Chapter 3 Environmental Analysis

3.0 Introduction

This section presents potential environmental impacts of the PWIMP or Proposed Project. The scope of the analysis and key attributes of the analytical approach are presented below to assist readers in understanding the manner in which the impact analyses have been conducted in this EIR.

3.0.1 Scope of the Environmental Impact Analysis

Based on Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, this Program EIR addresses the following environmental resource topics in detail:

Subsection #	Subsection Title
3.1	Aesthetics/Visual Resources
3.2	Agricultural and Soil Resources
3.3	Air Quality
3.4	Biological Resources
3.5	Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases
3.6	Cultural, Paleontological, and Tribal Resources
3.7	Geology, Seismic, and Soils Hazards
3.8	Hazards and Hazardous Wastes
3.9	Hydrology, Water Quality, and Water Utilities
3.10	Land Use Planning
3.11	Mineral Resources
3.12	Noise
3.13	Traffic and Transportation

For each resource topic, the CEQA EIR describes the existing environmental setting and regulatory framework, evaluates potential project impacts, and recommends mitigation measures that could reduce or avoid potentially significant impact(s).

3.0.2 Environmental Resources Eliminated From Further Discussion

As discussed in Chapter 1, Introduction, the primary purpose of the PWIMP is to improve the City's existing water, recycled water, wastewater, and stormwater systems to accommodate existing and projected planned and City Council approved growth based on the City's current and approved 2030 General Plan. As such, the PWIMP, in and of itself, will not cause or affect population growth, housing, community, environmental justice, and/or the need for additional public services. Further, the PWIMP will not affect socioeconomics, minority populations, or employment within the City and/or Ventura County. Many of these categories are very similar and related to potentially accommodating planned and

approved growth by the City Council. Therefore, it would be repetitive to repeat them as individual chapters or discussions. Population and growth inducing effects are discussed in **Chapter 5, Growth Inducing Impacts** as required by CEQA. The following specific categories are thereby eliminated from further discussion for the following reasons/justifications:

Population. The PWIMP is anticipated to employ approximately 10-to-85 construction workers during any given day of the approximately 15-to-20-year construction period. Although there might be a slight increase in the population of the City during the construction phase of the project, it is anticipated that sufficient skilled labor could be provided locally or regionally, resulting in workers commuting to the project area on a daily or weekly basis. Due to the short-term and temporary nature of construction and use of local and regional skilled labor, the proposed project would not induce substantial growth, cause a concentration of population, or displace people. The operation of the new PWIMP facilities would employ less than 10 additional employees on a full-time basis. Given the relatively small number of new jobs and local and/or regional fulfillment of labor needs, project operation would not induce substantial growth, cause a new concentration of population, or displace people. As a result, the construction and operation of the PWIMP, in and of itself, would not significantly affect population and this topic is not discussed further.

Housing. With respect to housing, as the source of temporary skilled labor for the project being local or regional, substantial amounts of short-term housing would not be required for construction workers. Any short-term housing needs would be met by existing capacity of local hotel or motel rooms. Further, extensive housing would not be needed for the 10 additional full-time workers. Although the housing markets in both the City and Ventura County are tight, the short-term and permanent housing needs associated with the PWIMP would not result in a significant impact to existing housing resources. As a result, this topic is not discussed further.

Community. Construction of PWIMP facilities would primarily involve expansion of existing facilities or placement of new facilities within vacant parcels in industrial areas of the City. Pipeline/conveyance facilities are proposed within or immediately adjacent to existing road rights-of-way. Therefore, no disruption or division of an established community is anticipated and no impacts would occur. As a result, this topic is not discussed further.

Socioeconomics and Employment. The PWIMP is an approximately $1 Billion improvements project that would definitely benefit the City, portions of Ventura County, and/or the region. This would be a beneficial socioeconomic impact. The construction of the PWIMP is expected to result in a temporary increase in construction-related jobs. The PWIMP is anticipated to employ approximately 10-to-85 construction workers during any given day of the approximately 15-to-20-year construction period. Although there might be a slight increase in the population of the City during the construction phase of the project, it is anticipated that sufficient skilled labor could be provided locally or regionally, resulting in workers commuting to the project area on a daily or weekly basis. Due to the short-term and temporary nature of construction and use of local and regional skilled labor, the proposed project would not induce substantial growth, cause a concentration of population, or displace people. This is expected to be beneficial and would not be a significant adverse impact. The operation of the new PWIMP facilities would employ less than 10 additional employees on a full-time basis. Based on availability of the local work force, it is anticipated that sufficient skilled labor could be provided from the local or regional Oxnard/Ventura County area. Given the relatively small number of new jobs and local and/or regional fulfillment of labor needs, project operation would not induce substantial growth, cause a new

concentration of population, or displace people. Because the City is seeking to acquire private land to construct the proposed project, the loss of this private property from the tax rolls is likely to have a small but insignificant negative impact on property tax revenues. The construction jobs are likely to result in a slight but temporary increase in personal income as well as sales tax revenues. Thus, changes in income are not expected to be significant. As a result, this topic is not discussed further.

