

2.5 UNIQUE FEATURES2.5.1 Historical Features

Several cultural groups have had significant influence on the history of the Oxnard Plain region, including those of the Indian, Spanish, and Mexican Periods (Table 2.5.1-I).

Prior to the arrival of permanent Spanish settlers in the late Eighteenth Century, the coastal area of the Oxnard Plain provided a suitable habitat for the Chumash Indians of the Canalino culture. For several thousands of years, these people occupied the region, living in fairly large nucleated villages scattered along the coastline. Despite the presence of adequate water, the Chumash did not practice agriculture. Instead they depended on a marine-based fishing, hunting and gathering economy for their livelihood. The Chumash were accomplished boat builders and constructed large pine plank canoes sealed with tar from natural oil seeps. While primarily fishermen, the Chumash practiced hunting and gathering to supplement their diets.

The first Spanish visit to the Oxnard Plain area occurred in the Sixteenth Century during the "Age of Exploration." In October 1542, Captain Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo anchored his vessels offshore of present-day Mugu Lagoon. While his expedition remained but a few days, Cabrillo was impressed by the skill of the Indian boat builders and named their settlement Pueblo de las Canoas (Village of the Canoes). In December 1602, a second expedition, led by Sebastian Vizcaino, made a brief stop in the area of Mugu Lagoon before sailing southward.

Over a century and a half passed before the next Spanish expedition arrived in the area. On August 13, 1769, Gaspar de

Portola led a group of soldiers and clergymen down the Santa Clara River to where it emptied into the ocean. This expedition was significant for two reasons: 1) it was the first Spanish attempt to explore coastal California by land; and 2) it was the forerunner of several mission site selection expeditions which would mean the beginning of permanent Spanish settlement.

On March 31, 1782, Padre Junipero Serra officially dedicated Mission San Buenaventura near the mouth of the Ventura River on the western end of the Oxnard Plain. Intended as a rest stop on El Camino Real (The King's Highway) and as a center for the conversion of the Chumash to Christianity, the Mission prospered for several decades. Much of the land in the Oxnard Plain was granted to the Church and extensive grazing of cattle was practiced. However, by the early Nineteenth Century, the mission was declining in importance.

In 1822, California passed from Spanish to Mexican control. Pressures to secularize the missions mounted, and in 1834 a secularization decree was passed. In 1836, Mission San Buenaventura was officially secularized and the churchlands awarded to private owners by the government. Eight land grants were carved from Church property on the Oxnard Plain, including Rancho Guadalasca (part), Rancho ex-mission (Tract 1), Rancho ex-mission (Tract 2), Rancho Santa Clara del Norte, Rancho San Miguel, Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy (part), Rancho Calleguas (part), and Rancho El Rio de Santa Clara o La Colonia. The latter, a 45,000-acre tract, included the land now occupied by the present-day cities of Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Camarillo,

and El Rio. Extensive cattle grazing in response to the hide and tallow trade followed.

With the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), the Oxnard Plain and other California territories were ceded to the United States. In 1850, California was admitted to the Union as a state. Ventura (San Buenaventura) was still the only significant settlement on the Oxnard Plain and most of the region continued to be used for grazing. With the disastrous drought of 1862 and a concurrent depression in cattle prices, the great ranchos were subdivided and much of the land converted to grain farming. A wharf was constructed at Port Hueneme in 1874 to handle grain shipments and for a time this was the busiest port south of San Francisco. The Southern Pacific Railroad's "Coast Line" reached Ventura in 1887, and there was some "in-migration" of new settlers, although not on the same scale as in the Los Angeles Basin. As a result of the railroad, the towns of Montalvo (1887) and Camarillo (1900) came into existence.

The extensive grain farming holdings of the plain gave way to more intensive crops by the early 1900's. Using new technology in pumping techniques, the groundwater under the Oxnard Plain was extracted and irrigation agriculture was possible. Sugar beets became the major irrigation crop, and in 1898, the Oxnard Brothers of San Francisco established the nation's second largest sugar beet refinery near present-day Oxnard. The city of Oxnard was surveyed and laid out the same year.

Since 1900 several transitions in cropping have occurred. Lima beans had replaced sugar beets by the 1920's.

A generation later citrus crops emerged as dominant. Recently, higher income-yielding truck crops such as celery, cauliflower, tomatoes, and lettuce have been planted. The Oxnard Plain, however, is presently undergoing a period of rapid urbanization and suburbanization, and the landscape is slowly changing from a rural to an urban one.

To commemorate the early history of the Oxnard Plain region, several federal, state, and local landmarks have been selected for preservation.

