

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF
AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
San José State University Campus Master Plan
California State University, San José**

Date: March 16, 2023

To: Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Interested Persons

Lead Agency: California State University Board of Trustees

Subject: San José State University Campus Master Plan

Review Period: March 16, 2023 to April 14, 2023

Purpose of Notice: In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), California State University, San José (SJSU) is distributing a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to solicit comments on the scope of an environmental impact report (EIR) that will be prepared for the San José State University Campus Master Plan (“project”), consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15378. The Trustees of the California State University (CSU) are the lead agency responsible for approval of the project and as such are responsible for complying with the provisions of CEQA. This NOP has been prepared pursuant to Sections 15082 and 15083 of the CEQA Guidelines.

This NOP starts a public scoping period that will assist CSU in the preparation of the Draft EIR. The public scoping period will run for 30 days from March 16, 2023 to April 14, 2023. The purpose of the NOP is to inform agencies and interested parties that an EIR will be prepared for the project, and to provide sufficient information about the project and its potential environmental impacts to allow agencies and interested parties the opportunity to provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIR, including possible environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15082, subd. (a)(1).)

Background: Within the CSU system, a master plan for a given campus is a comprehensive land use plan that guides the physical development necessary to achieve the campus’s mission. The Master Plan establishes a land use framework for academic and administrative space needs, housing, open space, circulation and other land uses that ultimately facilitate the appropriate siting of capital projects. All CSU campuses are required to prepare and periodically update a Master Plan to guide physical campus development.

SJSU initiated its Campus Master Plan (Master Plan) process in 2020 for its properties in Santa Clara County, which includes the Main and South campuses as well as other locations in and around the City of San José. The Campus Master Plan evolved through a process of gathering background information, setting goals and direction with the University, presenting preliminary ideas, soliciting feedback, and making refinements based on feedback before finalizing the Master Plan document.

The first phase of the Master Plan process included baseline research into existing conditions, stakeholder interviews with over twenty campus organizations and groups, and solicitation of public input through a virtual Open House. The Campus Master Plan Preliminary Background Report explained the SJSU Campus Master Plan scope and process, summarized the overall direction, outlined existing issues and opportunities, and synthesized this information into preliminary goals. This first phase of Master Plan development was completed in June 2021.

The second phase began during the summer of 2021 with the formulation of a draft vision and direction for campus development between the Master Plan team and the SJSU President and Executive Cabinet. The campus and community had an opportunity to review and comment on preliminary physical planning ideas for the Campus Master Plan framework during Fall 2021, resulting in the subsequent Campus Master Plan Framework Report in spring 2022.

Project Location: The Master Plan area encompasses SJSU-owned properties on the Main and South campuses of SJSU, as well as various separate sites nearby in and around the City of San José in Santa Clara County (see Figures 1 and 2). Main Campus consists of 88.5 acres of land in the middle of downtown San José at 1 Washington Square and is developed with more than 50 major buildings, including 23 academic buildings and 7 residence halls. South Campus consists of 62 acres of land located approximately 8 blocks south of the Main Campus and is developed with numerous SJSU athletic facilities, including the CEFCU Stadium, the Simpkins Athletic Building, the Simpkins Stadium Center, and various athletic and recreational playing fields and supporting facilities.

The Main Campus is adjacent to several lower-density residential neighborhoods to the east and south, and along the way to South Campus. In addition, multi-family apartment buildings and university-affiliated fraternity and sorority houses are located to the east of the Main Campus along 10th Street. Other nearby uses include retail and institutional (church) uses. To the north and west of the Main Campus, the downtown area of the City presents a mix of high-density residential, commercial/retail, and office space.

The South Campus is bordered on the north by the Spartan Keyes neighborhood; on the west and south by industrial uses and the Sharks Ice San Jose recreational skating facility; and on the east by Kelley Park and the Happy Hollow Park & Zoo.