Environmental Justice. According to the data provided in the City's 2030 General Plan and as updated, the City has a greater percentage of disadvantaged, minority, and/or Hispanic populations than the County. However, the construction and operation of the PWIMP is located City-wide as well as portions of Ventura County and does not focus or discriminate against any one area, community, minority, and/or disadvantaged population. In fact, implementation of the PWIMP would help the entire population of the City and portions of Ventura County equally. As a result, this topic is not discussed further.

Public Services, Other Utilities, and Recreation. The construction and/or operation of the PWIMP would not increase the need for additional public services and other utilities within the City and portions of Ventura County in the PWIMP Area beyond those described in this Program EIR's Project Description. Specifically, the PWIMP involves improving the City's water, recycled water, wastewater and srormwater systems to accommodate planned and approved growth as described in the City's 2030 General Plan. As such, the PWIMP, in and of itself, will not require additional needs from the City or County, including but not limited to, the police, fire, social services, education, other utilities, parks, and/or recreation facilities. Construction activities could affect other existing utilities within the existing roadways or rights-of-ways such as gas, electrical, cable, and telecommunications lines or infrastructure, but these potential impacts are already addressed in **Section 3.9 Hydrology, Water Quality, and Water Utilities** and would be returned to service and existing conditions or better after construction. Also, there is a low percentage possibility that the PWIMP's new wells and/or storage tanks could be located on or near existing parks or recreational facilities. However, these kinds of impacts are already addressed in **Section 3.10 - Land Use Planning.** As a result, these are not repeated in individual chapter(s).

3.0.3 Definition of Baseline or Existing Conditions

The Existing Conditions subsections present the existing environmental setting of the region and study area in relation to each of the resource topics. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15125 (Environmental Setting), an EIR must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, to provide the "baseline physical conditions" against which project-related changes can be compared. Based on the CEQA Guidelines, the baseline condition is normally the physical condition that exists when the Notice of Preparation is published. The Notice of Preparation for the proposed project was published on July 27, 2016, establishing the baseline for this Program EIR as 2016. Throughout this Program EIR, 2016 data is used for the description of the environmental setting to the extent available. Where such information is not available, data from the City's 2030 General Plan and other appropriate data is used to be representative of baseline conditions.

3.0.4 Definition of Project Area and Study Area

The project area consists of areas within the City of Oxnard and portions of unincorporated Ventura County as were previously described in **Chapter 2, Project Description**, and are further described throughout this section. The extent of any additional study area beyond the project area itself varies among resource topics, depending on the extent of the area in which impacts could be expected. A study area for each environmental topic is defined beyond the project area, as necessary and warranted, in the

various subsections of this section. For purposes of this document, the PWIMP Project/Study Area is essentially the same as the City's General Plan Area as shown on Figure 3.0-1.

3.0.5 Programmatic Environmental Impact Analysis

As described in Chapter 2, Project Description, the PWIMP establishes how the City's water, recycled water, wastewater, and stormwater systems would be upgraded and expanded in the coming years to meet the City's anticipated demands through build-out of the City's 2030 General Plan. However, the design details, final options, and the timing of the project-level projects are not precisely known at this time and will likely change significantly. As such, the environmental impact analysis has been prepared at a programmatic level of detail as it addresses the full range of potential environmental effects associated with implementation of the PWIMP, but in some cases the analysis is general and more qualitative than quantitative. This approach is consistent with the State CEQA Guidelines provisions for a Program EIR, as described in Section 15168, which suggests that the level of detail is dictated by "ripeness"; detailed analysis should be reserved for issues that are ripe for consideration.

