

3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section describes impacts on cultural resources that would result from implementation of the Project. Included is a summary of applicable policies and regulations related to cultural resources and review of existing conditions. It also describes impacts on cultural resources that would result from implementation of the Project, based on the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared by Stantec Consulting Services in April 2025 (Appendix D).

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

The Project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource as identified in Section 15064.5; however, with implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, impacts would be less than significant.

The Project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; however, with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-2 and CUL-3, impacts would be less than significant.

The ORCC Specific Plan area is located directly north of the Naval Weapons Station across I-405 (a historic resource) and directly south of the Los Alamitos JFTB (a potential historic resource). The development of the residential component of the ORCC Specific Plan Project would change the visual character of the area adjacent to the Naval Weapons Station and Los Alamitos JFTB. Additionally, development of the residential component of the ORCC Specific Plan would require excavation and earthmoving activities during construction which could have the potential to unearth buried archaeological deposits during development. Specific impact findings associated with the development of the ORCC Specific Plan Project are being evaluated separately by the City in a standalone EIR.

3.4.1 Environmental Setting

Precontact Archaeology

Researchers divided the regional precontact chronology into four-stages describing changing artifact assemblages and evolving ecological adaptations. The principal regional chronology divides the precontact era by major cultural changes within general time periods. Wallace defined four cultural horizons, or periods, for Southern California. These include the Early Period, the Millingstone Period, the Intermediate Period, and the Late Prehistoric Period (Stantec 2024). These periods are summarized below.

The Early Period covers the period between approximately 10,000 and approximately 5500 BC, although recent data from the Farpoint Site (CA-LAN-451) in Malibu indicates “Clovis Culture” occupation dating well before 10,000 years ago. Artifacts and cultural activities from Clovis and Early Period sites represent a predominantly hunting culture. Although Clovis and Early Period sites in Southern California are rare, several traits are characteristic of sites occupied during this period. This list includes locations on the



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shorelines of ancient lakes and marshes. In coastal areas, such sites are located along stream channels or near estuaries. Although the bow and arrow do not exist, the atlatl and dart have been identified in assemblages from this period. An array of specialized cobble, core, flake, and blade implements are also known. In certain areas, the presence of extremely large, often fluted bifaces marks the Clovis and Early Period.

The Early Period is followed in time by the Millingstone Period. Sites from the Millingstone Period (post-5500 BC) typically contain ground stone artifacts such as manos, metates, and coggled stones, as well as soapstone objects. Wallace suggests that Millingstone Period cultures were generally hunter-gatherers who spent much time collecting and processing plants. When bifaces are found on Millingstone Period sites, they are commonly large and associated with the use of the atlatl.

Drover et al. (1983) suggest that early Millingstone Period sites represent refuse from mobile hunters and gatherers who used coastal resources during the winter and inland resources throughout the remainder of the year (Stantec 2024). Subsistence strategies included intensive hunting of small and large land mammals, sea mammals, and birds, as well as near-shore fishing and shellfish collecting. Elsewhere, small mammals were hunted and seeds were collected, as documented by the many millingstones found at Millingstone Period sites throughout the Southern California region.

By 3000 BC, coastal populations began greater reliance on marine resources. The remains of near-shore and deep-sea fish appear more often as refuse in middens. Much further inland, populations centered around pluvial lakes created by runoff from melting glaciers. In coastal areas, there was an increased use of the mortar and pestle, which marked a technological change in the manner seeds were processed. Instead of using just mano and metate, smaller seeds could be better contained in the basket-like mortar or hopper mortar (a basket affixed with asphaltum to a mortar base), and it is possible that the mortar and pestle indicate a diversification in seed collecting strategy. The use of the mortar and pestle marks Wallace's Intermediate Period. Additional artifacts found predominantly within the Intermediate Period include discoids and crescentics (crescentically shaped flaked-stone artifacts).

The Late Prehistoric Period begins at approximately AD 500. During this period, artifact changes and new cultural practices occur. Smaller projectile points, representing bow-and-arrow hunting, appear on Late Period sites. This period is also marked by steatite effigies and by cremation as an interment practice. These artifacts and practices have been linked to a proposed Shoshonean (Takic) immigration from the Great Basin that ended at the coast, although there is a difference of opinion among experts regarding the timing of this proposed Takic migration. By AD 1000, smoking pipes and ceramic pottery occur, although ceramic smoking pipes may occur somewhat earlier, within the later portion of the Intermediate Period. Dating of sites to the Late Period also depends on the occurrence of other items such as Salton Sea (Obsidian Buttes) obsidian. Sites within the region occasionally contain the vitreous lithic (glassy stone) called Grimes Canyon fused shale, which originates from Ventura County (Stantec 2024).

