



Addendum to the  
Initial Study/Mitigated Negative  
Declaration for the

## **California State University San Marcos**

### **Integrated Science and Engineering Building Project**

July 2025

Addendum to the  
Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the

# California State University San Marcos Integrated Science and Engineering Building Project

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

|        |                                              |
|--------|----------------------------------------------|
| CEQA   | California Environmental Quality Act         |
| CSU    | California State University                  |
| CSUSM  | California State University, San Marcos      |
| EIR    | Environmental Impact Report                  |
| IS&E   | Integrated Science and Engineering           |
| IS/MND | Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration |
| USFWS  | US Fish and Wildlife Service                 |

# 1 OVERVIEW

This document constitutes an addendum to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the California State University, San Marcos (CSUSM) Integrated Science and Engineering (IS&E) Building Project (approved project) (State Clearinghouse No. 2024070644), adopted by the California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees on November 21, 2024 (CSUSM 2024). The approved project involves the construction of an IS&E building project with a combined 125,000 square feet on a 2.46-acre site and an approximately 750-foot-long off-site utility tunnel on an additional 0.17 acre within the existing campus. This IS/MND addendum has been prepared to address minor changes to the approved project, consisting of additional utility connections to the IS&E building and changes to the limits of disturbance along the re-aligned utility tunnel and service road serving the approved building that expand the approved project site to 3.85 acres.

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF AN ADDENDUM

Once an MND has been prepared and adopted for a project, no additional environmental review is required unless certain conditions are met, at which point subsequent review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) may be necessary. CEQA establishes the type of environmental documentation required when changes occur after an MND is adopted. Sections 15162-15164 of the CEQA Guidelines define the standards for determining the appropriate level of subsequent environmental review. Specifically, Section 15164(a) of the CEQA Guidelines states that: “an addendum to an adopted negative declaration may be prepared if only minor technical changes or additions are necessary or none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR or negative declaration have occurred.”

If new significant impacts beyond those addressed in the adopted MND or a substantial increase in the severity of impacts would result, then preparation and circulation of a subsequent MND for additional public review may be required. However, when it can be determined that neither the proposed changes to the project, changed circumstances, nor new information result in the identification of new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of impacts evaluated in the adopted MND, an addendum to the MND may be prepared. An addendum does not need to be circulated for public review, but it can be included in or attached to the adopted MND.

Based on this regulatory guidance, an addendum to the adopted 2024 IS/MND was determined to be the appropriate environmental documentation for the modified project. The additional utility connections to the IS&E building and changes to the disturbance limits along the utility tunnel and service road re-alignment would not result in any new significant impacts or impacts of greater severity than contemplated in the 2024 IS/MND as documented in the analysis that follows. This addendum to the 2024 IS/MND was prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164 to address minor project changes since adoption of the 2024 IS/MND.

## 1.2 APPROVED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The approved project consists of an IS&E building totaling approximately 125,000 square feet on a 2.46-acre site and an adjacent, approximately 750-foot-long off-site utility tunnel on an additional 0.17 acre within the existing campus. Figure 1, included on page 8 of this addendum, depicts the boundaries of the approved project. The approved project site is in the eastern portion of the CSUSM campus, which is located at 333 S. Twin Oaks Valley Road in the City of San Marcos. The approved project is envisioned to provide state-of-the-art facilities for teaching, learning, and research, featuring integrative innovative technology and flexible configurations for classrooms and laboratories. Re-routing an existing service road and underground utilities would be required under the approved project. Other on-site improvements include a loading dock and freight elevator, landscaping, exterior lighting, building and wayfinding signage, fire lane access, fire hydrants, and access for trash collection. The approved project would be constructed in separate phases for a total duration of approximately 25 months. Once operational, the approved project would support new College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics undergraduate programs on campus. The approved project is anticipated to support approximately 350 new students (i.e., students not currently enrolled) and 33 new staff and faculty in the opening year.



Source: Data received from HGA in 2025; adapted by Ascent in 2025.

Figure 1-1 Approved and Modified Project Site Boundaries

As described in Section 2.3.1, "Building and Site Design," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the utility tunnel associated with the approved project consists of an approximately 10-foot-wide and 9-foot-deep cast-in-place or precast concrete structure. Under the approved project, domestic and fire water, sanitary sewer, storm drain, mechanical hydronic piping, electrical power, natural gas, and telecommunications connections lines would be installed within the utility tunnel and would tie into existing utility lines at the southern end of Markstein Hall, approximately 600 feet south of the project site.

