

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT Student Housing Project California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt

Date: March 1, 2021

To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Interested Parties and Individuals

Lead Agency: California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt

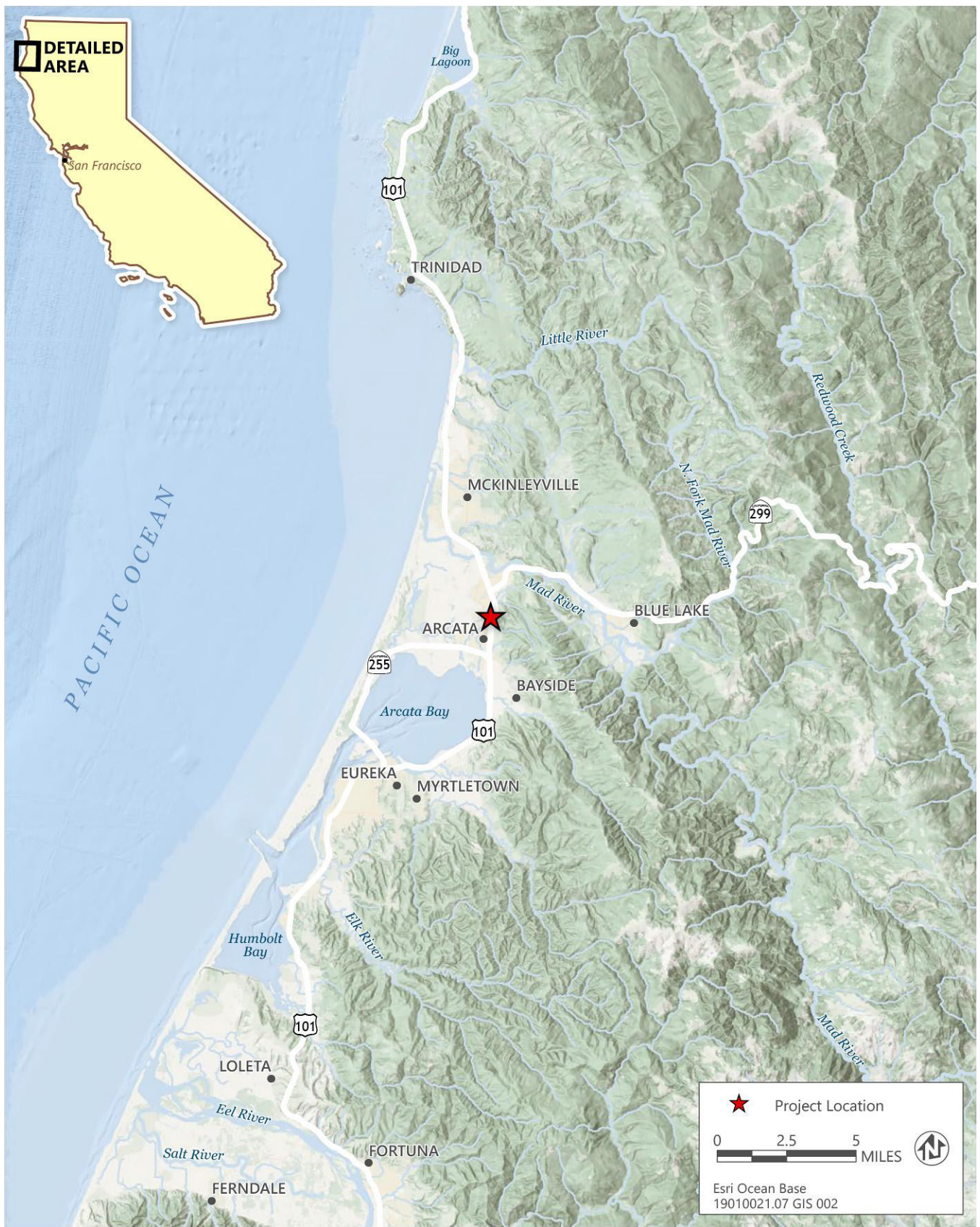
Public Review Period: March 1 through March 31, 2021

Purpose of the Notice: The intent of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to inform agencies and interested parties that California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt (Cal Poly Humboldt) is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Student Housing Project. The California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees is the lead agency pursuant to CEQA and as such is also responsible for complying with the provisions of CEQA.

