SUMMARY

PURPOSE

This section summarizes the information and analyses presented in the main body of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). Section 15123 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines *requires an EIR to include a brief summary of the proposed project and its impacts in language as clear and simple as reasonably practical. The* Guidelines *also state that the length of this summary should normally not exceed 15 pages. In accordance with the CEQA* Guidelines *this summary presents information on the proposed RiverPark Project, the potential environmental effects of this project, and measures identified to mitigate these effects. A summary of the analysis of alternatives contained in the DEIR is also provided. In addition, this summary addresses areas of controversy associated with the proposed project, including issues raised by public agencies and the public, known to the City of Oxnard. Issues to be resolved, including the choice among alternatives and measures to mitigate the environmental effects of the project, are discussed.*

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

The proposed RiverPark Specific Plan would allow the development of a new mixed-use community containing open space, residential, commercial, and public facilities uses within the 701-acre Specific Plan Area. The project site is located immediately north of the Ventura Freeway (U.S. 101) between the Santa Clara River and Vineyard Avenue (State Route 232) in Oxnard. The project site is located within the Local Agency formation Commission (LAFCO) Sphere of Influence line for the City of Oxnard and within the 20-year City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB) established by the City's 2020 *General Plan*. The southern 269 acres, presently located within the City of Oxnard, is referred to as RiverPark Area 'A' in this EIR. This portion of the site is located within the existing Historic Enhancement and Revitalization of Oxnard (HERO) Redevelopment Project area. The majority of RiverPark Area 'A' is also located in an existing specific plan area. The Oxnard Town Center Specific Plan, adopted in 1986 by the City of Oxnard, currently allows development of up to 4.4 million square feet of commercial space on this portion of the site. Two office buildings, streets and related infrastructure have been developed in this part of the site in conformance with this existing Specific Plan. The remainder of RiverPark Area 'A' consists of agricultural land, vacant land and the County of Ventura El Rio Maintenance Yard. This yard includes a fire station and various County offices and facilities.

The northern 432 acres of the project site is currently located outside of the City of Oxnard in an unincorporated area and is under the jurisdiction of the County of Ventura. This portion of the site, referred to as RiverPark Area 'B' in this EIR, contains an existing sand and gravel mine and two Ventura County Flood Control District retention basins. While mining on this portion of the site ended in the 1990s, materials processing still occurs on the mine site. Active plant facilities include two ready-mix concrete batch plants, an asphalt plant, and a materials recycling plant. The mine site contains four mining pits up to 100 feet in depth. Because the mine pits were excavated below the current average groundwater elevation in the area, the water table is exposed most of the time in one or more of the mine pits. Water levels in the pits were between 40 and 50 feet above mean sea level (msl) in October / November 2000. The County of Ventura has approved a reclamation plan for this mine site that requires the existing pits to be partially filled. The remainder of RiverPark Area 'B' consists of two existing retention basins, built by the Ventura County Flood Control District to accept runoff from agricultural areas to the east of Vineyard Avenue.

The RiverPark Specific Plan would permit the development of an integrated mixed-use community consisting of open space, residential, commercial, and public facilities uses. The community design of RiverPark follows the design principles of the 'New Urbanism' and 'Smart Growth' movements, which emphasize the importance of mixed land uses, communities scaled for pedestrian movement, limiting automobile usage and the importance of physical design in creating communities that people want to live, work, and shop in. The RiverPark community would be made up of four basic land uses: (1) the commercial area proposed within the southern portion of RiverPark Area 'A'; (2) the residential neighborhoods proposed to the north and east of the commercial areas; (3) the open space area proposed in the northern portion of the Specific Plan Area; and (4) public facilities. These land use areas would be linked and unified by a landscaped pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation system.

Approximately 38 percent (266 acres) of the 701-acre Specific Plan Area would remain in open space uses, 35 percent (244 acres) would contain residential uses, 21 percent (147 acres) would contain commercial uses, and 6 percent (44 acres) would contain public facilities. The RiverPark Specific Plan would allow the construction of up to 2,805 residential units and 2.485 million square feet of commercial development. The RiverPark Specific Plan would create 13 Planning Districts to regulate the location and configuration of the planned land uses. Each Planning District would have a specific range of permitted and specially-permitted land uses, densities, parking requirements, and other development controls.