## 1.3 MODIFIED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

All project elements would remain the same as described in the adopted 2024 IS/MND and as summarized above, except for additional utility connections to the IS&E building and changes to the limits of disturbance along the utility tunnel and service road re-alignment. Figure 1 depicts the boundaries of the modified project compared to those of the approved project. The modified project site encompasses an area of 3.85 acres, which is approximately 1.22 acres larger than the approved project site. Under the modified project, the following changes to the approved project are proposed:

- ▶ Under the approved project, it was assumed that the telecommunications and fire alarm lines would be routed through the proposed utility tunnel described under "Approved Project Description" above, south of the approved building. As design progressed, it was determined that routing the telecommunications and fire alarm lines north of the IS&E building would be the most feasible route for connecting the new IS&E building to the campus communication network and fire alarm system. Under the modified project, the telecommunications and fire alarm lines would be routed through a landscaped hillside to an existing utility tunnel adjacent to the Social and Behavioral Sciences Building. Landscaping would be replaced in kind following construction. The modified project also includes construction of a decomposed granite access path leading to a telecommunications vault located on the existing hillside. Under the modified project, the utility tunnel length would be approximately 550 feet.
- ▶ The limits of disturbance for the approved utility tunnel, as shown in Figure 1, would be expanded to avoid prior site improvements. Chilled and hot water lines would extend south from the main mechanical pump room in the IS&E building to an existing tunnel system near Markstein Hall. The chilled and hot water lines would be buried in a utility trench with removable concrete lids that would traverse parking lot H. A small section of existing landscaping would be removed and replaced in kind for the primary electrical connection to Markstein Hall.
- ▶ The modified project would include construction of a sewer lateral extension that would extend west from the IS&E building through a landscaped area and would connect to an existing sewer line along the edge of the Arts Building near Gonzalez Grove. Existing trees would be protected in place and any other removed landscaping would be replaced in kind following construction.
- ▶ The limits of disturbance along the service road re-alignment would be extended eastward toward the lower hillside slopes due to necessary revisions to the grading and site drainage plans. A 4-foot tall, 70-foot-long retaining wall would be constructed along the service road to reduce encroachment into the adjacent hillside and coastal sage scrub habitat.

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## 2 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

CSUSM has determined that, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15164, an addendum is appropriate to address minor changes to the approved project. The analysis of environmental effects below demonstrates that none of the conditions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 requiring the preparation of a subsequent MND have occurred. Comparative analysis of the modified project and approved project is provided below.

### 2.1 AESTHETICS

As described in Section 3.1, "Aesthetics," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would result in less than significant impacts with respect to aesthetics associated with the construction and operation of a new IS&E building. The changes to the proposed utility connections and alignment of the service road under the modified project would not introduce any new above-ground features or sources of light and glare compared to what was evaluated in the 2024 IS/MND. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of aesthetics impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

### 2.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

As described in Section 3.2, "Agricultural and Forest Resources," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have no impact on agriculture and forest resources because no such resources are present within the project site. Similarly, the modified project site does not contain any agriculture or forest resources. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of agriculture and forest resources impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

### 2.3 AIR QUALITY

As described in Section 3.3, "Air Quality," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would result in less than significant impacts with respect to air quality associated with air pollutant emissions generated during construction and operation. Construction of the modified project would have a similar duration and would require similar numbers and types of equipment as the approved project. In addition, the modified project would not increase the campus population and associated vehicle trips relative to what was anticipated under the approved project. Thus, air pollutant and precursor emissions from construction and operation of the modified project would continue to be below applicable thresholds established for the purpose of protecting human health. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of air quality impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

### 2.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

As described in Section 3.4, "Biological Resources," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact on biological resources with implementation of mitigation measures to avoid impacts on coastal California gnatcatcher and other nesting birds. As shown in Figure 1, the limits of disturbance for the modified project extend slightly beyond those of the approved project; however, these additional areas of ground disturbance would be entirely within land that is developed, disturbed, or covered with ornamental plantings. The approved project and modified project would each require the removal of approximately 0.04 acre of coastal sage scrub (including both disturbed and undisturbed varieties), which is considered suitable habitat for the coastal California gnatcatcher. However, the modified project would require removal of a smaller area of undisturbed coastal sage scrub that would provide higher quality habitat for coastal California gnatcatcher (approximately 57 square feet) compared to the approved project (approximately 870 square feet). Further, the modified project would be subject to

the same regulations and mitigation measures as the approved project, which were designed to avoid impacts on coastal California gnatcatcher and other nesting birds.