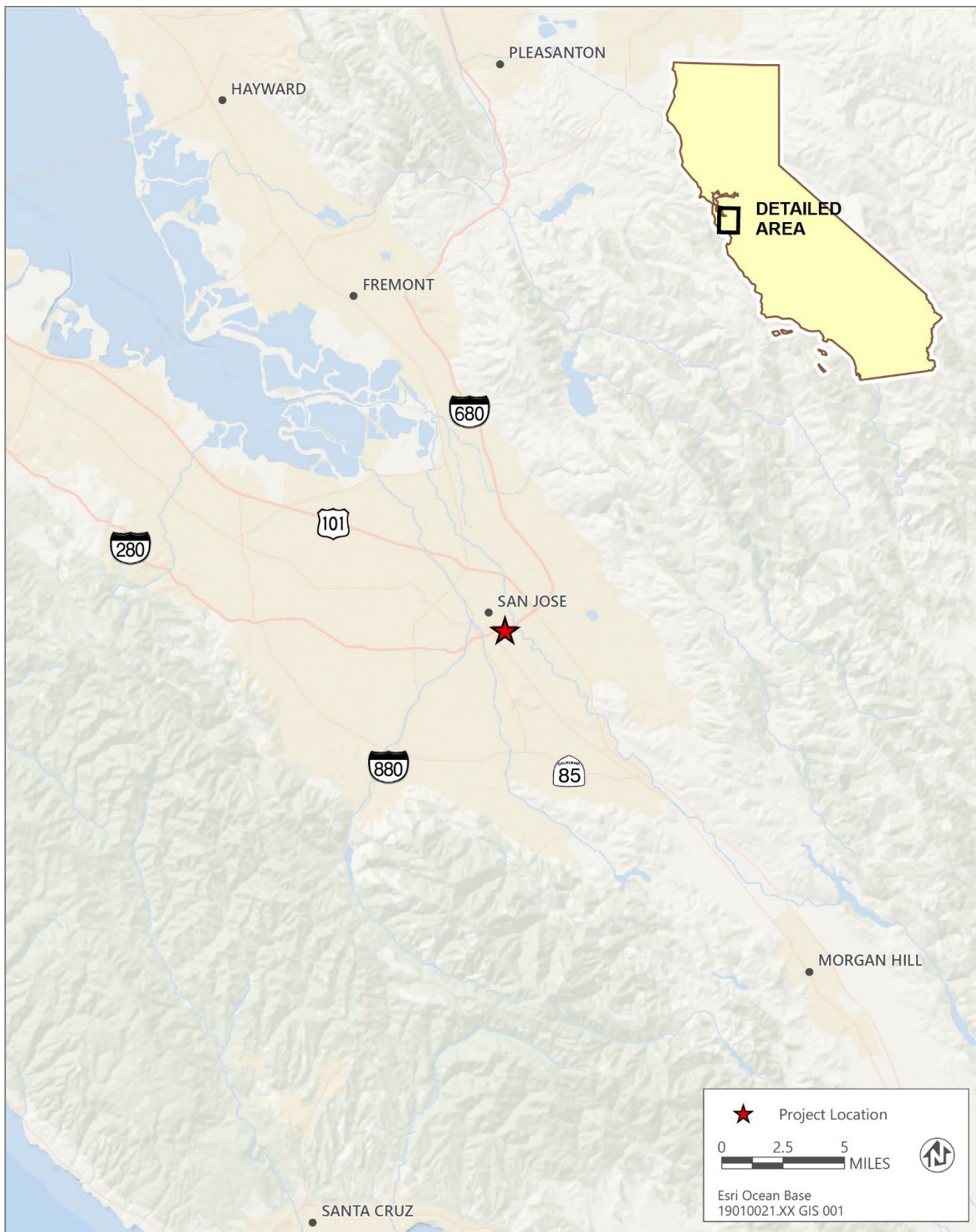
Project Description: The Master Plan will serve as a long-range planning document that will guide the development and use of campus lands in Santa Clara County. The Master Plan sets out a vision for San José State University based on SJSU's strategic plan, Transformation 2030, and anticipates the future space needs of the University by developing strategies for future growth. The Master Plan will address the development of the Main and South campuses and various separate SJSU-owned sites, including land use, site design, open space, circulation, buildings, and utility and other infrastructure. The Master Plan will identify the location, size, and type of needed academic facilities, housing, recreation and athletics facilities, and administrative and student support facilities to accommodate students seeking an education at SJSU and to meet the University's research needs over the next two decades.

SJSU projects enrollment to increase from 36,000 to 44,000 headcount students (from 25,000 full-time equivalent students (FTES) to 27,500 FTES) over the course of master plan buildout, with more than half of that growth in Special Sessions (i.e., academic programs provided to matriculated students on a self-support basis) and online enrollment.¹

To meet SJSU's future aspirations for academic programs and research, enrollment, student housing, and campus community, the Master Plan includes consideration of the need to renovate and replace existing facilities on-campus and to provide dense, sustainable, university-oriented development. To accomplish this, SJSU is projecting the approximately 4.3 million gsf of new, replacement and renovation space of on-campus facilities, primarily within the Main Campus.