#### 2.5.1.1 Federally Designated Landmarks

The National Register of Historic Places (Federal Register, 1973) lists entries for the Oxnard Plain (Ventura County) area as follows:

- a) Oxnard Public Library (Oxnard Chamber of Commerce--Art Club of Oxnard), 424 South C St., Oxnard.
- b) Ventura County Courthouse, 501 Poli St., Ventura.

In addition, Muju Lagoon is currently being considered for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. There are no historical landmarks in the register located on or near the proposed ship berth, LNG transfer line, plant site, or seawater exchange line.

#### 2.5.1.2 State Designated Landmarks

There are no designated state landmarks in the immediate vicinity of the proposed ship berth and plant site.

#### 2.5.1.3 Local Landmarks

No city-designated landmarks are located on or near the proposed ship berth, LNG transfer system, plant or seawater exchange line sites.

### 2.5.2 Archaeological Sites

The locations of known archaeological sites on the ~~land~~ Plain and adjacent environs were obtained from University of California Ventura Archaeological Site Identification Records. Table 2.5.2-I lists and briefly describes 53 sites which have been identified or excavated in the past. Plate 2.5.2-1 indicates the location of these sites (by University identification number). In addition, personnel of the University of California, Santa Barbara (1973) Archaeological Survey have indicated that other sites, yet undiscovered, may exist in the area. Therefore, while the attached table and plates give complete coverage of known sites, there is the possibility that additional sites may be discovered in the future.

### 2.5.3 Recreation Facilities

Major recreational facilities located in the area of the proposed LNG plant site include the following: parks (state, county, and city); marinas (public); deep sea sport fishing landings; piers (public); and golf courses (public, private, and government). Table 2.5.3-I lists these facilities by category, and Plate 2.5.3-1 depicts their locations in relation to the site.

The two most significant recreational facilities within the vicinity of the proposed LNG facilities are Hueneme City Beach Park and Channel Islands Harbor.

#### 2.5.3.1 Channel Islands Harbor

The Channel Islands Harbor is a recreational boating marina located approximately 2 miles northwest of the Port of Hueneme. It is under the administration of the County of

Ventura. The harbor opened officially in 1965 and currently has 1,035 boat slips available. Expansion by 500 additional slips is underway. At the present time, 935 boats are accommodated in slips and 208 boats are in dry storage (Oxnard Chamber of Commerce, 1973).

#### 2.5.3.2 Hueneme City Beach Park

The city operates Hueneme Beach Park along the coast. This park consists of about 50 acres and covers 90 percent of the usable beach area within the city. Along with numerous items of recreational equipment, the park also contains two restroom buildings, a public fishing pier, and parking for 375 cars. Summer weekday usage approximates 3,000 persons per day, while weekends normally draw 5,000 persons per day. Holiday usage approaches 12,000 persons per day.

#### 2.5.4 Scenic/Aesthetic Values

##### 2.5.4.1 Description of Present Environment

###### Scenic Values

The LNG plant site is part of a relatively flat plain gently sloping towards the ocean. It possesses no significant geographical features or scenic values. The entire area surrounding the property (south of Hueneme Road and east of the City of Port Hueneme) has been zoned M-2 for heavy industrial use (Plate 2.3.2-1). The berthing facility site is part of a similar, but somewhat more industrialized environment. Surrounding land uses, where development has taken place, are consistent with this zoning. Several industrial plants are located in the immediate vicinity of the proposed LNG plant site (see Section 2.3.2).

The general area of the site is traversed by numerous roads, some unimproved, and the Ventura County Railway. The Ormond Beach Generating Station 1 1/2 miles to the southeast is easily visible from the LNG plant site. The electrical transmission lines and towers are also visible from any point on the site.

### Exposure

Being on a relatively flat plain, the property is not easily visible from the surrounding communities. However, it is visible from the foothills surrounding the Oxnard Plain. These hills are from 6 to 15 miles away.

The plant site is visible from Hueneme Road on the north, Perkins Road on the west, and Arcturus Avenue on the east. It can also be viewed from the Ormond Beach Generating Station and from the sand dunes along Ormond Beach. The residential condominium developments within the city of Port Hueneme along Surfside Drive are less than one mile from the site. Second floor windows facing east and southeast provide a view of the site.

### Summary

The scenic value of the site as it currently exists is small. The exposure of the property, because of the flat plain upon which it is located, is also small. These factors, combined with the mature man-made industrial developments in the immediate vicinity, make the LNG plant site one of low visual aesthetic value.