In accordance with Mitigation Measure BIO-1 of the adopted IS/MND, CSUSM retained a qualified biologist to conduct protocol surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher ahead of the initiation of work planned to occur during the breeding season of the species (i.e., March 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>). On April 25, 2025, the qualified biologist provided a survey notification to David Zoutendyk, Division Supervisor of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, who granted CSUSM permission to begin protocol surveys (Zoutendyk, pers. Comm., 2025). No coastal California gnatcatchers were detected during these protocol surveys, which were completed on the following dates: May 1, 2025; May 8, 2025; May 15, 2025; May 22, 2025; May 29, 2025; and June 5, 2025. On June 12, 2025, CSUSM notified USFWS of the negative survey results. Based on the negative survey results, USFWS indicated that they have no concerns with the project proceeding (Zoutendyk, pers. Comm., 2025). Therefore, formal consultation under the Endangered Species Act is not required for coastal California gnatcatcher and no further coordination with USFWS is necessary. No additional mitigation requirements (e.g., noise walls) described in Mitigation Measures BIO-1 are necessary. Based on the above discussion, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of biological resources impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## 2.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

As described in Section 3.5, "Cultural Resources," and Section 3.18, "Tribal Cultural Resources," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact with respect to cultural and tribal cultural resources with incorporation of mitigation measures to prevent the destruction of buried archaeological resources if they are encountered during project construction. Excavation depths for the modified project would be consistent with those of the approved project. As shown in Figure 1, the limits of disturbance for the modified project extend slightly beyond those of the approved project; however, the environmental conditions within the modified project site are consistent with those of the approved project site. Like the approved project site, the modified project site is extremely disturbed from past grading activities. No cultural or tribal cultural resources were recorded within a one-mile radius of the approved project site, which includes the added areas under the modified project. Although the modified project would result in more ground disturbance than the approved project, construction activities under the modified project would be subject to the same regulations and mitigation measures as the approved project. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of cultural or tribal cultural resources impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## 2.6 ENERGY

As described in Section 3.6, "Energy," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact with respect to energy because energy consumption during project construction and operation would comply with applicable requirements for energy efficiency, including the California Energy Code. Construction of the modified project would have a similar duration and would require similar numbers and types of equipment as the approved project. In addition, the modified project would not increase the campus population and associated energy demand relative to what was anticipated under the approved project. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of energy impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## 2.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

As described in Section 3.7, "Geology and Soils," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact with respect to geology and soils associated with seismic-related hazards, erosion, unstable geologic units and soils, and expansive soils. Excavation depths for the modified project would be consistent with those of the approved project. As shown in Figure 1, the limits of disturbance for the modified project extend

slightly beyond those of the approved project; however, the geologic and soil conditions within the modified project site are consistent with those of the approved project site. Although the modified project would result in more ground disturbance than the approved project, construction activities under the modified project would be subject to the same regulations as the approved project to protect public safety during seismic hazards (e.g., California Building Code) and minimize erosion (e.g., National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit). Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of geology and soils impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## 2.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

As described in Section 3.8, "Greenhouse Gas Emissions," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would result in less than significant impacts associated with greenhouse gas emissions generated during project construction and operation. Construction of the modified project would have a similar duration and would require similar numbers and types of equipment as the approved project. In addition, the modified project would not increase the campus population and associated vehicle trips relative to what was anticipated under the approved project. Thus, greenhouse gas emissions from the modified project would continue to be below applicable targets established by CSU, CSUSM, and the City of San Marcos for the purpose of reducing project contributions to global climate change. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of greenhouse gas emissions impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## 2.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

As described in Section 3.9, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would result in less than significant impacts with respect to hazards and hazardous materials associated with potential releases of hazardous materials into the environment, interference with emergency response and evaluation, and exposure of people or structures to risks associated with wildland fires. The modified project would not result in any changes to the approved project that would increase the quantities of hazardous materials generated, interfere with emergency response, or exacerbate risks associated with wildfires. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of hazards and hazardous materials impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## 2.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