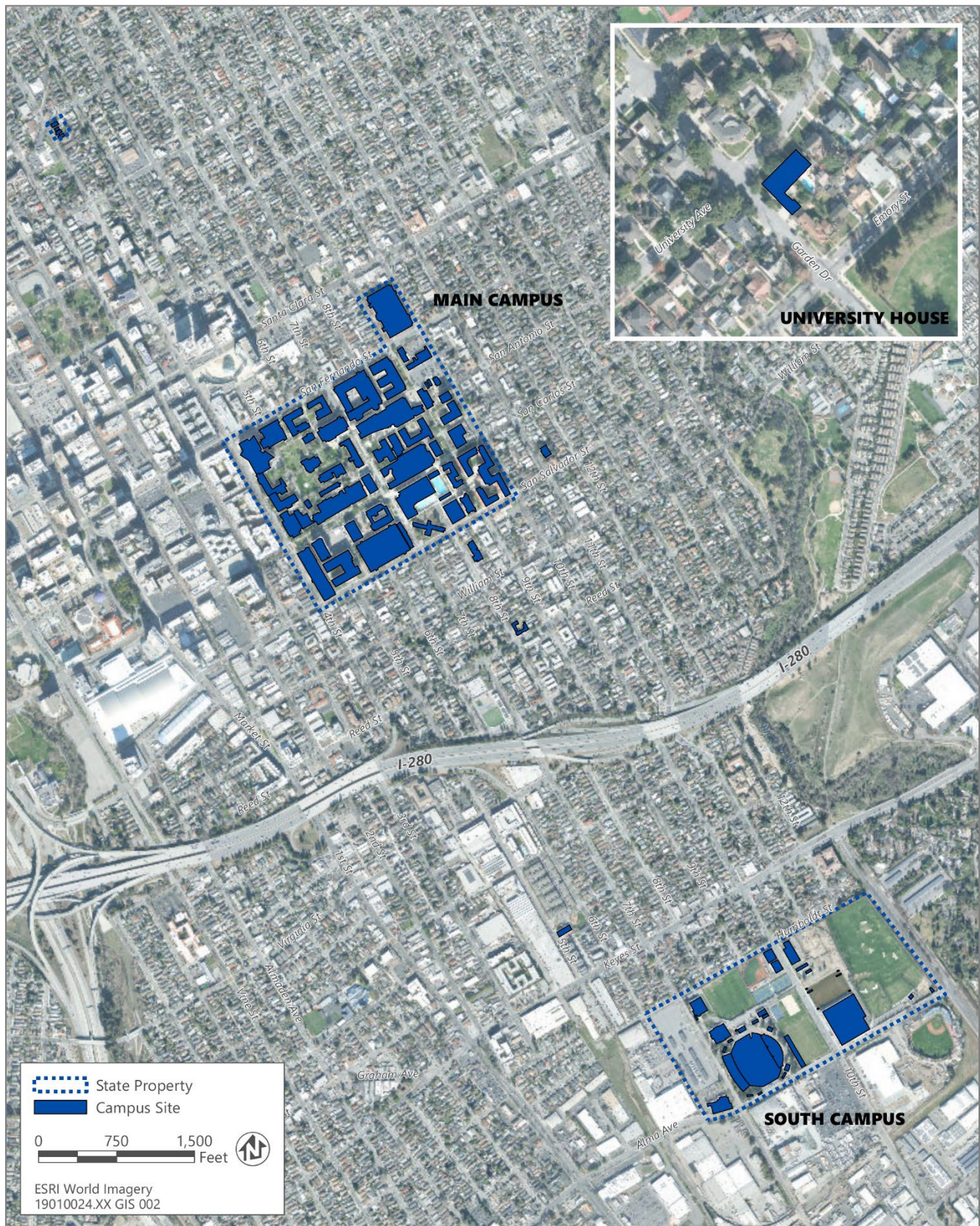
Required Permits and Approvals: As the lead agency pursuant to CEQA, the Trustees of the California State University are responsible for considering the adequacy of the EIR and determining whether to approve the project. As a state entity, the CSU is not required to obtain development approvals from Santa Clara County or other local agencies. Permits that may be required from other agencies include:

¹ FTES is a calculation of university capacity based on the assumptions that a full-time undergraduate student is expected to enroll in 15 units each term (i.e., quarter) and a full-time graduate student is expected to enroll in 12 units each term (i.e., quarter). FTES balances out the amount of instruction involved and level of academic instruction required because not all students take exactly these loads each term.



Source: Adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2023.

Figure 1 Regional Vicinity



Source: Adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2023.