The scenic value of the beach area in the vicinity of the proposed berthing facility, because of existing similar structures in the immediate area, is also of relatively low visual importance.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY 2.5

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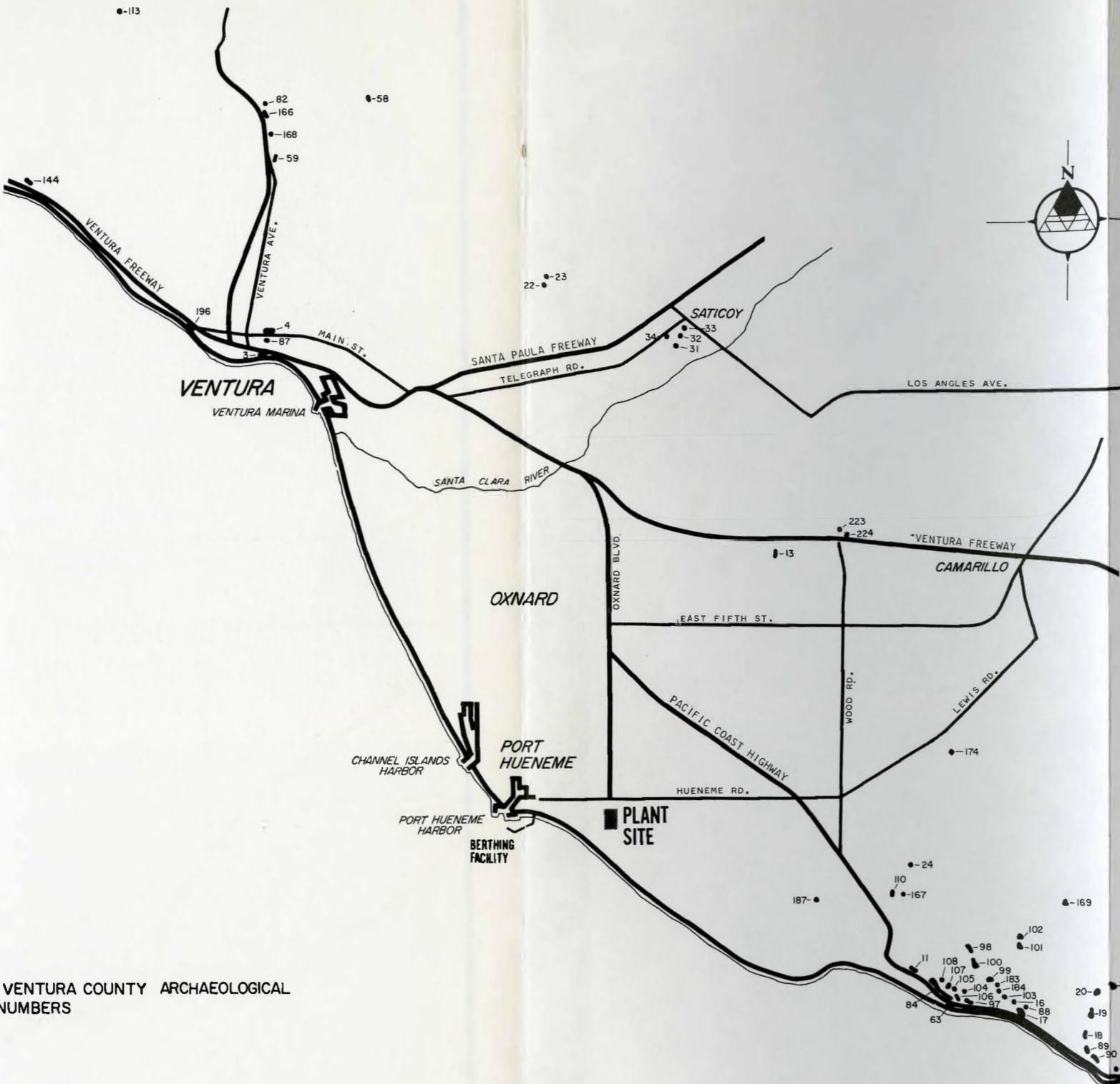
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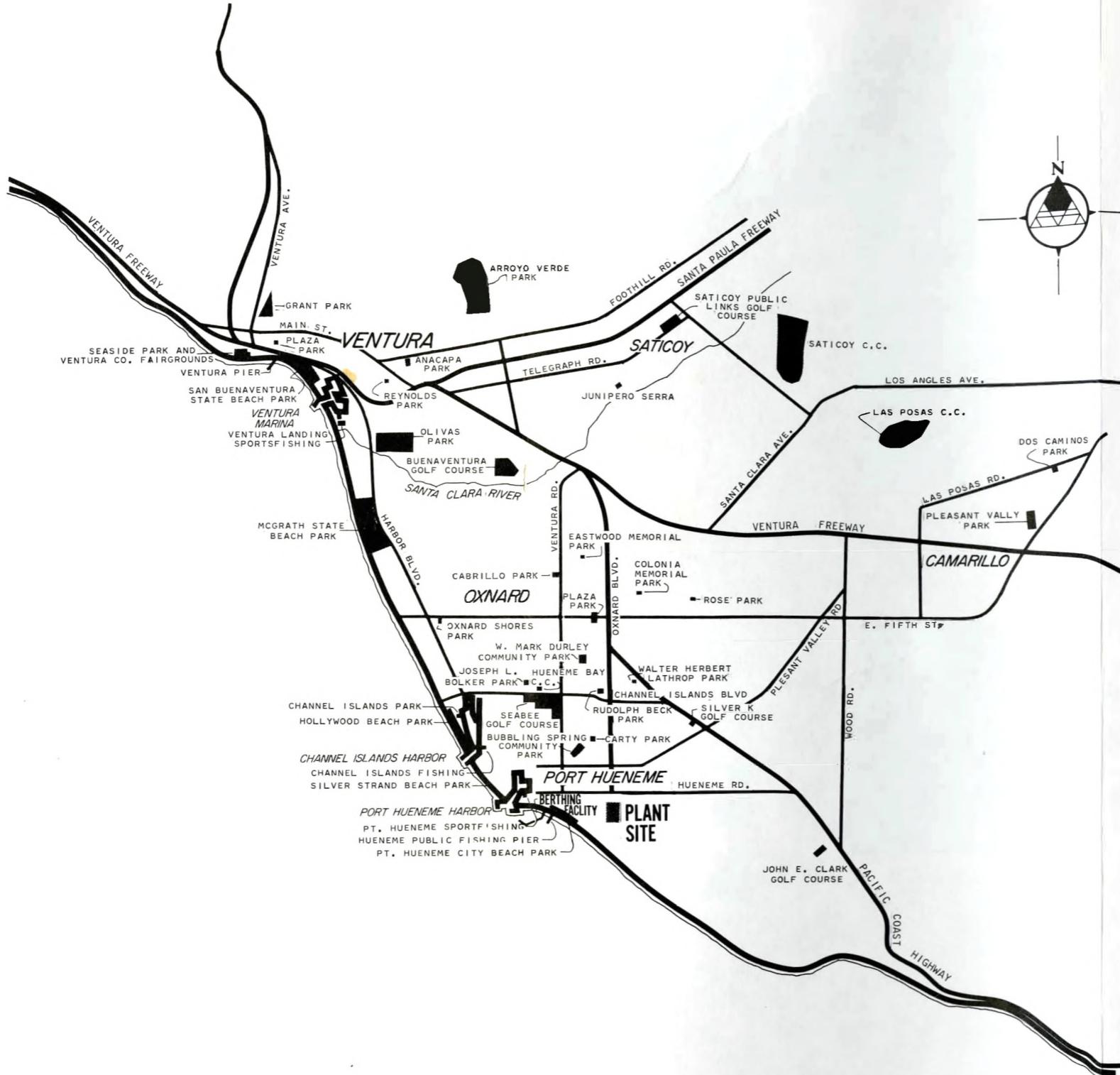
\*Oxnard Chamber of Commerce, 1971.