History of Seal Beach

The coastal area that officially became Seal Beach in 1915 was known as Anaheim Landing during the mid- to late-nineteenth century. After the gold rush, the Anaheim Landing Company established Anaheim Landing in 1857 in a small bay at the mouth of Anaheim Creek. The landing served as a port for the



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Santa Ana Valley. Anaheim Landing's decline began in 1875 when the railroad arrived in Anaheim and provided a more efficient means to ship goods from the coast to inland settlements. Around this time, the beaches around Anaheim Landing became a popular destination for tourists seeking respite from hot summer days in the valley, and tent city, with 25 square foot lots, grew near the former Anaheim Landing site. In 1904, J.C. Ord, a Civil War veteran, hired a 30-mule team to bring his small general store building from Los Alamitos to Bay City, where he set it down at the southwest corner of what is now known as Main Street and Electric Avenue.

In 1903, after successfully developing Huntington Beach, Phillip A. Stanton used his capital to form the Bayside Land Company, and with J.C. Ord and Isaac Lothian, developed Bay City just north of the former Anaheim Landing site. Stanton was the City's major champion and heavily promoted Bay City.

Bay City was officially incorporated on October 25, 1915, with the new name of Seal Beach. This name was derived from the many seals that lazed on the City's beach, and the name change was necessary as there was already an incorporated community named Bay City. J.C. Ord was one of five trustees voted into office in October 1915, the second Mayor, Postmaster, and the first Judge. His store on Main Street was the Post Office and Court House, and the Jail House when it was necessary. Seal Beach also became home to the Joy Zone at the base of the pier, with a dance hall, cafe, bath house, and large wooden roller coaster, attracting a large volume of tourists and becoming known for being a little on the wild side.

Seal Beach grew as a residential community during the 1920s. Between 1920 and 1930, the City's population swelled from 669 to 1,156, and by 1931, various businesses lined Main Street, and scattered dwellings dotted the remaining streets. Businesses on Main Street included restaurants, a billiard hall, beauty shops, a tailor, the City post office, grocers, drug stores, a hotel, and an automotive repair store.

During the 1930s, the development of Seal Beach stalled. The Great Depression and closure of the Joy Zone slowed all activity, and the 1933 Long Beach earthquake also impacted the community. The 6.4 magnitude quake, the largest known earthquake to occur in the Los Angeles region at that time, struck on the evening of March 10th and damaged or destroyed many of the buildings in Seal Beach. Collectively, the Depression, the 1933 earthquake, and the closure of offshore gambling establishments held the City's development at bay, though it retained its sin city characterization for a while longer.

World War II began a period of significant physical and social change in Seal Beach. In 1944, the Navy purchased most of the land around Anaheim Landing to construct the United States Navy's Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach for loading, unloading, and storing of ammunition for the Pacific Fleet. Today, Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach is the Navy's primary West Coast ordnance storage, loading, and maintenance installation. Located entirely within Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach is the Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge, which was established in 1972 and protects habitat for threatened and endangered species.

The influx of new residents during the war, chiefly from the Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach workforce, and a series of residential and commercial developments in the post-World War II period, began the transformation of Seal Beach into a middle-class seaside community, with a 129 percent



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increase in Seal Beach's population between 1940 and 1950. This growing population sought to dispel the City's long-held ill reputation and create a more family-oriented community.

A series of residential and commercial developments in the post-World War II period began the transformation of Seal Beach from a city known as "wild" to a middle-class seaside community. During the 1960s and 1970s, the City expanded from Old Town historic core to include Leisure World Seal Beach and the Marina Hill (also known as the Hill), College Park West, and College Park East subdivisions. Ross Cortese, a successful developer in Downey and Anaheim, established Leisure World Seal Beach, which would come to represent a third of Seal Beach's population. In 1962, the first residents of Leisure World Seal Beach moved in, and by 1964, all original 6,608 planned units had been purchased (Stantec 2024).

