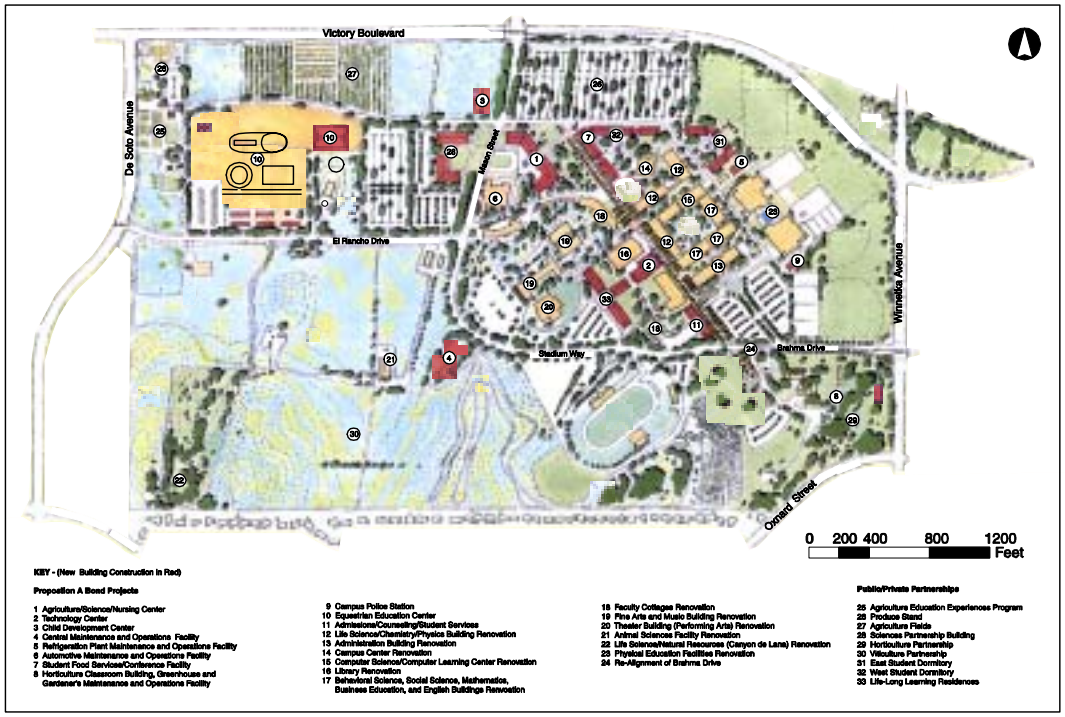
Los Angeles Pierce College
Facilities Master Plan

Draft Environmental Impact Report

State Clearinghouse Number 2002021004



Prepared for

the Los Angeles Community College District

Prepared by

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LOS ANGELES PIERCE COLLEGE
FACILITIES MASTER PLAN
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Los Angeles Pierce College is a 2-year community college accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and one of nine community colleges that form the Los Angeles Community College District (District). Pierce College is located in the southwest corner of the San Fernando Valley in the City and County of Los Angeles (see Figure 1).

On April 10, 2001, Los Angeles voters approved Proposition A, a $1.245 billion facilities bond that would provide funding to repair, rehabilitate, and modernize facilities at all nine of District's campuses. Pierce College was allocated $166 million of the $1.245 billion bond measure. In response, Pierce College has developed a Facilities Master Plan that sets forth the vision, commitment, and objectives of the College and its use of the bond money. The Master Plan would maintain the College's agricultural integrity while providing enough space in new and modernized facilities to accommodate anticipated student enrollment in the year 2010 (i.e., 23,252 total enrolled students in the Fall 2010 semester or 16,423 full-time-equivalent annual students in the 2010-2011 academic year).

The Proposition A funded projects under the Master Plan include but are not limited to: new and enhanced student classrooms and resources, administrative and faculty offices, maintenance and operations facilities, agricultural facilities, and an equestrian education center that would enhance Pierce College's agricultural curriculum and community services programs. In addition to new and renovated facilities funded by Proposition A, the Master Plan also proposes public/private partnerships to expand the College's facilities and educational opportunities. The public/private partnerships may include agricultural educational facilities, a produce stand, and agricultural fields; life-long learning residences; student dormitories; a sciences/research and development building; and a horticulture building. Implementation of some of the partnership projects may require zoning/planning approvals from the City of Los Angeles.