NOTE: NUMBERS DESIGNATE VENTURA COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

## LOCATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

A horizontal scale bar with numerical markings at 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Below the scale, the text "SCALE IN MILES" is centered.



## LOCATION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE OXNARD AREA

A horizontal scale bar with numerical markings at 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Below the scale, the text "SCALE IN MILES" is centered.

APPENDIX: COMPOSITE FROM AREA MAPS

**DAMES & MOORE**

**PLATE 2.5.3-I**

CULTURAL PERIODS IN THE REGION

Period*	Dominant Culture	Major Events
1848 A.D. - Present	American	1973-Urban land conversion continues. 1900-Pump irrigation begins. 1898-Oxnard founded. 1887-S.P.R.R. reaches Ventura. 1874-Port Hueneme wharf built. 1850-California admitted to union. 1848-Treaty of Guadalupe Hildalgo.
1822 A.D. - 1848 A.D.	Mexican	1836-Rancho land grants to private owners begins. 1834-Mission secularization decreed. 1822-Mexican independence from Spain.
1782 A.D. - 1822 A.D.	Spanish	1782-Mission San Buenaventura established. Ventura founded.
1,000 B.C. - 1782 A.D.	Chumash	1769-Portola's Expedition. 1602-Vizcaino visits. 1942-Cabrillo visits. 1000 (B.C.)-Chumash become coastal occupants.
35,000 B.C. - 1,000 B.C.	Early Indian	
Before 35,000 B.C.	No Human Occupance	

\*These dates represent approximate periods of occupancy.

