and the record, as follows:

1. The proposed Master Plan would accommodate incremental planned enrollment growth in the future as required by the CSU.
2. The proposed Master Plan will transform the campus core into a strong, activated "HUB" focused on instructional space, student housing, and student support programs.
3. The proposed Master Plan will consolidate student housing and residential life within three distinct neighborhoods in close proximity to the "HUB" or campus core.
4. The proposed Master Plan will increase opportunities for first-year freshmen to live on campus.

5. The proposed Master Plan will enhance the visibility and accessibility of the campus's current decentralized arts and culture district through the enhancement of existing performing arts spaces and consolidation of museum programs at a new campus gateway on Esplanade.
6. The proposed Master Plan will provide new and renovated facilities and open space to reflect today's students' need for additional informal space for collaborative learning.
7. The proposed Master Plan will improve and expand services and facilities for counseling, health and wellness, to include physical and mental health.
8. The proposed Master Plan will improve and expand facilities and support in the west campus for experiential (hands-on) learning and recreational opportunities and campus athletics.
9. The proposed Master Plan will maximize existing academic space to improve the academic and research environment by updating and improving facilities for today's learners and educators. This includes flexible learning environments that can adapt to different styles of learning and pedagogy.
10. The proposed Master Plan will preserve important farmland on the University Farm while enhancing its ability to support the university's academic mission as well as the region's existing and future agricultural industries, through the modernization of aging buildings and facilities, development of new classroom, laboratory, and support space for agricultural programs, infrastructure upgrades, creation of a new Farm Store, provision of on-site student housing, and improved road and parking facilities.
11. The proposed Master Plan will improve pedestrian and bicycle access on campus through extending the bicycle path to have a more contiguous east-west corridor that also enhances pedestrian safety.
12. The proposed Master Plan will relocate and consolidate existing parking facilities on the campus perimeter to free up limited campus space for academic, student support, and residential uses.
13. The proposed Master Plan will improve the safety and character of the Ivy/Warner corridor through development of an enlivened on-campus Rio Chico residential neighborhood, comprising new student residence halls, expanded Wildcat Recreation Center (WREC), improved south campus gateway, and improved pedestrian connections between off-campus Ivy/Warner Street and the campus core.
14. The proposed Master Plan will implement carbon reduction strategies with the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 through tactics such as onsite renewable energy, electrification of utilities, and improved alternative transportation infrastructure.
15. The proposed Master Plan will increase the resiliency of campus utility systems by creating utility redundancy and decentralization of the central plant combined with onsite renewable energy.
16. The proposed Master Plan will improve landscape and stormwater function and aesthetic.

Considering all the factors, the CSU Board of Trustees finds that there are specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other considerations associated with the project that serve to override and outweigh the project's significant unavoidable effects and, thus, the adverse effects are considered acceptable. Therefore, the CSU Board of Trustees hereby adopts this Statement of Overriding Considerations.