Figure 2 Project Location

- ▶ **San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board:** Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System construction stormwater permit (Notice of Intent to proceed under General Construction Permit), discharge permit for stormwater, general order for dewatering
- ▶ **California Department of Transportation:** Permits for movement of oversized or excessive loads on State highways
- ▶ **City of San José:** Encroachment permits for work within City streets and rights-of-way

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. Where significant or potentially significant environmental impacts are identified, the EIR will present mitigation measures that may make it possible to avoid or reduce these impacts, when feasible.

The EIR will evaluate the probable environmental effects, including cumulative effects, of the project on the following issue areas:

- ▶ **Aesthetics:** The EIR will evaluate temporary and long-term changes in views, visual character, and lighting resulting from implementation of the Master Plan.
- ▶ **Air Quality:** The EIR will evaluate potential impacts associated with temporary increases in air pollutant emissions from construction and long-term increases in pollutant emissions from project operations and associated vehicular trips.
- ▶ **Biological Resources:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to result in substantial adverse effects on biological resources, including sensitive habitats and species, wetlands, and waters, as well as potential conflicts with local/regional conservation planning efforts.
- ▶ **Cultural Resources:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of known or unknown archaeological or historical resources.
- ▶ **Energy:** The EIR will evaluate potential impacts related to energy use for construction and operation of future development under the Master Plan.
- ▶ **Geology and Soils:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to exacerbate geologic hazards and disturb unknown paleontological resources.
- ▶ **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** The EIR will evaluate potential impacts from 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 in GHG emissions associated with project operations, including stationary and mobile sources. The EIR will also evaluate the Master Plan's potential to conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations for reducing GHG emissions.
- ▶ **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for construction and operational activities associated with the Master Plan to increase hazards on campus and in the surrounding area and the potential for increased risk of exposure to hazards and hazardous materials. The EIR will also evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to physically impair emergency response or evacuation plans.
- ▶ **Hydrology and Water Quality:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to alter drainage patterns, increase impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff, and result in potential impacts on water quality (surface waters and groundwater) during construction and operation.
- ▶ **Land Use and Planning:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to affect established communities and conflict with applicable plans and policies adopted for the purpose of reducing or avoiding environmental impacts.

- ▶ **Noise:** The EIR will evaluate potential impacts from 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:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to induce (directly or indirectly) unplanned substantial population growth or displace substantial housing or residents.
- ▶ **Public Services and Recreation:** The EIR will evaluate potential impacts on public services and recreation facilities.
- ▶ **Transportation and Traffic:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to increase vehicle miles traveled (VMT) locally and in the region and whether such increases would conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations related to the effectiveness of the local/regional circulation system. The EIR will also include a discussion of emergency access adequacy, and potential transportation hazards from implementation of the Master Plan.
- ▶ **Tribal Cultural Resources:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of known or unknown tribal cultural resources.
- ▶ **Utilities and Service Systems:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to increase demand for water, transmission, and treatment; demand for wastewater transmission and treatment; use of recycled water; demand for electricity and natural gas; and the potential need to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure.
- ▶ **Wildfire:** The EIR will evaluate the potential for implementation of the Master Plan to exacerbate wildfire risks and associated hazards.

No significant impacts with respect to agriculture and forestry resources or mineral resources are anticipated, and these issue areas will not be evaluated in detail as part of the EIR.

Comment Period: Written comments on the NOP can be sent anytime during the NOP review period which begins March 16, 2023 and runs through April 14, 2023. SJSU will accept written or electronic comments submitted by 5:00 p.m. on April 14, 2023, to the following address:

Chris Shay, Senior Director of Real Estate and Special Projects
San José State University
Facilities Development and Operations
1 Washington Square, Corporation Yard A
San José, CA 95192
Email: campusmasterplan@sjsu.edu

Comments provided via email should include "San José State University Campus Master Plan 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: SJSU will host a public scoping meeting 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 conducted as a hybrid meeting (i.e., in-person meeting with online webinar for those who prefer to attend virtually).

- ▶ March 29, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Corporate Yard Offices Building (One Washington Square, San Jose State University, San Jose, CA 95192) located in the northeast corner of the main campus in the City of San Jose. The building is located at the southeast corner of 9th Street and San Fernando Street, immediately west of the surface parking lot (Parking Lot 4).
- ▶ Participants who would like to attend virtually must register to attend the scoping meeting here:

<https://www.sjsu.edu/campusmasterplan/>

After registering, you will receive the link to log-into the webinar to be held on March 29, 2023.