Completion of the projects proposed under the Master Plan would result in an increase of approximately 500,000 gross square feet of building area, 400 to 450 housing units, and 1,087 parking spaces on the campus. Currently, there are approximately 585,000 gross square feet of building area and 4,119 parking spaces on the campus. No student housing is currently provided on the campus. Construction of projects proposed under the Master Plan is expected to commence in 2003 and continue through the year 2010.

The District has directed the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the environmental effects of the Master Plan. In accordance with CEQA requirements, on February 1, 2002, approximately 100 copies of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) were distributed to various agencies, organizations, and individuals that might have an interest in the project. The NOP announced that an EIR would be prepared and requested comments on issues or impacts that should be addressed in the environmental document. A public scoping workshop was also held on February 12, 2002 to provide an additional opportunity for individuals to submit comments or suggestions on issues to be evaluated in the Draft EIR and to provide information on the Master Plan and EIR process.

A Draft EIR has been prepared that evaluates the environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the Facilities Master Plan and identifies measures to mitigate the significant effects of the projects proposed under the Master Plan. According to the analyses in the Draft EIR, the proposed Master Plan could result in significant or potentially significant impacts in the following areas:

- **Visual Resource**s – Development of 12 to 13 acres of open space agricultural land and demolition of the Business Office/Student Store Building would result in significant visual impacts.
- **Air Quality** – Construction activities and additional traffic due to increased enrollment and employment could result in pollutant emissions that exceed South Coast Air Quality Management District significance thresholds.
- **Biological Resources** – Development on existing agricultural lands would remove resting and foraging habitat for Canada geese, a locally sensitive species. Removal of trees could affect migratory birds and wetlands may be affected by Canyon de Lana improvements.
- **Historical Resource**s – Two buildings that appear eligible for inclusion on the California Register of Historical Resources may be demolished.
- **Archaeological Resources** – Construction activities have the potential to disturb, alter, or destroy archaeological resources that may be present.
- **Paleontological Resources** – Construction in hilly portions of the campus could result in the destruction of unique fossil resources that may be present.
- **Geology/Soils/Seismicity** – Strong groundshaking due to earthquakes on nearby faults could damage structures, roads, and utilities.
- **Hazardous Materials** – Potential health hazards could arise in the event construction activities result in ground disturbance of a hazardous materials site on the campus or if demolition or remodeling affects older buildings with asbestos-containing material and lead based paint contaminants.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality** – Increased impervious surfaces and new agricultural activities could contribute additional polluted runoff. New development in western portion of campus could exacerbate existing drainage problems.
- **Noise** – Noise from construction activities could adversely affect on-campus academic facilities.
- **Public Services** – Additional traffic due to increased enrollment and employment could increase congestion on local streets adversely affecting emergency vehicle response times.
- **Transportation/Traffic & Parking** – Increased enrollment and employment could result in significant impacts in the year 2010 at 19 of 30 study intersections.
- **Public Utilities** – Increased water demand would require construction of new water pipelines. New development in western portion of campus could exacerbate existing drainage problems.