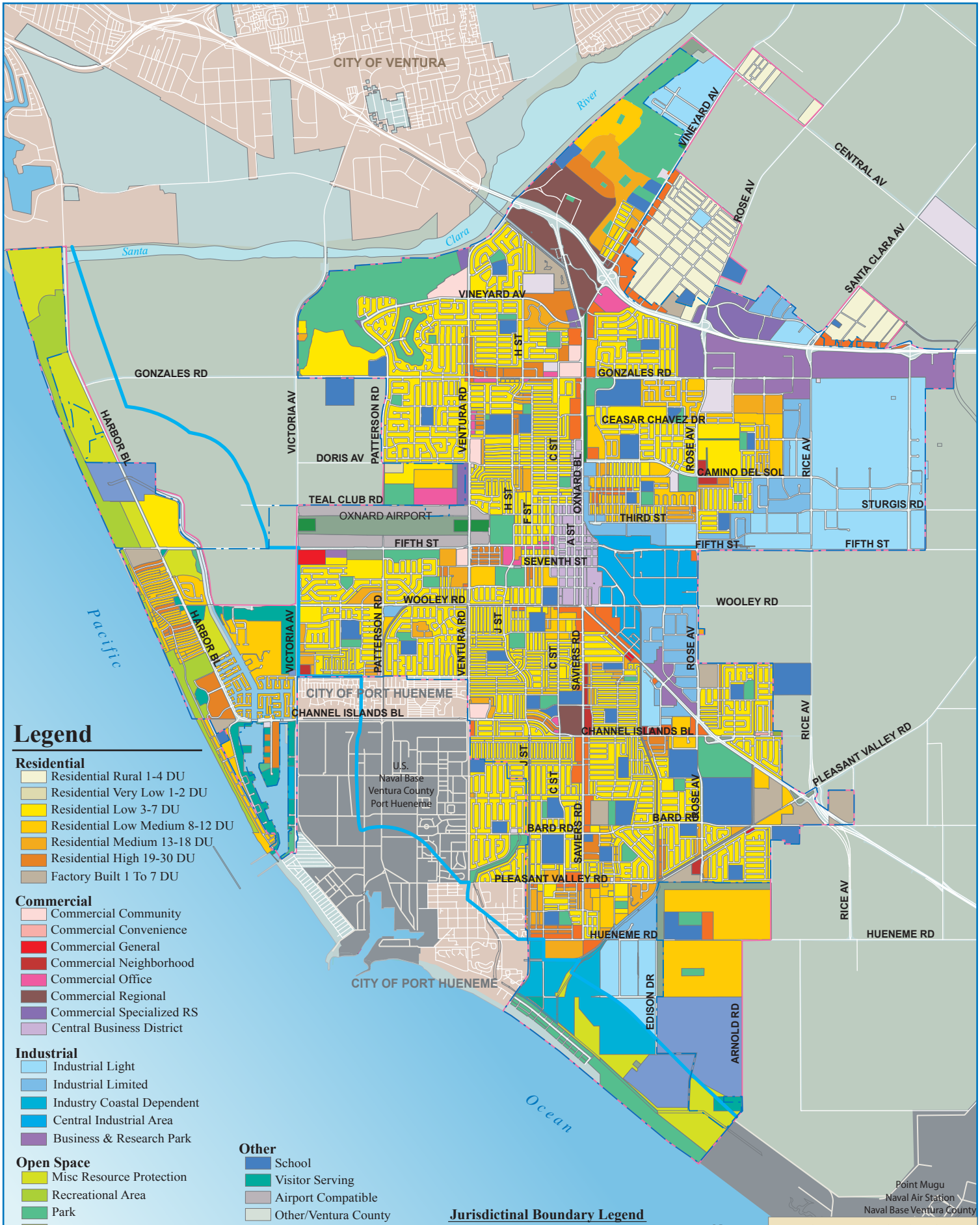
It is expected that each of the future project-level projects within the PWIMP will require further environmental and project-level analysis to be compliant with CEQA. These future project-level projects would tier off of this document for the full range of direct, indirect, cumulative, and growth inducing impacts. Depending on the type, location, timing, and potential environmental impacts of these future project-level projects, CEQA compliance can be achieved by a combination of individual project specific Addendums, Categorical Exemptions, Initial Study/Mitigated negative Declarations, and/or focused EIRs.

3.0.6 Impact Determinations

As required by CEQA, an EIR must identify and evaluate the significance of impacts caused by a proposed project. Evaluation of the significance of an impact involves a variety of factors, such as the applicable standards of significance, the use of standard analytical methodologies and modeling approaches, an assessment of the extent and characteristics of the project effect, consistency with conclusions reached for similar projects, and principles derived from CEQA case law. The standards of significance, analytical methodologies, and other aspects of the analyses are described in detail in each section. The impact significance determinations listed below were used in this analysis.

- **Significant Unavoidable (SU) –** This category applies to those impacts that have been determined to be significant or potentially significant and cannot be mitigated to less than significant. This determination is made when there is no mitigation available, or the available feasible mitigation measures would not reduce the impact to less than significant. A *Statement of Overriding Considerations* must be made by the City for any project approval that will involve significant impacts that cannot be mitigated to less than significant.