During the 1960s and 1970s, as the previously undeveloped portions of Seal Beach were platted and neighborhoods emerged, Old Town remained static in comparison. Storefronts were often boarded, and divey bars were still clustered near the pier. The western portion of Old Town, adjacent to the San Gabriel River, was mostly industrial in the 1960s and included a sewage disposal plant and oil separating facility. However, Old Town and its immediately adjacent neighborhood, the Hill, were not void of development. In 1966, the Seal Beach Shopping Center was constructed across the Pacific Coast Highway from Main Street in the Hill neighborhood.

As Seal Beach approached the twenty-first century, the City had become a densely developed suburban community, outside of Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, which continued to occupy the majority of the City, and provided a natural isolation from neighboring Huntington Beach and Westminster. Main Street outlived its racy reputation, and came to represent itself as the charming hub of an historic beach community, still with a hardware store, nursery, and post office, along with local restaurants, service businesses, and shops, while major property owner, The Bixby Ranch Company, sold its large landholdings in the northern end of town for development.

3.4.2 Regulatory Setting

Federal

National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, authorized the creation of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The NRHP is "an authoritative guide to be used by federal, state, and local governments, private groups, and citizens to identify the nation's cultural resources and to indicate what properties should be considered for protection from destruction or impairment (Title 36 CFR Part 60.2)." For a property to be considered eligible for the NRHP, it must typically be at least 50 years old and meet one or more of four criteria for evaluation set forth in 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.4:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:



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- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master or that possess high artistic values or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history (Title 36 CFR Part 60.4).

A property must also be significant within a historic context under one or more of the criteria listed above. "National Register Bulletin #15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" states that the significance of a historic property can be judged only when it is evaluated within its historic context. Historic contexts are "those patterns, themes, or trends in history by which a specific...property or site is understood and its meaning...is made clear (Title 36 CFR Part 60.4)." A historic property must therefore represent an important aspect of history or prehistory.

In addition to possessing significance, a property must possess integrity, defined by seven aspects:

Location: the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event took place.

Design: the composition of elements that constitute the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.

Setting: the physical environment of a historic property that illustrates the character of the place.

Materials: the physical elements combined in a particular pattern or configuration.

Workmanship: the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history.

Feeling: the quality that a historic property has in evoking the aesthetic or historic sense of a past period of time.

Association: the direct link between a property and the event or person for which the property is significant (Andrus and Shrimpton undated).

State

California Environmental Quality Act

The state CEQA Guidelines set the standard for determining whether a proposed project will result in a "substantial adverse change" in the significance of historical resources in Title 14 CCR Section 15064.5(b), which states:



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“A project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment (Title 14 CCR Section 15064.5[b]).”

Title 14 CCR Section 15064.5(b)(1) further clarifies “substantial adverse change” as:

“Substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired (Title 14 CCR Section 15064.5[b][1]).”

Title 14 CCR Section 15064.5(b)(2) in turn explains that a historical resource is “materially impaired” when a project:

“Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA (Title 14 CCR Section 15064.5[b][2]).”

As a result, the test for determining if a proposed project will have a significant impact on an identified historical resource is whether the project will alter the physical integrity of the historical resource in an adverse manner such that it would no longer be eligible for the NRHP, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or other landmark programs.

If an impact on a historical or archaeological resource is significant, CEQA requires feasible measures to minimize the impact (14 CCR Section 15126.4 (a)(1)). Mitigation of significant impacts must lessen or eliminate the physical impact that the project would have on the resource. CEQA requires that all feasible mitigation be undertaken even if it does not mitigate impacts to less-than-significant levels (14 CCR Section 15126.4(a)(1)).

California Register of Historical Resources

The CRHR was established in 1992 by Assembly Bill 2881. It is an authoritative guide used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse impacts (Andrus and Shrimpton undated). The criteria for eligibility of listing in the CRHR are based upon the NRHP criteria, and are identified as 1–4 instead of A–D. To be eligible for the CRHR, a property generally must be at least 50 years of age and must possess significance at the local, state, or national level, under one or more of these four criteria:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States; or
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history; or



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3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; or
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important in the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Like the NRHP, properties eligible for the CRHR may include buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts. The enabling legislation for the CRHR is less rigorous than the NRHP with regard to the issue of integrity, yet the expectation is that eligible properties should retain enough of their historic-period character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance (California OHP undated).

Evaluations for the CRHR are based upon the evaluation instructions and classification system prescribed by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) in its "Instructions for Recording Historical Resources," which include Status Codes to classify potential historical resources. These Status Codes are used statewide in the preparation of historical resource surveys and evaluation reports.