The RiverPark Specific Plan includes an Affordable Housing Program requiring 15 percent of the total number of housing units built under the Specific Plan to be affordable to low- and very low-income

households. The Specific Plan also identifies sites for two new elementary and one new intermediate school, new City of Oxnard and County of Ventura Fire Stations, neighborhood parks and community open space. The existing mine pits would be reclaimed and remain as open space. The proposed Specific Plan designates the reclaimed mine pits for use as water storage and recharge basins and allows the pits to be used by the United Water Conservation District (UWCD) as water storage and recharge basins at some future date. UWCD has expressed interest in using the existing mine pits within the Specific Plan Area for the storage of water diverted from the Santa Clara River at the Freeman Diversion structure. Water stored in the pits would be allowed to infiltrate in the basins to recharge the aquifer or be transferred to other UWCD facilities for recharge or delivery to customers for use.

The proposed RiverPark Specific Plan includes master plans for grading, circulation, drainage and stormwater quality treatment, water, sewer, electricity and natural gas service. Grading would be balanced within the Specific Plan Area, with no import or export of earth materials required. Stormwater flows generated within the RiverPark Specific Plan Area and those generated from off-site areas that drain to the Specific Plan Area will be treated by passing through a system of water quality basins and/or dry grassy swales before being discharged to the Santa Clara River through existing drain outlets, or to the mine pits, depending upon the magnitude of the rainfall event and location of the individual drainage area.

The first occupancy of residences or commercial buildings within the Specific Plan Area would be in 2003. It is anticipated that the community would take between 12 and 15 years to be fully built, depending on economic conditions. For purposes of analysis in this EIR, it is assumed that the Specific Plan Area would be fully developed by the year 2020. The overall phasing schedule established in the Specific Plan has been coordinated with the schedule for the State Route 101 and Santa Clara River Bridge Improvement Project, which calls for the four northbound lanes of the Ventura Freeway, including the new replacement bridge over the Santa Clara River, to be completed in the second quarter of 2003, and the new Oxnard Boulevard Interchange with the freeway completed in the third quarter of 2003.

In addition to the Specific Plan, several related actions are proposed including approval of a new Reclamation Plan for the existing sand and gravel mine; a general plan amendment; zone change and pre-zone actions; a change to the text of the City's zoning code; a tentative tract map; a development agreement; an amendment to an existing owner participation agreement; and annexation of RiverPark Area 'B' to the City of Oxnard.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND MITIGATION SUMMARY

A summary of the impacts of the proposed project is presented below. This summary also discusses the measures proposed to mitigate the impact of the project and identifies the level of impact anticipated after these measures are implemented.

Land Use Planning, Programs & Policies

The consistency of the proposed RiverPark Specific Plan project with applicable land use plans and policies and the compatibility of the proposed development with surrounding land uses was analyzed. The consistency of the project with the City's 2020 *General Plan*, the HERO Redevelopment Plan, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) *Regional Comprehensive Plan & Guide* and LAFCO policies was assessed. Annexation of RiverPark Area 'B' to the City and development of the entire Specific Plan Area with the proposed uses would be consistent with the City's land use plans and policies. Annexation of RiverPark Area 'B', which is located within the LAFCO Sphere of Influence line for the City, would also be consistent with LAFCO policies. The RiverPark Project is consistent with the SCAG *Regional Comprehensive Plan & Guide* as the amount of growth allowed by the Specific Plan would be consistent with adopted regional growth forecasts, and the characteristics of the project are consistent with relevant objectives of this regional plan. In addition, the RiverPark Specific Plan defines a pattern of land uses that would be consistent with the residential, agricultural and open space uses around the Specific Plan Area. No significant impacts related to inconsistencies with applicable land uses plans and policies have been identified.

