

This Draft Phase 1 Campus Impact Analysis assesses the potential environmental effects of the first phase of the proposed University of California Merced Long Range Development Plan which is proposed to take place from academic years 2004-05 through academic years 2007-08 (Phase 1 Campus). This analysis describes the individual and cumulative project level impacts of the development of the Phase 1 Campus. The Regents of the University of California (The Regents) is the “lead agency” for the project evaluated in this Draft Phase 1 Campus Impact Analysis and thus has principal responsibility for approving the project.

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PHASE 1 CAMPUS IMPACT ANALYSIS

The University of California, Merced (UC Merced) has commissioned this impact analysis for the LRDP Phase 1 Campus for the following purposes:

- to satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);
- to inform the general public, the local community, responsible and interested public agencies, and the University of the nature of the proposed components of the Phase 1 project, the possible environmental impacts, and possible measures to mitigate those impacts;
- to enable The Board of Regents (The Regents) of the University of California (University) to consider environmental consequences when deciding whether to approve the projects for Phase 1.

## 1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE UC MERCED PHASE 1 CAMPUS

The Phase 1 Campus involves the construction of the first set of buildings for the opening of the UC Merced campus in 2004 and the provision of adequate additional space for envisioned programs until 2008. The Phase 1 academic core, upon opening, would consist of a Science and Engineering Building, a Classroom Building, and a Library/Information Technology Center, all of which would be located between Fairfield and Le Grand canals on the present site of the Merced Hills Golf Course. Initial campus housing would be located to the southwest of the academic facilities. Necessary utilities including a Central Plant, surface parking, and road infrastructure would also be constructed. Additional facilities are planned for construction between 2004 and 2008. These include additional student housing and a Campus Logistical Support Facilities Building at the southeastern portion of the site by 2006, a second Science and Engineering Building by 2007, and a Social Science and Management Building by 2008.

## 1.3 PHASE 1 IMPACT ANALYSIS REVIEW PROCESS/RELATIONSHIP TO THE LRDP AND VOLUME 1 OF THE LRDP EIR

This environmental analysis builds upon the broader analysis of the LRDP found in Volume 1. Volume 1 analyzes full implementation of uses and physical development proposed under the LRDP to meet an enrollment of 25,000 full-time-equivalent students and identifies measures to mitigate the significant adverse program-level, project-level, and cumulative impacts associated with that growth.

The organization of the environmental analysis allows this Volume to avoid repetition of general background and setting information for environmental topic areas, overall growth-related issues,

issues that were evaluated in sufficient detail in Volume 1 for which there is no additional information that would require further analysis, cumulative impacts, and broad project alternatives.

Mitigation measures identified in Volume 1 that apply to the Phase 1 Campus will be implemented as part of the project. Project-specific mitigation measures for potentially significant impacts that were not addressed in detail in Volume 1 may also be required to be implemented as part of the Phase 1 Campus. Such measures are identified in this Volume.

## 1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THE PHASE 1 CAMPUS IMPACT ANALYSIS

The Phase 1 Campus Impact Analysis is organized into the following sections:

*Summary.* Summarizes environmental impacts that would result from construction of Phase 1 Campus, describes proposed mitigation measures, and indicates the level of significance of impacts after mitigation. The Summary also presents alternatives to the proposed project.

*Chapter 1, Introduction.* Provides an introduction and overview describing the intended use of the Phase 1 Campus Impact Analysis, its relationship to Volume 1, and the review and certification process.

*Chapter 2, Description of the Proposed Project.* Provides a detailed description of the Phase 1 Campus, including its location, background information, major objectives, and structural and technical characteristics.

*Chapter 3, Environmental Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures.* Contains the analysis of environmental issue areas based on the foundation of Volume 1. Environmental impacts that were analyzed in Volume 1 are included by reference. Subsections for aesthetics; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; geology; seismicity and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; noise; recreation; and traffic, circulation and parking include an introduction and description of the existing setting specific to the Phase 1 Campus, methodology used to evaluate impacts, and, for potentially significant impacts, references to appropriate LRDP EIR mitigation measures and/or recommendations of additional appropriate project-level mitigation measures.

*Chapter 4, Alternatives to the Proposed Project.* Describes the alternatives discussed within Volume 1 in relation to the Phase 1 Campus, and their associated environmental impacts.

*Chapter 5, Other CEQA Considerations.* Provides discussions required by CEQA regarding impacts that would result from the Phase 1 Campus including potential growth-inducing impacts, and unavoidable significant impacts that cannot be mitigated.