This NOP has been prepared pursuant to Sections 15082 and 15083 of the CEQA Guidelines and starts a public scoping period that will assist Cal Poly Humboldt in the preparation of the Draft EIR. The purpose of the NOP is to provide trustee agencies, property owners and other interested parties with a description of the project and its potential environmental impacts and to allow the opportunity to provide input regarding the scope and content of the EIR, including possible environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives.

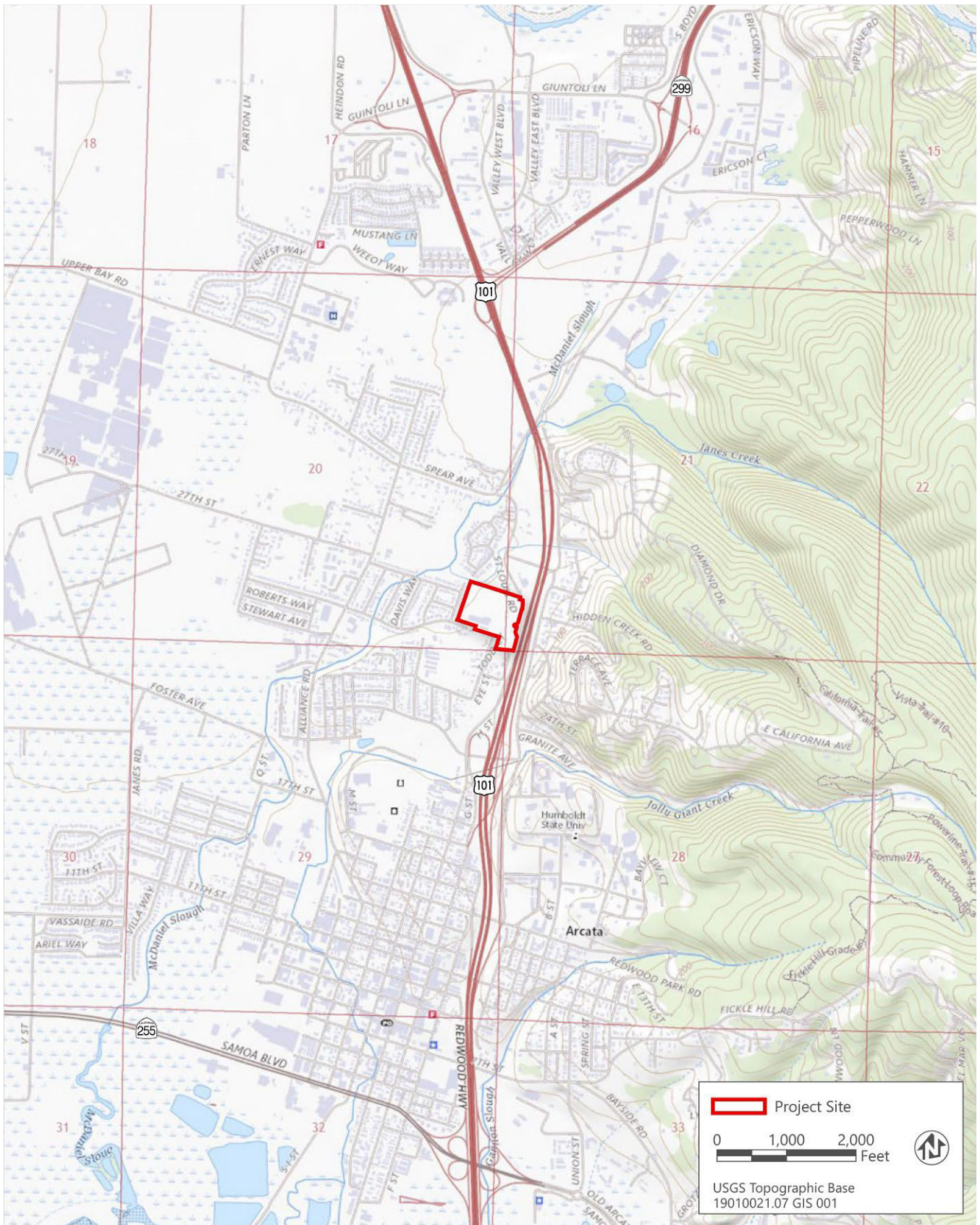
The public scoping period is for 30 days and will run from March 1, 2022 to March 31, 2022.