Aesthetics

Analysis is provided on the significance of changes to the visual character of the area that would result from implementation of the RiverPark Project. The Community Design Element of the City of Oxnard *General Plan* identifies scenic resources within the City. Roadways that provide views of the scenic resources and agricultural lands within and around the City are designated as image corridors. The Ventura Freeway is designated as Regional Image Corridor, and Vineyard Avenue is a City Image Corridor. In addition, the intersection of the Ventura Freeway and Vineyard Avenue is designated as a Regional Gateway. Although Oxnard Boulevard, which is proposed to be extended into the Specific Plan Area, is also identified as a City Image Corridor, views between the project site and Oxnard Boulevard are currently obstructed by the Ventura Freeway. As viewed from surrounding roadways and uses, the Specific Plan Area currently has an open space visual character due to the small number of existing structures.

While the visual character of the Specific Plan Area will change as a result of the development allowed by the proposed RiverPark Specific Plan, this change will not result in a significant impact on the visual character of the area. The allowed development will not obstruct long range views of the mountains and hills in the Los Padres National Forest to the north from the Ventura Freeway or Vineyard Avenue. The height and character of the residential and commercial development proposed will be consistent with existing development in the area. RiverPark Area 'B' will continue to have an open space character as the existing mine pits will be preserved, a native woodland habitat will be established along the western edge of the Specific Plan Area, and no buildings will be located near Vineyard Avenue.

The Specific Plan would allow the development of a ballpark facility in RiverPark Area 'A' subject to the issuance of a Special Use Permit by the City. This facility would be lighted and could potentially impact residential uses allowed by the Specific Plan. This potential impact can be avoided through proper lighting design. No unavoidable significant impacts to the visual character of the area would result from the RiverPark Project.

Earth Resources

This section of the DEIR addresses potential impacts related to the soils conditions on the site and the geology of the area. The Specific Plan Area contains a variety of topographic and soils conditions as a result of the historic mining and agricultural activities. The mine site in RiverPark Area 'B' contains substantial areas of artificial fill which are potentially unstable. Significant impacts related to the potential instability of the slopes of the existing mine pits have been identified. Areas adjacent to the existing and proposed pit slopes may be impacted by: (1) gross instability of the pit slopes under static or seismic conditions, and/or (2) seismically induced lateral movements. Approximately 10 million cubic yards of earth materials will be graded over the entire 701-acre site. A balanced grading program involving excavation and replacement of the 10 million cubic yards of material is planned. The majority of this grading would consist of the excavation and/or replacement of earth materials in RiverPark Area 'B' to improve the structural characteristics of the soils in the mine site stockpile and plant areas and to stabilize the slopes of the existing mining pits. A comprehensive program of 44 specific measures is proposed to mitigate all identified geotechnical impacts to a level that is less than significant.

The Specific Plan Area is located in an area designated by the State Mining and Geology Board as containing sand and gravel resources of regional significance. While the available resources in the RiverPark Area 'B' have been mined, aggregate resources remain in RiverPark Area 'A'. Mining of

these resources is not considered economically feasible as a relatively small amount of low quality aggregate is available under the existing agricultural land. This portion of the Specific Plan Area has also been designated for urban development since 1986. Development of the area is consistent with the mineral resource policies of the City's 2020 *General Plan*. Nonetheless, the loss of access to the approximate 2.2 million tons of mineral resources underlying the agricultural soils in RiverPark Area 'A' is considered an unavoidable significant impact of the RiverPark Project.

Biological Resources

The Specific Plan Area contains limited natural habitat as a result of the long-term disturbance of the site for agricultural and mining activities. RiverPark Area 'A' supports no native plant communities. Vegetation within this area is limited to agricultural crops, landscaping associated with existing development, and non-native weedy species in disturbed areas. RiverPark Area 'B' includes scattered patches of disturbed open space, two rows of trees, a small amount of active agricultural land and the El Rio Retention Basins No. 1 and 2. The mine site includes mine pits containing exposed groundwater, currently providing resting and limited foraging area for a number of waterfowl and other water-associated bird species. No special status plant or wildlife species were identified within the Specific Plan Area during biological surveys. Though not included within the Specific Plan Area, the predominant biological feature in the vicinity is the Santa Clara River. Several fish and wildlife species associated with the river are considered to be of special status, including southern steelhead, arroyo chub, and tidewater gobi, which have adapted to the seasonal and daily changing conditions of the river.