Reference: Lantis, Steiver, and Karinen, 1973

TABLE 2.5.2-I

KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE VICINITY  
OF THE OXNARD PLAIN

<u>Site Number*</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	Shell midden; village site
4	Village site
11	Shell midden
13	Artifacts
16	Shell midden
17	Shell midden
18	Shell midden
19	Shell fragments
20	Shell midden; probable campsite
21	Small campsite
22	Scattered shells
23	Scattered shells
25	Shell fragments
31	Village site above Santa Clara River
32	Cemetery site
33	A "metate feature" site
34	A "metate feature" site
58	Habitation area; artifacts
59	Former habitation area
63	Occupation site
82	Mission aqueduct; grinding tools
84	Thin shell midden; no obvious artifacts
87	Indian artifacts site
88	Small area of scattered shells
89	Large shell midden
90	Scattered shells
91	Scattered shells

TABLE 2.5.2-I - continued

KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE VICINITY  
OF THE OXNARD PLAIN

<u>Site Number*</u>	<u>Description</u>
97	Shell midden
98	Shell midden
99	Shell midden
100	Four midden areas
101	Four small midden areas
102	Shell midden
103	Shell midden
104	Two areas of scattered shells
105	Small triangular shaped midden area
106	Three rock shelters with midden aprons
107	Four small areas of scattered shells
108	Large area of scattered shells
110	Shell midden
113	Flat area near river
144	Middens and burial area
166	Old village
167	Shell midden
168	Habitation area
169	Shell midden
174	Shell midden
183	Rock shelter
184	Open; shell midden
187	Cemetery; five burial sites
196	(site survey records unavailable)
223	(site survey records unavailable)
224	(site survey records unavailable)

\*Ventur

a County Archaeological Site Identification Number

Reference: University of California, 1973

LISTING OF RECREATION FACILITIESParksState Beach Parks

San Buenaventura (Ventura)  
McGrath (Oxnard)

County of Ventura Parks

Hollywood Beach (Oxnard)  
Silver Strand Beach (Oxnard)

City Parks

Anacapa (Ventura)  
Arroyo Verde (Ventura)  
Rudolph Beck (Oxnard)  
Joseph L. Bolker (Oxnard)  
Bubbling Springs Community (Oxnard)  
Cabrillo (Oxnard)  
Carty (Oxnard)  
Channel Islands (Oxnard)  
Colonia Memorial (Oxnard)  
Dos Caminos (Camarillo)  
W. Mark Durley Community (Oxnard)  
Eastwood Memorial (Oxnard)  
Grant (Ventura)  
Hueneme City Beach (Port Hueneme)  
Walter Herbert Lathrop (Oxnard)  
Olivas (Ventura)  
Oxnard Shores (Oxnard)  
Plaza (Oxnard)  
Plaza (Ventura)  
Pleasant Valley (Camarillo)  
Reynolds (Ventura)  
Rose (Oxnard)  
Seaside Park and Ventura  
County Fairgrounds (Ventura)  
Junipero Serra (Ventura)  
Thompson (Oxnard)

Marinas (Public)

Channel Islands Harbor (Oxnard)  
Ventura Marina (Ventura)

TABLE 2.5.3-I - continued  
LISTING OF RECREATION FACILITIES

Deep Sea Sport Fishing Landings

Channel Islands Sport Fishing (at Channel Islands Harbor)  
Port Hueneme Sportfishing (at Port Hueneme Harbor)  
Ventura Landing Sportfishing (at Ventura Marina)

Piers (Public)

Hueneme Public Fishing Pier (east of Port Hueneme Harbor)  
Ventura Pier (Harbor Street, Ventura)

Golf Courses

Public

Buenaventura Golf Course (Ventura)  
Olivas Park Golf Course (Ventura)  
Saticoy Public Links Golf Course (Saticoy)  
Silver K Golf Course (Oxnard)

Private

Hueneme Bay Golf Club (Port Hueneme)  
Las Posas Country Club (Camarillo)  
Saticoy Country Club (Saticoy)

Government

John E. Clark Golf Course (U.S. Navy, Point Mugu)  
Seabee Golf Course (U.S. Navy, Port Hueneme)

**Reference:** California Department of Parks  
and Recreation, 1971.