California Department of Transportation

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September 8, 2025

1-HUM-101-86.498
CPH Foster Campus Connect
SCH: 2025080375

Mrs. Deidre Clem
Project & Space Analyst
California State Polytechnic University at Humboldt
1 Harpst Street
Arcata, CA 95521

Dear Mrs. Clem:

Thank you for giving Caltrans the opportunity to review and comment on a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) by The California State Polytechnic University at Humboldt (Cal Poly Humboldt) to develop and operate a parking lot and shuttle station (the project) at 2000 Foster Avenue (Assessor's Parcel Number 505-161-011). The project site is owned by the Board of Trustees of the California State University (CSU). The project would be developed in a single phase and would result in paving of the project site to support long-term student parking, improved access to the project site, provision of construction of a shuttle stops within the parking lot and bus stop at the intersection of 17th and Q Street. In addition, the project will modify the Humboldt State University 2004 Master Plan (Campus Master Plan) by removing the approved Parking Structure P from the main campus.

Cal Poly Humboldt's plans for the Foster Avenue parcel are described in greater detail in Cal Poly Humboldt's comprehensive 2025 Campus Physical Plan. As such, the following comments on the MND for the proposed Foster Campus Connect project are made in context of Cal Poly Humboldt's plans for the project site found in the 2025 Campus Physical Plan.

Initial comments

In summary, the Cal Poly Humboldt Campus Connect project presents an opportunity for the University to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), both to and from the main campus, particularly if the university works in coordination with Caltrans and the local transit operator, Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA). A coordinated approach to reduce VMT would be most welcome, the Cal Poly Humboldt main campus is the single the largest generator of VMT of any site within Caltrans District 1.

1. The MND for the Foster Campus Connect project proposes 212 parking spaces. However, page 153 of the 2025 Campus Physical Plan, under section "P Future Surface Parking", states that this parking lot will provide "nearly 1,000 parking spaces in a paved

parking lot on the eastern side of the site". Cal Poly Humboldt is requested to clarify if the proposed number of parking spaces will be 212 spaces (per the MND) or up to 1,000 spaces (per the 2025 Campus Physical Plan), or if the MND only describes a phase of development. Looking at the MND for the Foster Campus Connect project and the 2025 Campus Physical Plan, it appears the university is proposing to construct a paved parking lot adjacent to Foster Avenue, and then in less than 10 years to construct apartments on top of the paved parking lot, with new paved parking to be built further north and west on the Foster parcel, along with multiple athletic fields and a sports complex building.
a) It is unclear how the Foster Campus Connect project relates to the 2025 Campus Master Plan. Is the Campus Connect parking lot temporary, to be replaced with future site improvements or if it is a phase of the larger improvement, to be incorporated into the future design plans. If the parking will remain in the later phase, we recommend electric car charging stations as part of the parking lot.
b) We assume one goal of the project is to reduce VMT and passenger vehicle trips. Can the MND provide a description of the project's VMT goals and methodology?
c) We also request more information about the proposed transit for the project, as more specific site plan details of transit facilities, transfers, passenger facilities, and shuttles would help HTA to optimize operations.

Advisory comments
1. The MND does not describe how the project coordinates with the local transit provider, Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA). Limited information is found on page 175 of the 2025 Campus Physical Plan, where it references Regional Express Shuttles routes to Cal Poly Humboldt. Caltrans provides funding and strategic assistance to transit operators within District 1, and strong coordination between Cal Poly Humboldt, Caltrans D1 and HTA will increase the likelihood of mode shift to transit.
a. We request that the MND provide information and discussion about existing public transit, routes, service, transfers for the project. HTA has bus stops near the project at Alliance Rd & Foster Ave (AMRTAS?, stop 3040), and those stops and facilities at or near the main campus could be better identified, mapped and described to provide public transit context and connectivity for the project.
b. We request that the MND clarify how the Foster Campus Connect project will connect with public transit locations where Cal Poly Humboldt staff and students commute to the Foster Campus Connect site and the main campus, such as from elsewhere in Arcata, from Eureka, McKinleyville, Trinidad, Blue Lake, etc.

In conclusion, Caltrans welcomes the Cal Poly Humboldt Campus Connect project and the linked 2025 Campus Physical Plan, as they present opportunities to reduce VMT generated by Cal Poly Humboldt, the largest generator of VMT within Caltrans District 1.

Thank you for including Caltrans in the County's review process for projects. Please contact me with questions or for further assistance with the comments provided at (707) 497-7742 or by email: <daniel.gjerde@dot.ca.gov>.

Sincerely,

Daniel Gjerde

DAN GJERDE
Local Development Review Coordinator
Caltrans District 1

e-copy: State Clearinghouse
Greg Pratt, Humboldt Transit Authority