The proposed mine reclamation plan and specific plan include proposals to plant native vegetation on the reconstructed slopes of the mine pits and on the western edge of RiverPark Area 'B' along the Santa Clara River levee. No significant impacts to native plant communities would result. Native habitat values on the site would be enhanced as a result of the project.

Construction activities could impact native bird species nesting on the site. There is also a potential for significant indirect impacts to the natural habitat in the Santa Clara River from new lighting sources within the Specific Plan Area and the use of invasive non-native plant species in landscaping. Measures are identified to mitigate these impacts to a level that is less than significant. The RiverPark Specific Plan includes a water quality treatment system designed to treat runoff from the new land uses proposed within the Specific Plan Area and from off-site areas that presently drain to the Specific Plan Area. The water quality treatment system proposed will be sufficient to trap and remove pollutants and urban sediments to the degree necessary to ensure high water quality levels.

Therefore, impacts to biological resources in the Santa Clara River as a result of stormwater runoff into the River are not significant. No unavoidable significant impacts to biological resources would result from the RiverPark Project.

Water Resources

An extensive analysis was conducted on the potential impacts to groundwater and surface water quality, and on groundwater quantity. This analysis determined that the RiverPark Project would result in a beneficial impact on groundwater quantity. Over the 20-year period analyzed, the existing conditions on the site resulted in a net loss of 573 acre feet of groundwater per year because of evaporation from the existing mine pits and the consumption of groundwater pumped from on-site wells. The RiverPark Project will result in a net gain to the groundwater system of approximately 8,000 acre-feet per year as a result of the surface water diversions proposed by UWCD and the elimination of groundwater pumping for agricultural and industrial supply.

Construction of the project will require dewatering in the stockpile area on the existing mine site. Depending on the volume of groundwater pumped and the discharge location, this dewatering operation could result in significant impacts on groundwater quantity and quality. A mitigation measure recommending the discharge of this water to the nearby UWCD El Rio Spreading Grounds is proposed to mitigate this impact.

The RiverPark Project would change the amount, quality and direction of stormwater drainage flows in the Specific Plan Area. Stormwater flows generated within the RiverPark Specific Plan Area and those generated from off-site areas that drain onto the Specific Plan Area will be conveyed and treated by a system of water quality detention basins and/or Best Management Practice devices (such as dry swales, centrifugal separators, etc.). These flows are then discharged to the Santa Clara River through existing drain outlets, or to the mine pits, depending upon the magnitude of the rainfall event and location of the individual drainage area. Runoff from off-site industrial and agricultural areas that presently drain to RiverPark Area 'B' and the western portion of the residential area proposed in RiverPark Area 'B' would drain to three water quality treatment basins. These water quality detention basins have the capacity to hold, treat and convey runoff from a 10-year storm event to the Santa Clara River. The excess runoff generated from storms larger than a 10-year event will overflow via engineered spillways into the existing mine pits.

Changes in minerals, nutrients, metals, pesticides, hydrocarbon and microbial contaminants in runoff discharged to the Santa Clara River and the mine pits were analyzed. Conservative thresholds of

significance were selected for determining impacts. This analysis determined that the potential use of the pits by UWCD for diverted surface water flows from the Santa Clara River would not have a significant impact on groundwater quality.