Project Location: The 10.7-acre project site is located at the following Assessor's parcel numbers (APNs): 505-022-011, 505-022-012, 503-372-002, 503-372-003, 503-372-004, 503-372-005, and 503-372-006), located along St. Louis Road in the City of Arcata, approximately 0.5 mile north of Cal Poly Humboldt (Figure 1, Figure 2). The project site is located near the intersection of the St. Louis Road and U.S. Highway 101 (US 101) overcrossing, on the northeast edge of the Sunset Neighborhood in the City of Arcata (Figure 3). The project site is bordered by US 101 on the east, single-family residences to the south and west, the Janes Creek Meadows riparian/open space area, residences, and industrial uses to the north, and the Mad River Lumber Company to the northeast.



Source: Adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2022

Figure 1 Regional Location



Source: Adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2022

Figure 2 Project Location



Source: Adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2022

Figure 3 **Project Site**

The project site housed a lumber mill prior until the 1970s. Currently, the project site contains Craftsman’s Mall, a collection of wood-framed warehouse buildings housing artisan and light industrial rental spaces and outdoor storage areas for local contractors. Two single-family residential properties are located on the site, one of which contains a residential building.

Regional access to the site is available from US 101. Local ingress / egress would be provided from St. Louis Road. Pedestrian access to the site would be available via Eye Street and St. Louis Road. In addition, the project would include creation of a bus/shuttle stop at the St. Louis Road turnaround, located along the eastern boundary of the project site. Automobile, pedestrian, and bicyclist travel between the project site and campus would primarily be provided via the US 101 overcrossing, which connects to LK Wood Boulevard, approximately 0.1 mile north of the project site.

Project Description: Currently, residential spaces available to students at Cal Poly Humboldt are aged and heavy in deferred maintenance. Expanded campus housing for undergraduate and graduate students supports the growth of Cal Poly Humboldt’s academic programs, and is critical to avoid substantial effects on the local housing market. The project is one of several housing projects included in the on-campus housing capacity growth plan, which would provide over 4,000 beds for students by 2028. This represents a step toward Cal Poly Humboldt’s overall housing goal of 3,000 residential campus beds and 3,000 off-campus beds.

The project involves purchase of the project site from the University Foundation, which acquired the property in 2021 with the intent on using it for campus purposes. The project site would be developed into an 850- bed housing complex that would provide apartment-style student residence units for undergraduate and graduate students attending Cal Poly Humboldt, as well approximately 20 student-family housing units. The project would include an exercise gym, common lounge spaces, study spaces, computer rooms, television rooms, a market /convenience store, and conference rooms. Exterior amenities would include green space, covered bicycle parking, basketball courts, outdoor cooking, and appropriate hardscapes. Additionally, the project would include on-site parking and exterior safety lighting.

Vehicle access to the site would be maintained along St. Louis Road. Emergency vehicle access would be allowed via Eye Street. Bicycle and pedestrian access would be available via Eye Street and St. Louis Street. A bicycle and pedestrian path is planned and funded for development along the old railroad easement located to the west of US 101 (note that this path is not considered to be part of the project).