As described in Section 3.10, "Hydrology and Water Quality," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would result in less than significant impacts with respect to hydrology and water quality associated with ground-disturbing activities during construction and changes in impervious surfaces during operation. As shown in Figure 1, the limits of disturbance for the modified project extend slightly beyond those of the approved project; however, overall drainage patterns associated with the modified project would be consistent with those of the approved project. Although the modified project site is larger than the approved project site, construction activities under the modified project would be required to implement the same best management practices and post-construction stormwater controls to comply with applicable regulations and permits that are protective of water quality (e.g., National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for Stormwater Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems). Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of hydrology and water quality impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## 2.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

As described in Section 3.11, "Land Use and Planning," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would result in less than significant impacts with respect to land use and planning because the project requires a minor

master plan revision to address changing programmatic needs at the campus. The modified project does not propose any changes in land use and would not increase the campus population relative to the approved project. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of land use and planning impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## **2.12 MINERAL RESOURCES**

As described in Section 3.12, "Mineral Resources," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact with respect to mineral resources because existing and planned campus land uses preclude the use of the site for mineral resource extraction. As shown in Figure 1, the limits of disturbance for the modified project extend slightly beyond those of the approved project; however, the land use conditions within the modified project site are consistent with those of the approved project site. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of mineral resources impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## **2.13 NOISE**

As described in Section 3.13, "Noise," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact with respect to noise and vibration generated during construction and operation. Construction of the modified project would have a similar duration and would require similar numbers and types of equipment as the approved project. In addition, the modified project would not increase the number of stationary or mobile noise sources relative to what was anticipated under the approved project. Thus, noise and vibration levels generated during construction and operation of the modified project would continue to be below applicable thresholds established for the purpose of protecting human health. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of noise impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## **2.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING**

As described in Section 3.14, "Population and Housing," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact with respect to population and housing because the project would not increase the campus population at CSUSM beyond what was projected in the Campus Master Plan. The modified project would not result in any changes that would increase campus population growth relative to what was anticipated under the approved project. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of population and housing impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## **2.15 PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION**

As described in Section 3.15, "Public Services," and 3.16, "Recreation," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact with respect to public services and recreation because the project would not increase demands for public services in a manner that would require the provision of new fire and police protection facilities, schools, parks, or other public facilities. The modified project would not result in any changes that would increase campus population growth and associated demand for public services, including recreation facilities, relative to what was anticipated under the approved project. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of public services and recreation impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## **2.16 TRANSPORTATION**

As described in Section 3.17, "Transportation," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact on transportation with respect to the circulation system, project-generated vehicle trips,

transportation-related hazards, and emergency access. The modified project would not result in any changes to circulation patterns compared to what was described for the adopted project. In addition, the modified project would not contribute to an increase in campus population growth and associated vehicle trips relative to what was anticipated under the approved project. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of transportation impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## **2.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**

As described in Section 3.18, "Utilities and Service Systems," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact with respect to utilities and service systems because the project would not increase demands for utility services beyond the capacity of utility service providers. The modified project would not result in any changes that would increase campus population growth and associated demand for utilities relative to what was anticipated under the approved project. As described throughout this addendum, no new environmental impacts are associated with construction and operation of the alternative utility connections proposed under the modified project. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of utilities and service systems impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## **2.18 WILDFIRE**

As described in Section 3.19, "Wildfire," of the adopted 2024 IS/MND, the approved project would have a less than significant impact on wildfire with respect to emergency response and evacuation and risks associated with wildfires. Compared to the approved project, the modified project would not result in any changes that would interfere with emergency access or exacerbate wildfire risks or other hazards. Therefore, the modified project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of wildfire impacts evaluated in the adopted IS/MND.

## **2.19 CONCLUSION**

Based on the above discussion, the minor changes to the approved project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of impacts evaluated in the adopted 2024 IS/MND. Further, no changed circumstances and no new information resulting in the identification of new significant impacts have occurred since adoption of the 2024 IS/MND. Accordingly, CSUSM determined that none of the conditions described in Section 15162 of the CEQA Guidelines calling for preparation of a subsequent MND or EIR have been triggered and an addendum to the adopted 2024 IS/MND is the appropriate environmental documentation to address minor changes to the approved project. This addendum was prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164.

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### 3 REFERENCES

CSUSM. *See* California State University, San Marcos.

California State University, San Marcos. 2024. Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Integrated Science and Engineering Building Project.

Zoutendyk, David. Division Supervisor. Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, Carlsbad, CA. April and June 2025—email messages with Ryan Winkleman of Michael Baker International and Michelle Alves of California State University, San Marcos related to coastal California gnatcatcher survey notification, coordination, and survey results for the Integrated Science and Engineering Building Project.