The concentrations of fecal coliform, iron, manganese, and nickel in runoff would be higher than the thresholds of significance used in this analysis. Fecal coliform concentrations discharged to the Santa Clara River would exceed the threshold selected for this numerical constituent, but would be less than the concentration in existing runoff. The estimated concentration also falls within the observed maximum ambient concentration in the river. Concentrations of iron, manganese and nickel in runoff discharged to the Water Storage/Recharge Basins from storms larger than a 10-year event are calculated to remain above the thresholds of significance being used for these constituents in the water quality analysis. Given the low frequency of these large storm events, this impact would not occur often. Based on the historical rainfall data from 1979 to 1999, no runoff would have reached pits during this 20-year period if the proposed stormwater treatment system had been in place. Because runoff from storms with a frequency less than a 10-year event would not enter the pits, overall mass loading of these and other pollutant constituents would be reduced. Iron concentration in discharges to the Water Storage/Recharge Basins would be greater than ambient groundwater concentrations, but would be lower than the Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels (SMCL) set by the State Department of Health Services for drinking water and the existing discharge concentration. Manganese concentration in discharges to the Water Storage/Recharge Basins would be greater than ambient groundwater concentrations, but would be less than the existing discharge concentration and matches the SMCL. Nickel concentration in discharges to the Water Storage/Recharge Basins would be greater than ambient groundwater concentrations, but would be lower than the Primary Maximum Contaminant Levels set by the State Department of Health Services for drinking water.

Reduction of the concentrations of these constituents to a level that is lower than the numeric thresholds of significance used in the water quality analysis is not feasible because of the significant capital, operational and stand-by costs associated with the treatment systems examined as potential mitigation measures and because of the potential low reliability of treatment systems that would operate infrequently. The identified impacts to surface and groundwater quality would be an unavoidable significant impact of the RiverPark Project.

Agricultural Resources

Approximately 155 acres of agricultural land is located in RiverPark Area 'A'. In addition to this agricultural land in RiverPark Area 'A', there is a small amount of agricultural land in RiverPark Area

'B'. There is a small strip of agricultural land located between Vineyard Avenue and El Rio Retention Basin No. 2. In addition, the County of Ventura currently leases the bottom of El Rio Retention Basin No. 2 for agricultural use. When this land currently used for agricultural purposes in RiverPark Area 'B' is considered, a total of 209 acres of agricultural land is located within the Specific Plan Area. All of the agricultural land within the Specific Plan Area is currently under cultivation with strawberries. The 155 acres of agricultural land in RiverPark Area 'A' is mapped as Prime Farmland on the Important Farmlands Map for Ventura County prepared by the State Department of Conservation. The property currently located in RiverPark Area 'B' is not currently identified as farmland on the Important Farmlands Map. The portion of the Specific Plan Area containing the 155 acres of Prime Farmland has been designated for urban uses since 1986 and the Project is consistent with the policies of the Oxnard 2020 *General Plan* addressing the preservation of agricultural land. The loss of agricultural land within the RiverPark Specific Plan Area would be an unavoidable significant impact resulting from the project.

Transportation & Circulation

Analysis of the traffic impacts of the project was conducted according to the guidelines set forth in the City of Oxnard's Traffic Impact Study Standards. Under the City's technical direction, traffic impacts on the study area transportation system were assessed for the proposed RiverPark Project. Existing and future traffic conditions were assessed in accordance with procedures specified by the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) and SCAG in the Ventura County *Congestion Management Plan* (CMP). The analysis incorporated a detailed evaluation of traffic conditions at 33 intersections, consisting of 25 intersections in Oxnard and immediately surrounding areas and 8 intersections in the City of Ventura. Five segments of the state highway network were also evaluated. These study locations include those roadway facilities most likely to be directly impacted by the traffic generated by the RiverPark Project.

The uses allowed by the proposed RiverPark Specific Plan would generate approximately 94,500 daily trips, of which 9,860 would occur in the evening peak traffic period. Of the total daily trips, 78,840 would leave the Specific Plan Area. The remainder of the daily trips would be trips between the allowed residential, commercial and school uses contained within the Specific Plan Area. As discussed in **Section 4.7, Transportation and Circulation**, these additional trips would significantly impact 8 of the 33 intersections studied. All of these impacts can be mitigated with identified roadway improvements.