The CRHR may include properties identified during historic resource surveys. However, properties included must be based on surveys that meet these criteria:

1. The survey has been or will be included in the State Historic Resources Inventory;
2. The survey and the survey documentation were prepared in accordance with office (OHP) procedures and requirements;
3. The resource is evaluated and determined by the office (OHP) to have a significance rating of Category 1 to 5 on a DPR Form 523; and
4. If the survey is five or more years old at the time of its nomination for inclusion in the CRHR, the survey is updated to identify historical resources that have become eligible or ineligible due to changed circumstances or further documentation and those that have been demolished or altered in a manner that substantially diminishes the significance of the resource (PRC Section 5024.1).

California Health and Safety Code

Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code (HSC) states that in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of the county in which the remains are discovered has determined whether or not the remains are subject to the coroner's authority. If the human remains are of Native American origin, the coroner must notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours of this identification.

Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code states that the NAHC, upon notification of the discovery of Native American human remains pursuant to HSC Section 7050.5, shall immediately notify those persons (i.e., the Most Likely Descendent or "MLD") it believes to be descended from the



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deceased. With permission of the landowner or a designated representative, the MLD may inspect the remains and any associated cultural materials and make recommendations for treatment or disposition of the remains and associated grave goods. The MLD shall provide recommendations or preferences for treatment of the remains and associated cultural materials within 48 hours of being granted access to the site.

Local

City of Seal Beach General Plan

The City's General Plan is a comprehensive long-range general plan for the physical development of the City of Seal Beach. The General Plan contains the current Housing Element Update, which was adopted in 2022 and revised in 2024. The various elements within the General Plan include goals and policies for the physical development of the City. The City's General Plan goals and policies applicable to cultural resources are presented below:

Cultural Resources Element

Goal 1: Preserve and protect historical, archaeological, and paleontological resources.

- **Policy 1:** Balance the benefits of development with the project's potential impacts to existing cultural resources.
- **Policy 2:** Identify, designate, and protect sites and buildings of historical importance.
- **Policy 5:** Assess development proposals for potential impacts to significant archaeological resources pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Require a study conducted by a professional archaeologist for all development proposals located in areas known to be sensitive for cultural resources.

City of Seal Beach Municipal Code

The City's Residential Conservation Overlay District Ordinance (Ordinance No. 1598) defines locally significant historic structures as "those residential structures constructed prior to 1925" (Title 11 Part III Chapter 11.3.05.005). The Ordinance states:

"These locally-significant historic structures represent the city's unique historical, social and cultural foundations and should be preserved as living parts of community life and development in order to build a greater understanding of the city's past and give future generations the opportunity to appreciate, understand and enjoy the city's remaining historic heritage (Title 11 Part III Chapter 11.3.05.005)."

Unlike the NRHP and CRHR, the City's Residential Conservation Overlay District Ordinance has no criteria for designating properties as locally-significant historic structures and makes no mention of concepts such as physical integrity or period of significance.



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The Seal Beach Historic Resources Foundation currently acts as a hub and repository for historic photographs and stories to preserve and celebrate the history of Seal Beach.

3.4.3 Environmental Impacts

This section analyzes the Project's potential to result in significant cultural resources impacts. When an impact is determined to be significant, mitigation measures are identified that would reduce or avoid impacts.

Methodology for Analysis

The following impact analysis is based on the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared for the Project by Stantec in April 2025 (Appendix D). The Cultural Resources Assessment included a records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC), literature review, and review of California Building Environment Resource Directory (BERD). The records search was completed in accordance with the CEQA guidelines.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines' Appendix G Environmental Checklist, the following questions were analyzed and evaluated to determine whether the Project's cultural resources impacts are significant.

Would the Project:

- *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?*
- *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?*

The following issues were determined to have no impact or a less than significant impact during the NOP Scoping. These issues are summarized in Section 6.0, Effects Found Not to Be Significant, and are not discussed further in this section.

Would the Project:

- *Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*



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Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures

Historical Resources

Impact CUL-1	The Project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as identified in Section 15064.5.
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Impact Analysis

The threshold for determining significant impacts to historical resources in the CEQA Guidelines is whether the Project would cause a substantial adverse change, which is defined as demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate vicinity such that the historical resource is materially impaired. A historical resource would be materially impaired if a Project alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that convey its significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP, CRHR, and/or local register (14 CCR Section 15064.5[b][2]).

