

**California State University, Northridge  
2005 Campus Master Plan Update**

**Statement of Overriding Considerations**

(Pursuant to Sections 15091 and 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines and  
Sections 21081 and 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code)

Final Environmental Impact Report  
(State Clearinghouse Number 2005051008)

CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological or other benefits of the 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 outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, those effects may be considered "acceptable." (CEQA Guidelines §15093(a).) CEQA requires the agency to state, 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 § 15093(b).)

In accordance with the requirements of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, the Board of Trustees finds that the mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, when implemented, will avoid or substantially lessen virtually all of the significant effects identified in the Final EIR for the California State University, Northridge 2005 Campus Master Plan Revision. However, certain significant impacts of the project are unavoidable even after incorporation of all feasible mitigation measures. These significant unavoidable impacts are: (a) impacts to air quality attributable to construction equipment emissions and operational emissions from project-related traffic, (b) noise impacts associated with construction activities, and (c) direct and cumulative traffic impacts at two intersections, three street segments, and three freeway segments (d) impacts to off-site water and wastewater facilities improvements. Section 3.0 of the Draft EIR, Environmental Analysis, provides detailed information regarding these impacts.

The Board of Trustees finds that all feasible mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR within the purview of the University will be implemented with the project, and that the remaining significant unavoidable effects are outweighed and are found to be acceptable due to the following specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including the provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, based upon the facts set forth above, the Final EIR, and the record, as follows:

- a) The CSU has identified the need to serve the higher education needs of the historically under-represented populations and cultures of the State of California, and the project will enable California State University, Northridge to meet projected increases in student demand for higher education. With the projected "Tidal Wave II" student growth forecasts, campuses must expand their capacities to meet current and projected educational demand. The project provides enhanced educational opportunities to eligible high school graduates and community college transfer students of the region. CSU campuses provide access and scholarship opportunities to an increasing number of students throughout the State, thereby significantly contributing to a well-educated work force and the economic well-being of the State of California.
- b) The California State University, Northridge 2005 Campus Master Plan Revision will guide development of the University with a projected enrollment increase of 10,000 full-

time equivalent students over the next 30 years. The project provides sound guidelines for development and implementation of capital outlay programs and planning, design and construction of academic and support facilities.

- c) The project provides for future facilities supporting scientific research, providing social benefits associated with advances in various fields of science.
- d) California State University, Northridge has one of the largest teacher preparation programs in the CSU; the project will provide facilities necessary to support and expand these programs, providing qualified teachers for the State of California.
- e) The project supports the educational, cultural, and recreational facilities on the California State University, Northridge campus that will serve citizens of the region, including those currently underrepresented in the CSU.
- f) The project will create direct job opportunities for faculty and staff, as well as additional employment in university support activities.
- g) The project will create regional economic growth and development, create jobs, attract new private industry to the community, establish new research and training partnerships between the university and private industry, address the CSU's affordable housing needs, and provide a substantial increase in the tax base of the local community.
- h) The provision of affordable faculty/staff housing will assist California State University, Northridge in meeting its workforce housing needs, and will enhance the University's ability to attract well-qualified faculty and staff members, thereby enhancing California State University, Northridge's standing as a premier undergraduate, graduate and research institution in the state of California. Escalating housing prices in the Los Angeles region have made it extremely difficult to attract and retain quality faculty. Most starting salaries at the University fall within the low to moderate-income levels of the region. Less than 17 percent of the CSU faculty and staff in southern California have income levels sufficient to afford the average priced home in the communities where the campuses are located. New faculty and staff recruitment is needed to replace retiring campus employees and to provide for expanded enrollment. Development of affordable housing is key to attracting and retaining the qualified faculty and staff necessary to provide quality public higher education for the San Fernando Valley region.
- i) The locations identified in the master plan for faculty/staff housing provide the most compatible use of land with respect to the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- j) The provision of additional student housing will support a more learning-centered campus environment, thereby improving the academic experience and success rate of future students.

- k) The student and faculty/staff housing components will have a positive impact on traffic conditions by reducing the percentage of peak-hour commuters traveling to campus in private vehicles.
- l) The project replaces existing campus facilities that have exceeded their useful service life, providing for more efficient use of state land and allowing for sustainable growth and cost effective facility maintenance.
- m) The project improves access for the disabled by replacing non-compliant buildings and site improvements with fully accessible facilities.
- n) The project improves public safety by replacing existing facilities with new facilities meeting current seismic and fire/life safety codes.
- o) The project includes improvements to utility infrastructure and central plant systems that will reduce energy consumption and improve the overall energy efficiency of campus facilities.
- p) The project improves the overall campus design and architectural character by preserving important campus open spaces, creating exterior courtyards that increase opportunities for utilization of outdoor spaces for academic pursuits, and improving the campus image and identity.
- q) The project incorporates environmentally sound, sustainable planning and design concepts including: reduction of heat island effects by replacing surface parking locations with multi-level parking structures, significant improvements in mass transit accessibility, incorporation of drought tolerant landscaping to reduce irrigation water consumption, replacement of existing buildings with future buildings utilizing larger building footprints and multiple stories in order to more efficiently utilize land resources and maintain prominent open spaces, and building siting and massing that provides strategic shading of outdoor courtyard spaces.
- r) The project is strongly influenced by input from the campus and surrounding communities and incorporates measures to balance community concerns with the academic mission of the University.

Considering all factors, the Board of Trustees finds that there are specific economic, legal, social, technological and other considerations associated with the project that outweigh the project's significant unavoidable effects, and the adverse effects are therefore considered acceptable.