

## 7.0 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

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### INTRODUCTION

*Use of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of a proposed project may be irreversible if a large commitment of these resources makes their restoration thereafter unlikely. According to Section 15126.2(c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, irretrievable commitment of such resources is to be evaluated to ensure that their consumption by a proposed project is justified. In addition, this section must also identify any irreversible damage caused by environmental accidents associated with the proposed project.*

### 7.1 DISCUSSION

The construction and use of residential, commercial, and industrial uses would irreversibly commit construction materials and nonrenewable energy resources to the purposes of the specific plan. These energy resource demands would be used for construction, heating, and cooling of buildings, transportation of people and goods, as well as lighting and other associated energy needs. Nonrenewable and slowly renewable resources used by the planning area land uses and improvements would include, but are not limited to, lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, petrochemical construction materials, steel, copper, lead and other metals, and water. A marginal increase in the commitment of facility maintenance services would also be required. Planning area impacts related to consumption of nonrenewable and slowly renewable resources are considered to be less than significant because development within the planning area would not use unusual amounts of energy or construction materials.

Irreversible long-term environmental changes would accompany the proposed conversion of a partially disturbed, but primarily undeveloped area to a residential and industrial urban-scale in-fill development site. Changes would include a significant change in the visual character of the site associated with landform modification and increased building height and bulk, an increase in local and regional traffic with associated increase in air pollution emissions and noise levels, volume of solid waste generation, volume of wastewater generation, and an increase in water and energy consumption. The project would require additional school space and recreational opportunities. Although the project site is partially disturbed, it contains natural open space areas that have biological habitat of value. It is unlikely that the existing environmental conditions would be restored to their original condition subsequent to project development; however, mitigation measures are proposed throughout **Section 4.0** of this EIR to minimize the effects of the development impacts.

The *State CEQA Guidelines* also require a discussion of the potential for environmental damage caused by an accident associated with the project. The following discussion identifies site characteristics and proposed future uses that could be sources of potential accidents.

The planning area is located within a seismically active region and would be exposed to ground shaking in the event of a seismic event. Conformance with the regulatory provisions of the City of Ventura and the *Uniform Building Code* pertaining to construction standards would minimize, to the extent feasible, damage and injuries in the event of such an occurrence. Although there are no known operating water wells within the planning area, any abandoned water wells that are discovered on on-site parcels that would be developed under the Westside Community Planning Project shall be sealed prior to development according to state and County rules and regulations. Geotechnical hazards can be mitigated by stabilization, removal, or redesign; no significant impacts on the site are expected.

The planning area has numerous known or potential contamination sites based on a federal and state agency database search. Impacts would occur from the historic leaking or spillage of regulated substances into the shallow soils or groundwater of the planning area. The individual properties would need to be reviewed and assessed, as needed, to determine if they present a significant environmental concern or liability. Development and redevelopment proposed within the Planning Area could be impacted due to soil and groundwater contamination. The General Plan contains the following actions that aim to minimize adverse impacts to health and quality of life associated with exposure to hazardous materials:

- Action 7.24: Only approve projects involving sensitive land uses (such as residences, schools, daycare centers, playgrounds, medical facilities) within or adjacent to industrially designated areas if an analysis provided by the proponent demonstrates that the health risk will not be significant.
- Action 7.25: Adopt new development code provisions that ensure uses in mixed-use projects do not pose significant health effects.
- Action 7.26: Seek funding for cleanup of sites within the Brownfield Assessment Demonstration Pilot Program and other contaminated areas in West Ventura.

Action 7.27: Require proponents of projects on or immediately adjacent to lands in industrial, commercial, or agricultural use to perform soil and groundwater contamination assessments in accordance with American Society for Testing and Materials standards, and if contamination exceeds regulatory action levels, require the proponent to undertake remediation procedures prior to grading and development under the supervision of the County Environmental Health Division, County Department of Toxic Substances Control, or Regional Water Quality Control Board (depending upon the nature of any identified contamination).

With implementation of the applicable General Plan actions and enforcement of state and federal laws governing the upset conditions associated with hazardous materials and wastes, impacts would be less than significant.