Traffic conditions on the Ventura Freeway were also forecast for future year 2020. All freeway segments analyzed are projected to operate at level of service (LOS) D and better with the exception of the Ventura Freeway south of Central Avenue, where traffic conditions are projected at LOS F in the northbound direction during the morning peak hour and in the southbound during the evening peak hour with all projected cumulative growth. Traffic from the proposed project would contribute to this cumulative impact. As this level of service exceeds the minimum acceptable Level of Service E standard set by the Ventura County CMP, this cumulative impact is significant. Improvements necessary to achieve an acceptable level of service on the Ventura Freeway will be identified and addressed through the Ventura County CMP program. No unavoidable significant traffic impacts would result from the RiverPark Project.

Air Quality

The analysis for potential air quality impacts resulting from the RiverPark Project was completed in accordance with the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) *Guidelines for the Preparation of Air Quality Analyses.* The APCD has established criteria for determining significant air quality impacts from a project. The APCD does not consider normal construction-related impacts to be significant. Standard mitigation measures will be applied to the project to minimize any adverse effect from construction to the maximum extent possible.

After the proposed homes are built and occupied, emissions would be generated by both stationary and mobile sources on a regular, day-to-day basis. Based on the threshold of significance recommended by the APCD, a project is considered to have a significant impact on air quality if it would generate over 25 pounds per day of either Reactive Organic Compounds (ROC) or Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_X). Emission modeling completed for the proposed project, assuming full build-out by the year 2020, shows that emissions of NO_X and ROC would exceed this threshold by approximately 173 and 64 pounds per day, respectively. This impact is considered significant. Certain design features, consistent with the *APCD Guidelines*, have been incorporated into the RiverPark Specific Plan. The *APCD Guidelines* state that addressing site design and land use issues at the conceptual stage of development maximizes opportunities to incorporate measures to reduce potential air quality impacts. Land use design features suggested in the *APCD Guidelines* which have been incorporated into the RiverPark Project include:

- Encourage the development of higher density housing and employment centers near public transit corridors;
- Encourage compact development featuring a mix of uses that locates residences near jobs and services;

- Provide services, such as food services, banks, post offices, and other personal services, within office parks and other large developments;
- Encourage infill development;
- Ensure that the design of streets, sidewalks, and bike paths within a development encourage walking and biking; and
- Provide landscaping to reduce energy demand for cooling.

The incorporation of a number of other standard mitigation measures recommended by the APCD would reduce daily emissions of these pollutants to the extent feasible, not to the 25 pounds per day significance threshold. The remaining impacts can be mitigated by the contribution of funds to an off-site Transportation Demand Management fund administered by the City of Oxnard. Contribution of funds would be required for each individual building project within the Specific Plan Area and would fund trip reduction measures to mitigate these impacts to a level considered less than significant. Modeling was also completed to determine if traffic generated by the project would result in significant increases in carbon monoxide levels at any intersections that will be impacted by the project. No significant carbon monoxide impacts will occur. Finally, there would be no significant risk to the health of residents of the homes proposed for this site from air emissions generated by facilities in the immediate vicinity, nor to objectionable odors generated from or experienced on the Specific Plan Area. No unavoidable significant air quality impacts would result from the RiverPark Project.

Noise

Analysis of potential noise impacts resulting from construction activities, roadway noise and stationary sources to both on- and off-site land uses has been conducted. Temporary noise impacts from equipment used during site development and individual building projects would result in impacts that are significant to both on- and off-site residential uses. However, with the inclusion of the recommended mitigation measures, these impacts would be reduced to less than significant. Future roadway noise levels were modeled based on the projected traffic volumes in the project traffic study. The increase in roadway noise along roadways, both on and off site, generated by project traffic would not be significant.

The Specific Plan would allow the development of a ballpark facility in RiverPark Area 'A' subject to the issuance of a Special Use Permit by the City. Activities at this facility, such as concerts, could generate levels of noise that would impact residential uses allowed by the Specific Plan. Proper siting and design of this facility can mitigate this potential impact. No unavoidable significant noise impacts would result from the RiverPark Project.

