NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING FOR THE SIERRA COLLEGE ROCKLIN CAMPUS FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

To: Responsible and Trustee Agencies, involved federal agencies and interested members of the public

From: Sierra Joint Community College District, Laura Doty, Director, Facilities and Construction

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Sierra College Rocklin Campus Facilities Master Plan

Date: October 6, 2017

Action: Sierra Joint Community College District (College) will be the Lead Agency pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and will be responsible for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) preparation pursuant to CEQA and CEQA Guidelines.

Project Title: Sierra College Rocklin Campus Facilities Master Plan

Project Applicant: Sierra Joint Community College District

Project Summary:
The proposed Rocklin Campus Facilities Master Plan describes a 20-year development program which includes demolition of certain existing structures, construction of new structures, and rehabilitation of numerous existing structures. Plan components include both near-term and long-term projects. Near-term projects are those which the College anticipates will be funded within a period of approximately five years and are considered to have a higher degree of certainty than other components in the Master Plan. Near term components include the following: Phase 1 of a new science building, a new north parking structure and Phase 1 of loop road improvements, and a new dormitory. Details of these and other Project components are provided below in the subsection entitled Major Components of the Project. The EIR will be completed at a Project level for the near-term projects, and a Programmatic level for the long-term projects.

Written Comments:
As required by Section 15082 and CEQA Guidelines, this Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared and distributed to solicit comments from interested parties and potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies and other public agencies so that Project-related concerns relevant to each agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed Project can be addressed in the EIR, as well as any related issues from interested parties other than potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies, including other agencies and affected members of the public. The EIR will be the environmental document of reference for Responsible and Trustee Agencies when considering subsequent discretionary approvals. Note that a Notice of Preparation was originally released for this project in April 2014 (SCH#201442088). Since that time, the District has revised the Facilities Master Plan, and altered or changed some of the proposed near-term and long-term projects. The original EIR was not completed or circulated for public review, so this new Notice of Preparation was prepared to reflect the projects now proposed in the revised Facilities Master Plan.
The College requests that interested parties and any potential Responsible or Trustee Agencies responding to this NOP reply in a manner consistent with Section 15082(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, which allows for submittal of any comments in response to this notice no later than 30 days after receipt of the Notice of Preparation (NOP). **Comments in response to this NOP will be accepted through November 5, 2017.** Written comments should be addressed to the person noted below.

Laura Doty, Director  
Facilities and Construction  
Sierra College  
5100 Sierra College Blvd  
Rocklin, CA 95677  
Phone: (916) 660.7650  
Email: ldoty@sierracollege.edu

**Public Scoping Meeting:**

The CEQA process encourages comments and questions from the general public, public agencies, and other interested parties throughout the planning process. Consistent with the California Public Resources Code and Section 15082(c)(1), (2)(A) to (D) of the CEQA Guidelines, two Public Scoping Meetings will be held to solicit public and agency comments on the scope and content of the Draft EIR. Written comments may also be presented at the Public Scoping meeting. The Public Scoping Meetings will be held on:

**Date:** October 26, 2017  
**Times:** 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
**Place:** Sierra College, Rocklin Campus Board Room (located in the Learning Resources Center, Room 133)

Parking enforcement will be suspended on campus after 1:00 p.m. this day to encourage attendance.

**Project Location and Setting:**

Sierra College is located at the eastern edge of the Sacramento Valley in south Placer County, along Interstate 80, approximately 21 miles northeast of Sacramento and 14 miles southwest of Auburn. The campus sits on the edge of urbanized land and lower density agricultural residential land within the city of Rocklin, Placer County, California. The natural landscape both within and surrounding the campus consists of gently rolling topography and oak woodland. The Project is limited to the main part of the Rocklin campus, inside the boundaries of Interstate 80 (I-80), Rocklin Road, and Sierra College Boulevard, and within the city limits of Rocklin. (See Figure 1 Vicinity Map).