CEQA defines historical resources as (1) resources eligible for or listed in the CRHR and/or NRHP; (2) resources listed in a local register; or (3) resources identified as historically significant in a historic resources survey. Historical resources are also typically at least 50 years old because of NPS and OHP minimum-age requirements for NRHP and CRHR eligibility. Therefore, buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that meet this age threshold and have not been previously evaluated generally have the potential to be identified as historical resources unless a detailed evaluation is prepared demonstrating that it is not eligible for national, state, and/or local listing. For the purpose of evaluating a resource's eligibility as a historical resource, a minimum-age threshold of 45 years is commonly recommended to account for the delay between resource identification and a CEQA lead agency's approval of a project.

Stantec consulted the BERD to determine if the Housing Opportunity Sites and Main Street Program contains any resources listed in or determined eligible for the NRHP or CRHR, designated as California Registered Historical Landmarks or California Points of Historical Interest, or evaluated in historic resource surveys and other planning activities. One resource listed in the BERD is within the Housing Opportunity Sites and Main Street Program and two resources are immediately adjacent. Of the three resources previously recorded in BERD, the Naval Weapons Station was previously determined eligible for the NRHP and is a historical resource as defined by CEQA.



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Table 3.4-1: Previously Recorded BERD Resources

Name	Address	OHP Status Code(s)	Within Housing Opportunity Site/Main Street Program?
Seal Beach Red Car	Electric Avenue	7P	No—adjacent
Naval Weapons Station	800 Seal Beach Blvd	2S2	No—adjacent
Seal Beach Plaza	13962 Seal Beach Blvd	6Y	Yes

Notes:

2S2 – Individually determined eligible for the NRHP by consensus throughout Section 106 process. Listed in the CRHR.

5S1 – Individually listed or designated locally.

6Y – Determined ineligible for the NRHP by consensus through Section 106 process – Not evaluated for CRHR or local listing. Appears individually eligible for the NRHP through survey evaluation.

7P – State Point of Historical Interest that does not meet the CRHR criteria.

The City does not have an identified Historic District or an inventory of historical resources or landmarks located within the City. However, the City has identified a few resources within the City that are considered by the City to be locally historic resources or community landmarks. Stantec consulted with the City of Seal Beach to determine if the Housing Opportunity Sites and Main Street Program contain any locally designated resources. One resource within the Main Street Program is designated as a City historic resource, the Bay Theater, under Resolution No. 6685. The Bay Theater is a historical resource as defined by CEQA and has an OHP status code of 5S1 which is defined above in Table 3.4-1. This is a City identified landmark that has not met the qualifications for listing in federal, state, or local historic resources inventories. One historical resource listed in the CRHR, the Naval Weapons Station, is located adjacent to Housing Opportunity Sites 1, 3, and 6. In addition, previously unidentified resources 45 years old or older have the potential to be historical resources as defined by CEQA due to their age. Sixteen structures are potentially 45 years old or older on Housing Opportunity Sites 1–2, 4, and 6–8. An unknown number of structures within the Main Street Program area are 45 years old or older. Additionally, though not listed in or eligible to be listed in any historical resources inventory, Los Alamitos JFTB is an area that provides historical significance to the City and may be determined to be a historical resource or landmark of importance by the City. Housing Opportunity Sites 4 and 5 are located within close proximity to Los Alamitos JFTB.

The Project would have no direct impact on historical resources. The Project involves the establishment of a new zoning designation and rezoning of sites within the eight Housing Opportunity Sites and Main Street Program area to plan for potential future housing developments within the City. The Project's actions would not directly cause a substantial adverse change to historical resources due to demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration resulting in a loss of integrity.

The Project would potentially have indirect impacts on historical resources as it may facilitate future development activities that would directly or indirectly cause a substantial adverse change to historical resources. Two identified historical resources are within or adjacent to the Project area, as well as an unknown number of previously unevaluated resources 45 years old or older that have the potential to be historical resources. It is possible that future development activities may demolish or significantly alter



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these known and unknown historical resources or introduce a new visual element that alters a resource's setting. As such, indirect impacts to historical resources would be potentially significant.

The implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 discussed below would reduce impacts to historical resources. This would be accomplished by requiring a process for the identification of historical resources and the analysis of potential impacts on historical resources resulting from future development activities. Therefore, with the incorporation of the mitigation measure, the Project impacts would be less than significant.