Potential Permits and Approvals Required: Elements of the project could be subject to permitting and/or approval by agencies other than the CSU Board of Trustees. As the lead agency pursuant to CEQA, CSU is responsible for considering the adequacy of the EIR and determining whether to approve the project. Permits that may be required from other agencies include:

- ▣ California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) from CDFW pursuant to California Fish and Game Code Section 1602
- ▣ California Department of Transportation: Permits for movement of oversized or excessive loads on State highways
- ▣ City of Arcata: utility connection permits, utility easements

- ▣ North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System construction stormwater permit (Notice of Intent to proceed under General Construction Permit) and Section 401 Water Quality Certificate for impacts to waters of the United States
- ▣ United State Army Corps of Engineers: Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit for impacts to waters of the United States

Potential Environmental Effects: The EIR will describe the significant direct and indirect environmental impacts of the project. The EIR also will evaluate the cumulative impacts of the project, defined as impacts that could be exacerbated when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. The project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following resource areas, which will be further evaluated in the EIR:

- ▣ **Aesthetics:** Temporary and long-term changes in visual character or views of the site from key vantage points, including US 101.
- ▣ **Air Quality:** Temporary increases in air pollutant emissions associated with construction and long-term increases associated with project operations and associated vehicular trips.
- ▣ **Archaeological, Historical, and Tribal Cultural Resources:** Disturbance of known or unknown archaeological or tribal cultural resources.
- ▣ **Biological Resources:** Although the project site is disturbed and located within a semi-urban setting, the potential for impacts to biological resources, including tree removal, nesting birds, and bats, will be evaluated.
- ▣ **Energy:** Energy consumption for construction and operation of the project.
- ▣ **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Temporary increases in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with mobile-source exhaust from construction worker commute trips, truck haul trips, and equipment (e.g., excavators, graders); and long-term increases associated with project operations, including stationary and mobile sources.
- ▣ **Land Use and Planning:** Relationship to campus planning efforts and, in the interest of intergovernmental coordination, discussion for informational purposes only of project relationship to the City of Arcata General Plan land use designation and policies.
- ▣ **Noise:** Temporary increases in noise (including off-site, vehicle traffic noise) and vibration levels during construction; and long-term increases in noise from project operation, including stationary and mobile sources.
- ▣ **Population and Housing:** Project relationship to university, local, and regional population growth and housing demand and supply.
- ▣ **Public Services and Recreation:** The need for new or expanded public service facilities and whether the construction of such facilities would result in significant impacts to the environment.
- ▣ **Transportation and Traffic:** Temporary and long-term increases in vehicular trips, potential traffic hazards on local roadways, parking, and impacts to transit, pedestrian, or bicycle facilities due to construction and operations.
- ▣ **Utilities and Service Systems:** Increased demand for water, wastewater service, electricity, or natural gas at the project site and the potential need to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure.

The aforementioned issue areas and associated impacts will be evaluated in detail in the EIR. As necessary, feasible and practicable mitigation measures will be recommended to reduce any identified significant or potentially significant impacts.

Cal Poly Humboldt anticipates that the project would not result in significant environmental impacts to the following resources and does not propose to evaluate them in depth in the EIR: agriculture and forest resources, hazards and hazardous materials, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, mineral resources, and wildfire. Brief discussions of these resources will be provided in the EIR with explanations as to why significant impacts to each resource are not anticipated.

Comment Period: Written comments on the scope and content of the Draft EIR may be submitted during the NOP review period, which runs from March 1, 2022 to March 31, 2022. Cal Poly Humboldt will accept mailed or electronic comments submitted by 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2022, to the following addresses:

Deirdre Clem
Facilities Management
California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt
1 Harpst Street
Arcata, CA 95521
Email: Deirdre.Clem@humboldt.edu

Comments provided via email should include “Student Housing Project NOP Scoping Comment” in the subject line and the name and physical address of the commenter in the body of the email.

Public Scoping Meeting: Cal Poly Humboldt will host a public scoping meeting on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. to inform interested parties about the project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR. The scoping meeting will be held via webinar only.

Participants must register to attend the scoping meeting here:

<https://humboldtstate.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMvdOCorz0sGNJPpbnF9SMsH8bIfBM6DsCU>

- ▣ After registering, participants will receive a link via email to log into the webinar on March 16, 2022.