The Rocklin General Plan designates the campus in the Public Quasi Public (PQP) land use category. The campus is zoned Planned Development Community College (PD-CC), except for the Secret Ravine creek area, which is zoned Open Area (OA).

**Major Components of the Project:**

Both near-term projects and long-term projects would include construction of new facilities, improvements and expansion of existing facilities, and improvements to Campus traffic and circulation. Other improvements may include access and expansion of pedestrian and bicycle paths and lanes, and energy and water saving enhancements. Near-term projects are described below (Figure 2).
Near-term Projects Include:

**Phase 1 of the New Science Building**
The Sewell Hall science building was built in the early 1960s and was designed for the technologies that existed at that time. Under the Master Plan, a new Science Building would be constructed to replace Sewell hall. The Science Building project will be constructed in two phases. Phase I will consist of a new multi-discipline, 45,000 square foot (SF), two-story building that will house the existing Natural History Museum, and labs for chemistry, biology, physics, agriculture, and nutrition, along with a new greenhouse. The initial phase will replace Sewell Hall plus seven portable science buildings and the greenhouse, which will be demolished. As enrollment in the sciences increases, a future Phase II will include additional classroom and lab space. Phase I is anticipated to begin in the near-term period.

**Dormitory**
The current Master Plan includes demolition of the existing residence hall (Building Z) with a capacity of 120 beds to make way for the new Child Development Center. The new dormitory is planned for the northeast side of the campus as a three-story, 350-400 bed facility. This dormitory would be located directly off of Sierra College Boulevard, and adjacent to parking lot K, and would create a visual identity for the East Campus entrance. The floor plan will incorporate a mix of both single and double occupancy residence rooms, lounges, common areas and break rooms. A pedestrian signal crossing will be located south of the dormitory for students to access the main campus.

**North Parking Structure and Phase 1 of Loop Road Improvements**
The first of two planned parking structures to be built would be the parking structure centrally located close to the Campus core and accessed from Sierra College Boulevard. The North Parking Structure will have a capacity for approximately 1,500 vehicles. This structure would attract many students to the northeast corner of Campus, helping to balance the traffic volume to and from campus between Rocklin Road and Sierra College Blvd. Phase 1 of the loop road improvements would increase the vehicle capacity of Stadium Way between Sierra College Blvd and the north parking structure.

A Partial list of Long-term Projects includes:

**Child Development Center**
The College is presently operating a child care/development facility in a 1,600-square foot (SF) portable facility in the southwest corner of the Campus, which will be demolished. As currently envisioned, the new Child Development Center (CDC) would include approximately 14,000 SF of floor area and would accommodate an additional 80 families beyond what can be accommodated in the existing facility. The new CDC will be located in the area of the current Administration Building (U Bldg).

**Instructional Building**
The new Instructional Building will be located on the western edge of Campus and will replace buildings B,C,M, and Mt -7/8/9/10. When completed the new classroom building will not only replace the 1960’s era classrooms of the B, C, and M buildings, but will incorporate modern technologies needed for current instructional delivery. Located between the Math and Technology building and the Winstead Center, the Instructional Building will become a key anchor at the west end of the Campus plaza.
**Public Safety Center**

Sierra College offers numerous courses in public safety that are currently taught on the Rocklin campus, at the Roseville Center in downtown Roseville, and in multiple locations around Placer County. The new Public Safety Center will establish a Rocklin campus home for fire technology, emergency medical technician, and administration of justice instructional programs. In addition to lecture and lab space, the facility may include fitness and agility training spaces, an indoor shooting range, a fire training tower, a vehicle obstacle course, and emergency vehicle bays. The new facility would be located on the northeast end of the campus just north of the K parking lot.

**Learning Resource Center (LRC Building)**

The Learning Resource Center is located in the heart of the campus, north of the parking lots along Rocklin Road. Although it is a main focal point to those arriving on campus, it lacks a clear and defined point of entry, which makes wayfinding a challenge for students and visitors. This project will update the LRC and potentially enlarge the building to include a new 8,000 SF front entry and lobby, providing a “front door” to the building. The addition could also include an indoor/outdoor deck and sitting area that would have views to the west onto the student plaza.