Public Services

Impact of the proposed RiverPark Specific Plan on schools, fire and police service, parks and recreation facilities, solid waste disposal and library services was assessed. The residential uses proposed would generate approximately 1,654 K-6 and 337 high school students. As schools in both the Rio Elementary and Oxnard Union High School District are operating at capacity, the impact of these new students would be significant. The proposed Specific Plan provides two school sites for the Rio Elementary School District to develop two elementary and one intermediate school to ensure adequate facilities are provided. School impact fees will also be paid to both school districts to mitigate the impact of these new students. No significant impact on fire services will result as the Specific Plan includes a site for new City and County fire stations. The addition of RiverPark Area 'B' to the City will have a significant impact on police services due to the amount of the area being added to the existing patrol beat in this part of the City. Establishment of a storefront police station in the commercial portion of the project is proposed to mitigate this impact. The Specific Plan also provides sufficient neighborhood and community parkland to meet the City's planning standards for the estimated new resident population of approximately 7,220. The City's existing diversion and recycling programs for solid waste result in impacts associated with solid waste generation not being significant. Impacts on the City's library services will also not be significant given that the Specific Plan permits the development of a storefront library facility to serve the residents in the Specific Plan Area, as well as residents throughout the City. No unavoidable significant impacts to public services would result from the RiverPark Project.

Public Utilities

An analysis of the impacts of the project on drainage, water, sewer, and energy service systems was conducted. The Specific Plan includes master plans for drainage and stormwater treatment, sewer, water, electrical and natural gas service. The City also recently completed updates of the city-wide drainage, wastewater collection and treatment, and water master plans as well as the City's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). These city-wide master plans all address the RiverPark Project.

The storm drain master plan included in the proposed RiverPark Specific Plan reflects detailed drainage studies completed to support the planning of the Specific Plan Area. The RiverPark Specific Plan Drainage Master Plan is designed to meet and exceed the Ventura County and City of Oxnard drainage criteria. In addition, the proposed drainage system was designed to provide water quality treatment of all storm flows from on- and off-site tributary areas. As the proposed drainage system has adequate capacity for on- and off-site runoff, no significant impacts to drainage conditions in the area

will result from the RiverPark Project. A review of the flood protection provided by the Santa Clara River levee indicates the site is adequately protected.

The proposed water transmission system has been designed to conform to all City of Oxnard standards. Analysis completed shows that the proposed water distribution system would support the maximum day demand of all uses permitted by the proposed Specific Plan at the City's flow and pressure requirements. Based on the water demand factors used in the UWMP, the proposed uses would use 1,835 acre-feet of water annually. The Specific Plan Area contains existing wells with agricultural and industrial groundwater extraction allocations from the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency. These allocations, totaling 1,580 acre-feet annually, will be transferred to the City, largely offsetting the increased demand associated with the project. The UWMP identifies additional water sources to meet projected demands through the year 2020. The City plans to meet the majority of this new demand with additional local water resources brought about by conservation and new water supply programs. No significant impacts to the City's water supply or distribution network will result from the project. UWCD has expressed interest in using the existing mine pits within the Specific Plan Area, after implementation of the proposed reclamation plan, for the storage of water diverted from the Santa Clara River at the Freeman Diversion structure. Water stored in the pits would be allowed to infiltrate or be transferred to other UWCD facilities for recharge. This allowed use would increase the reliability of local groundwater resources and would be a beneficial impact of the project.

The Specific Plan Sewer Master Plan is consistent with the City Wastewater Collection System Master Plan. The City's master plan identifies improvements needed to serve the proposed RiverPark Project and other areas tributary to the Central Trunk Sewer. The City's treatment plant has also been planned to serve projected growth throughout the City. No significant impacts will result to the City's collection, conveyance or treatment system.

The demand for electricity and natural gas supplies and service can be accommodated within the long-term source and distribution planning of the utilities serving the area, and no significant impacts will result from the RiverPark Project. No unavoidable significant impacts to public utilities would result from the RiverPark Project.