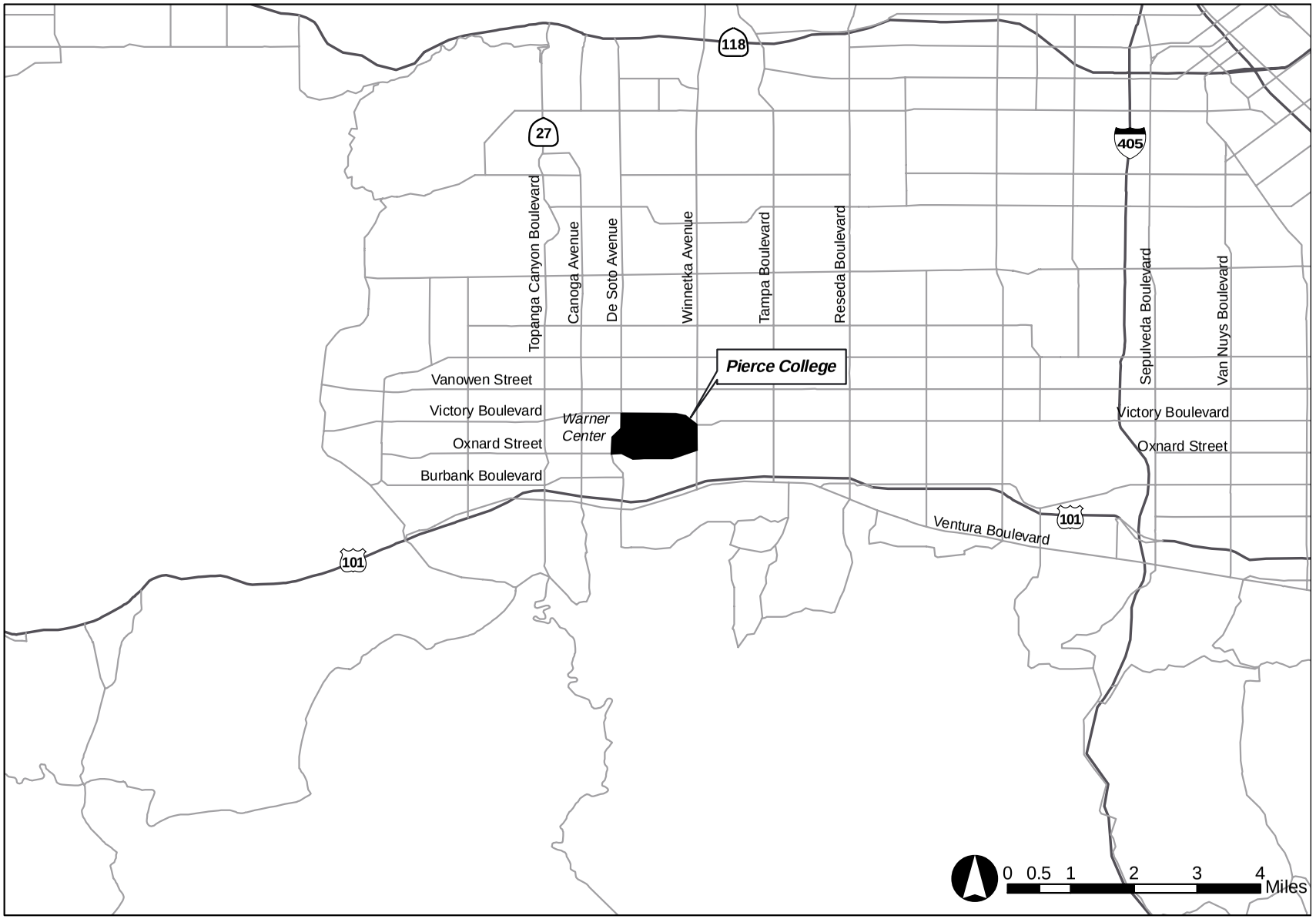
The impacts in the following areas would remain significant after implementation of proposed mitigation measures: visual resources, air quality, historical resources, potential archaeological

resources (if any Native American remains are present and disturbed), and transportation/traffic (if agencies with jurisdiction over the affected intersections determine, upon further review, that the mitigation measures at an affected intersection are infeasible, the impact would be significant and unavoidable).

As required by CEQA, a public review period for the Draft EIR has been established, which will begin July 25, 2002 and end September 10, 2002. Comments on the adequacy of the Draft EIR and merits of the project must be submitted in writing to the Los Angeles Community College District by the termination of the comment period on September 10. Comments may also be submitted at two public workshops that will be held at the Pierce College Cafeteria on August 1 and August 27 (6 p.m. to 8 p.m.).

Comments on environmental issues received during the public review period and responses to those comments will be included in a Final EIR. It is anticipated that the District Board of Trustees will consider approval of the Master Plan and certification of the Final EIR in December of 2002.

Figure 1: Project Vicinity Map



Sources: Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc., 2001; Myra L. Frank & Associates, Inc., 2002.