This EIR includes a discussion of the residential component of the ORCC Specific Plan Project based on the site location and proposed buildout of the 167 dwelling units that are included within the City's site inventory to meet its RHNA requirements. The ORCC Specific Plan Project area is located directly south of the Los Alamitos JFTB and directly north of the Naval Weapons Station across I-405. The Naval Weapons Station is a historical resource as defined by CEQA; however, the Los Alamitos JFTB is not listed in or eligible to be listed in any historical resources inventory. As Los Alamitos JFTB is an area that provides historical significance to the City, it may be determined to be a historical resource or landmark of importance by the City. The development of the residential component of the ORCC Specific Plan Project would change the visual character of the area adjacent to the Naval Weapons Station and Los Alamitos JFTB. Specific impact findings associated with the development of the ORCC Specific Plan Project are being evaluated separately by the City in a standalone EIR.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially Significant Impact.

Mitigation Measures

MM CUL-1: Development Review Process for Historical Resources. Prior to approval of discretionary projects at any of the eight Housing Opportunity Sites or within the Main Street Program area, City staff shall determine whether the project applicant should conduct further study to assess the project's potential impacts on historical resources. Further study is required if the project is located on the same parcel or within 100 feet of a known historical resource. Further study is also required if the project is located on the same parcel as a building, structure, or object 45 years old or older from the date the discretionary permit application was filed. If further study is necessary, the City shall require the project applicant to retain a qualified architectural historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards in architectural history. The qualified consultant shall prepare a Historical Resource Evaluation Report (HRER). The HRER should involve a California Historic Resources Information System (CHRIS) and California Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD) records search and preparation of a historic context. If a building, structure, or object on the parcel is 45 years old or older and has not been previously identified as a historical resource, the consultant should prepare an evaluation for NRHP, CRHR, and local landmark eligibility per NPS, OHP, and City guidelines. All evaluated resources should be documented on Department of Parks and Recreation Series 523 Forms. The qualified consultant should



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analyze potential project impacts and provide recommendations for avoiding or otherwise mitigating potentially significant impacts to historical resources, which shall be enforced as conditions of approval for the project.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.

Archaeological Resources

Impact CUL-2	The Project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.
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Impact Analysis

CEQA requires a lead agency to determine if an archaeological cultural resource meets the definition of a historical resource, a unique archaeological resource, or neither (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)). Prior to considering potential impacts, the lead agency must determine whether an archaeological cultural resource meets the definition of a historical resource in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)(1). If the archaeological cultural resource meets the definition of a historical resource, then it is treated like any other type of historical resource in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4. If the archaeological cultural resource does not meet the definition of a historical resource, then the lead agency determines if it meets the definition of a unique archaeological resource as defined at CEQA Section 21083.2(g). In practice, however, most archaeological sites that meet the definition of a unique archaeological resource will also meet the definition of a historical resource. Should the archaeological cultural resource meet the definition of a unique archaeological resource, then it must be treated in accordance with CEQA Section 21083.2. If the archaeological cultural resource does not meet the definition of a historical resource or an archaeological resource, then effects to the resource are not considered significant effects on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)(4)).

As identified in the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared for the Project, three archaeological cultural resources have been identified at, or in the vicinity of, one of the Housing Opportunity Sites: P-30-000143, P-30-000264, and P-30-001546. The status of these three archaeological cultural resources is unknown at this time, including their integrity (i.e., whether these sites contain intact subsurface archaeological deposits) and their eligibility for listing in either the CRHR or NRHP. At least two of these sites have reported Native American human remains, and regardless of these sites' status as historical resources or archaeological resources under CEQA, the presence of such remains triggers protections under sections of the California PRC and HSC, as described in Cultural Resources Assessment prepared for the Project. Additionally, other precontact and historic-period archaeological cultural resources have been identified in Seal Beach, and the potential to unearth buried archaeological deposits during development cannot be ruled out and should be assessed on a project and site-specific basis.

The Project, therefore, may have direct impacts on known archaeological cultural resources (including those that qualify as "historical resources" and "archaeological resources" under CEQA) as well as previously unrecorded cultural resources that could be unearthed during ground disturbance. Future developments facilitated by the Project could cause a substantial adverse change to archaeological



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cultural resources due to their demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration resulting in a loss of integrity. As such, impacts to archaeological cultural resources would be potentially significant.