**Student Services**

Student Services on the Rocklin campus were consolidated into the Winstead Building about 20 years ago. Within the last 5 years, Student Services functions have significantly expanded and are currently offered at several different locations on campus, which at best is confusing to students and operationally inefficient. The Master Plan consolidates all student services into the center of Campus by modernizing and expanding buildings L, J, and K. While the LRC is identified separately in the Master Plan for expansion and renovation, it will also house some student services related activities and should be considered a part of the centralized student services hub that will occupy the center of Campus.

**Campus-wide Modernization**

The Master Plan includes the modernization of all existing instructional buildings not scheduled for demolition and most Campus support buildings. The buildings will be upgraded for compliance with current building and ADA codes. The modernizations will improve energy efficiency and when possible reconfigure the existing spaces to improve efficiency. The following is a list of the buildings proposed for modernization:

1. Music - Building D
2. Physical Education/Gym - Building G
3. Vocational Education/Metals - Building H
4. Vocational Education/Automotive – Building N
5. Cafeteria - Building J
6. Bookstore/Student Engagement Center - Building K
7. Theater/Speech Arts - Building T
8. Instruction - Building W
9. Facilities/Transportation - Building Y
10. Warehouse - Building X

**Physical Education Facilities (G Building) Modernization and Athletic Fields Improvements**

The campus’s existing physical education and athletics facilities include a gymnasium and locker rooms (G Building), portable classrooms and office buildings (Gt-1 through -4), a 25-yard lap pool, a diving pool, five tennis courts, and one football, one softball, one baseball, and one soccer field. The buildings were constructed in the 1960s and do not meet current code requirements or meet
instructional program needs. G Building would be expanded to incorporate the square footage of the existing Gt’s, and the Gt’s would be demolished. Three additional beach volleyball courts, an additional tennis court, and a concession stand with restrooms and equipment storage would be constructed. The baseball, softball, and soccer fields would eventually be upgraded from grass to synthetic turf, which would allow broader use of the facilities and would reduce water consumption.

**Instructional Building (Bldg W) Modernization**
Building W, a two-story lecture and lab classroom building, was built in 1971 and has had no major renovations. This project will significantly improve the instructional spaces by incorporating current instructional delivery technology into the classrooms and labs. It will also upgrade the heating/cooling/lighting systems to provide a better learning environment, make the building safer and more accessible through compliance with current building codes and ADA requirements, and (wherever possible) right-size classrooms to match class sizes.

**Alternatives to be Analyzed in the EIR:**
In accordance with Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Draft EIR will assess a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project. The range of alternatives to be addressed will include alternatives that are specifically required by CEQA (e.g., No Project Alternative), as well as other alternatives identified through the coordinated consultation and planning process.

**Potential Environmental Impacts:**
An Initial Study is typically prepared during the preliminary review process to determine whether a project is subject to CEQA. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(d), the lead agency can determine that an EIR will be clearly required for a project and may skip further initial review and begin work directly on the EIR.

Sierra College has determined that there is substantial evidence that this project could result in significant environmental impacts and/or have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment, thereby necessitating the preparation of an EIR. CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(d) states that the lead agency may bypass further initial review of the project and begin work directly on the EIR process described in Article 9. As such, Sierra College has determined that preparation of an EIR is appropriate.

The EIR will evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project, after having first established the environmental setting, or baseline, for the environmental analysis. The proposed Project will be analyzed in the EIR relative to both short-term construction and long-term operations in the environmental topics listed below. In each instance, the significance of potential impacts, cumulative impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures associated with the Project and identified alternatives to the Project would be thoroughly discussed in the EIR.

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VICINITY OF SIERRA COLLEGE FACILITIES
MASTER PLAN PROJECT SITE

Legend

City of Rocklin
Project Site

Miles

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ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN FOR SIERRA COLLEGE FACILITIES
MASTER PLAN PROJECT SITE

Figure 2