Cultural Resources

Archeological and historic resource surveys of the Specific Plan Area were completed. The archeological survey included a records search and a field survey. RiverPark Area 'A' was previously surveyed as part of the environmental review of the Oxnard Town Center Specific Plan project. No sites

of any kind had been previously recorded within the study area or adjacent properties, and no new sites were discovered during the Phase I survey. A low density, mixed scatter of historical debris, possibly dating between 1879 and 1884, was found southeast of Myrtle Street and El Rio Drive. This is currently an open lot which is in a disturbed state as a result of the fairly recent demolition of structures that were present on this parcel. These surface materials may be an indication of a buried historical deposit at this location. Development of the proposed project would result in grading and earthwork at this location that may impact a potential historical deposit. This is considered a potential significant impact on archaeological resources.

All existing structures within the Specific Plan Area were reviewed for possible historical significance. The historic resource study identified 33 existing buildings and structures on the project site that would be demolished. Eighteen of these buildings, including sixteen buildings in the Ventura County El Rio Maintenance Yard, and an existing home and a commercial showroom building on El Rio Drive, are not eligible as historic resources under CEQA because they are not 50 or more years of age. Three other residential structures and the buildings on the mine site were surveyed and researched to determine whether any of these structures are historically significant. This research found that five of the existing buildings on the mine site, including an office building, garage, and three metal storage buildings are of sufficient age to be potential historic resources. In this case, these five buildings and structures are associated with an industry that has made a significant contribution to the physical development of Ventura County through the construction of roads, bases, airfields and buildings. While these existing structures are not eligible for listing on the national or state registers of historical resources, they may be eligible for listing as Ventura County Landmarks, a designation that has no integrity criteria. For this reason, these five structures are considered to be of local historical significance and demolition is considered to be a significant impact.

As the existing mine property derives some of its significance from the historic industrial style it represents, recordation should be regarded as an appropriate mitigation technique. Since the significance of the property is not in its architecture, design-based mitigation would not be appropriate. As the property derives its significance partially from its associations with historic themes, interpretative measures are warranted. Mitigation measures to document these structures and their associated history is proposed. Even with this mitigation, demolition of these five structures is considered an unavoidable significant impact of the project.

Hazards

A series of Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) reports have been prepared for the properties included in the proposed Specific Plan Area to determine the potential for impacts

related to the presence and use of hazardous materials by existing and historical uses within and around the Specific Plan Area. These risks are primarily associated with the potential for on-site hazards from abandoned oil wells, storage of materials categorized as hazardous under existing regulations, underground and above-ground storage tanks, and the operations of facilities historically located within the boundaries of the proposed Specific Plan Area.

Analysis of soils in the agricultural portions of the Specific Plan Area determined that no significant concentrations of herbicides or pesticides are present in the soils. These studies determined that the Specific Plan Area contains several abandoned oil wells that many need to be re-abandoned to current standards. In addition, the existing buildings on the site that would be demolished are of sufficient age to contain asbestos building materials and lead paint. Demolition of these structures in conformance with existing regulations would mitigate any potential impacts. No unavoidable significant impacts related to hazardous conditions within the Specific Plan Area would result from the RiverPark Project.

PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Analysis of a range of alternatives has been performed to provide information on ways to lessen or avoid the impacts of the proposed RiverPark Project. Eight alternatives are analyzed, including: the No Project/Existing Conditions Alternative; the No Project/Existing Approvals Alternative; a RiverPark 'A' Only Alternative; a Reduced Density Alternative; two alternative water quality treatment systems; an alternative that preserves the structures with local historic significance on the site; and Alternative Locations. Of these alternatives, the Reduced Density Alternative, which considers development of 75 percent of the proposed uses within the Specific Plan Area, is identified as the environmentally superior alternative. Financial analysis of this alternative indicates that the reduction in allowed development results in insufficient revenues to pay for the costs of the project, rendering this alternative infeasible.

ISSUES RAISED DURING ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The primary issue raised during the environmental review of this proposed project has been the impact of stormwater runoff on the groundwater exposed in the existing mine pits on the site. The City of Oxnard and the project applicant have consulted extensively with interested public agencies, including the County of Ventura, the United Water Conservation District and the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency to determine the most appropriate drainage and stormwater quality treatment system and the ultimate use and disposition of the pits. The City has also worked closely with the Rio Elementary School District on the planning for new elementary and intermediate schools in the project.