To mitigate significant impacts to archaeological cultural resources, Mitigation Measures CUL-2 and CUL-3 would be required. Mitigation Measure CUL-2 outlines the required development review process for archaeological resources for future development projects and Mitigation Measure CUL-2 outlines requirements to be followed if human remains are found during construction activities. With implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-2 and CUL-3, potential impacts related to archaeological resources would be reduced and the Project would result in a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated.

This EIR includes a discussion of the residential component of the ORCC Specific Plan Project based on the site location and proposed buildout of the 167 dwelling units that are included within the City's site inventory to meet its RHNA requirements. Development of the residential component of the ORCC Specific Plan Project would require excavation and earthmoving activities during construction. As precontact and historic-period archaeological cultural resources have been identified in the City, the potential to unearth buried archaeological deposits during development cannot be ruled out. The ORCC Specific Plan Project site is located in an area of high sensitivity for precontact Native American resources. Additional study of this future development is recommended to fully assess future project impacts on historical resources, archaeological resources, and tribal cultural resources. Specific impact findings associated with the development of the ORCC Specific Plan Project are being evaluated separately by the City in a standalone EIR.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially Significant Impact.

Mitigation Measures

MM CUL-2: Development Review Process for Archaeological Resources. Prior to approval of discretionary projects that include ground-disturbing activities, City staff shall conduct a records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center to review the current data on file for the project location. If it is determined that known archaeological cultural resources are within a 0.25-mile of the project site, the City shall require the project applicant to retain a qualified archaeologist who meets the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualification Standards in archaeology to assess the project's potential impacts to archaeological cultural resources. Further study may include a survey of the project location; controlled excavation to determine the presence of subsurface archaeological deposits; a review of relevant literature, including historical maps and published archaeological and ethnographic sources; and consultation with local Native American tribes. The qualified archaeologist shall provide recommendations for avoiding or otherwise mitigating potentially significant impacts to archaeological cultural resources and human remains, which shall be enforced as conditions of approval for the project.

MM CUL-3: Human Remains. The City shall use the development review process to identify human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries, and follow the appropriate



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procedures outlined under Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.98. Should human remains be found on a project site, no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains shall be disturbed until the Orange County Coroner is contacted and determines that no investigation of the cause of death is required. If an investigation is required, and the coroner determines the remains to be Native American then: (1) the coroner would contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours; (2) the NAHC would identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descended from the deceased native American; (3) the most likely descendent may make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in PRC Section 5097.98.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation.

3.4.4 Cumulative Impacts

CEQA requires that EIRs evaluate the potential cumulative impacts of a project. A project's environmental impacts are "cumulatively considerable" if the "incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a)(3)).

As discussed in Section 3.0, Environmental Analysis, CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 requires cumulative impact analysis in EIRs to consider a list of planned and pending projects that may contribute to the cumulative impacts of a project. Section 3.0, Table 3.0-3 identifies all past, present, and probable future residential projects in the City and surrounding areas that may impact the Project. As identified in Table 3.0-2 in Section 3.0, Environmental Analysis, the geographic scope of impacts for cultural resources is limited to the specific project site. The potential for impacts to occur to known and unknown cultural resources is site-specific and cannot combine with cumulative projects to produce a larger impact and therefore, cultural resources does not contribute to cumulative impacts. As such, a table of related projects that contribute to cumulative tribal cultural resources impacts is not included within this section.

However, indirect cumulative impacts could occur if the Project and related projects cumulatively effect historical resources. Because the specific direct and indirect impacts of the Project and future cumulative projects are unknown, it is possible that the incremental effects on historical resources could be cumulatively considerable. Potential cumulative impacts include contributing to impacts to historical resources in the immediate vicinity; contribute to changes to the same historical resource; or involve resources that are examples of the same property type as those within the Project area. The Project, in conjunction with other cumulative development identified in Table 3.0-3 has the potential to cumulatively impact historical resources. However, as identified above, proposed mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level related to historical resources. Unless exempt, each cumulative project would require separate discretionary approval and evaluation under CEQA, which would address potential historical and archaeological impacts and identify necessary mitigation



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measures, where appropriate. Each cumulative project would be anticipated to require implementation of similar mitigation measures as those identified for the Project to reduce potential project specific impacts to cultural resources. Therefore, with implementation of mitigation measures and compliance with regulatory requirements, the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact related to historical or archaeological cultural resources.

3.4.5 References

Stantec. 2024. Cultural Resources Assessment Report, October 2024. PDF.