- **Less-than-Significant with Mitigation (LTSM) –** This category applies to those impacts that may be significant or potentially significant, but can be reduced to less than significant through either project modifications or feasible mitigation measures.
- **Less-than-Significant (LS) –** This category applies to effects of the project on the environment that could be adverse but are not significant or potentially significant, and therefore, do not require mitigation.



Legend

Residential
- Residential Rural 1-4 DU
- Residential Very Low 1-2 DU
- Residential Low 3-7 DU
- Residential Low Medium 8-12 DU
- Residential Medium 13-18 DU
- Residential High 19-30 DU
- Factory Built 1 To 7 DU

Commercial
- Commercial Community
- Commercial Convenience
- Commercial General
- Commercial Neighborhood
- Commercial Office
- Commercial Regional
- Commercial Specialized RS
- Central Business District

Industrial
- Industrial Light
- Industrial Limited
- Industry Coastal Dependent
- Central Industrial Area
- Business & Research Park

Open Space
- Misc Resource Protection
- Recreational Area
- Park
- Misc Ag/Planning Reserve
- Misc Open Space
- Open Space Buffer
- Misc Agriculture

Other
- School
- Visitor Serving
- Airport Compatible
- Other/Ventura County
- Military Base
- Public Utility/Energy Facility
- Public/Semi Public
- Easement

Jurisdictinal Boundary Legend
- Oxnard City Limits
- Oxnard Sphere of Influence
- Coastal Zone Boundary

N W E S

Figure 3.0-1
PWIMP and General Plan Map

Source: City of Oxnard GIS
Created By: City of Oxnard Planning & Environmental Services, 11-2005

0 1 2 3 4 Miles

- **No Impact (NI) –** This category refers to effects of the project on the environment that are not considered adverse.
- **Beneficial Impacts (B) –** CEQA does not require that beneficial impacts of a proposed project be identified and evaluated. However, this document identifies beneficial impacts if they are significant and address one or more of the identified project objectives, as identified in **Chapter 2, Project Description**.

3.0.7 Numbering Systems

Each of the environmental resource topics is evaluated in the numbered subsections shown above. The standards of significance and the impacts and mitigation measures in each subsection are also numbered. An example of the number system for each resource topic is provided below:

Numbering System for **Chapter 3.12, Noise**:

- **Environmental Impacts** – The impacts are numbered Impact 3.12-1, Impact 3.12-2, Impact 3.12-3, etc. Impacts are discussed as construction and/or operational impacts as appropriate.
- **Mitigation Measures** – The mitigation measures are numbered based on which impact they address. For example, mitigation measures for Impact 3.12-1 are numbered Mitigation Measure 3.12-1a, Mitigation Measure 3.12-1b, Mitigation Measure 3.12-1c, etc.

3.0.8 Alternatives

In addition to the potential for direct and indirect impacts associated with the Proposed Project, alternatives to the Proposed Project are considered and evaluated. CEQA requires an EIR to describe and evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives to the Proposed Project that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the Proposed project, while avoiding or substantially lessening any significant impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(a)). There is no iron clad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives to be discussed other than the rule of reason. The discussion of alternatives must focus on those alternatives that are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening the significant environmental effects of the proposed project. **Chapter 4, Alternatives,** identifies, considers, and evaluates various Alternatives that would meet the goals and objectives of the Proposed Project.

3.0.9 Growth Inducing Impacts

CEQA requires that an EIR evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed project[1]. A growth-inducing impact is defined as follows:

> *[T]he ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects, which would remove obstacles to population growth.... It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.*

The environmental effects of induced growth are secondary or indirect impacts of the project. Growth can result in significant increased demand on community services and public service infrastructure; increased traffic, noise, degradation of air and water quality; and conversion of agricultural land to urban uses.

[1] CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d).

Based on the CEQA definition above, assessing the growth-inducement potential of a water, wastewater, recycled water, and stormwater project such as the Proposed Project involves answering the question:

> *Will construction and/or operation of the proposed water, wastewater, recycled water, and stormwater facilities and/or related infrastructure remove an obstacle to growth and thus directly or indirectly support more economic or population growth or residential construction in the surrounding environment?*

Chapter 5, Growth Inducement, evaluates the growth inducement potential of the PWIMP as well as any alternatives that may be carried forward for consideration of project approval.

3.0.10 Cumulative Effects

In addition to the potential for direct and indirect impacts associated with the PWIMP, the project may contribute to broader cumulative impacts, when considered together with other development that may cause related impacts. **Chapter 6, Cumulative Effects,** analyzes these potential effects.