

PRESENTATION BY MAYOR JANE M. TOLMACH TO
V. C. COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JULY 17, 1973

MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE BOARD, MY NAME IS JANE TOLMACH, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OXNARD. I AM HERE TODAY AT THE DIRECTION OF THE OXNARD CITY COUNCIL TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT THE OXNARD COLLEGE. I WAS ACCOMPANIED TO THIS MEETING BY SEVERAL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY WHO ARE ALSO VERY INTERESTED IN THE OXNARD COLLEGE; THIS DELEGATION INCLUDES REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OXNARD ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND OXNARD'S NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL ORGANIZATION.

ON JULY 10, 1973, THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. 6050 URGING THE VENTURA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO REAFFIRM ITS PLEDGE TO CONSTRUCT A COLLEGE FACILITY IN OXNARD AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE. I BELIEVE EACH OF YOU HAS RECEIVED A COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION, SO I WILL NOT READ IT HERE THIS AFTERNOON. HOWEVER, I WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS SOME OF THE POINTS SET FORTH IN THAT RESOLUTION.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MORE RECENTLY ELECTED MEMBERS, I WOULD LIKE TO BRIEFLY REVIEW SOME OF THE BACKGROUND OF THE OXNARD COLLEGE ISSUE. PRIOR TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT IN 1962, THERE WAS AN ACTIVE OPPOSITION WITHIN OXNARD TO THE PROPOSED COUNTY-WIDE COLLEGE DISTRICT. IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT THE DISTRICT COULD HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED WITHOUT THE STRONG EFFORT TO COUNTERACT THIS OPPOSITION WHICH WAS UNDERTAKEN IN OXNARD. I MIGHT ADD, PARENTHETICALLY, THAT THOSE OF US WHO PARTICIPATED IN THAT EFFORT TO PROMOTE THE DISTRICT'S ESTABLISHMENT ARE ESPECIALLY DISAPPOINTED AT THE SLOW PROGRESS WHICH THE DISTRICT HAS MADE IN CONSTRUCTING A COLLEGE IN OXNARD. ALTHOUGH IN 1962 BOARD MEMBERS GENERALLY AGREED THAT THE OXNARD AREA HAD THE GREATEST NEED FOR A NEW COLLEGE, ACTION WAS TAKEN TO FIRST RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF THE EASTERN COUNTY AREA. THE OXNARD COMMUNITY SUPPORTED THAT EFFORT WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE EASTERN COUNTY WOULD, IN TURN, SUPPORT AN OXNARD COLLEGE. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS SUPPORT WAS NOT TO BE FORTHCOMING IN THE TWO SUBSEQUENT BOND ELECTIONS WHICH WOULD HAVE ALLOWED THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE

OXNARD COLLEGE. AFTER THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MOORPARK CAMPUS, THE DISTRICT DID PURCHASE A 118 ACRE SITE IN OXNARD IN 1968 AND BEGAN PLANNING FOR THE COLLEGE FACILITY. THIS SITE PLANNING WAS UNDERTAKEN IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE CITY OF OXNARD SINCE THE CITY HAD ACQUIRED 50 ACRES DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO THE COLLEGE SITE FOR DEVELOPMENT AS A REGIONAL PARK; THE DELAY OF THE OXNARD COLLEGE PROJECT HAS, OF COURSE, POSTPONED THE INITIATION OF THIS SORELY NEEDED PARK FACILITY. DESPITE THE FAILURE OF THE 1970 BOND ELECTION WHICH WOULD HAVE ALLOWED FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE OXNARD COLLEGE, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MAINTAINED ITS PLEDGE TO BUILD THE OXNARD COLLEGE. IN FACT, PRIOR TO THE SUBSEQUENT BOND ELECTION IN 1972, THE BOARD INDICATED THAT, IF THAT BOND ELECTION FAILED, THE STIERN BILL WOULD BE USED TO FINANCE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OXNARD COLLEGE; THIS APPROACH IS AVAILABLE SINCE THE OXNARD COLLEGE PROJECT HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET.

TO THE OXNARD COLLEGE,
IN LIGHT OF THIS LONGSTANDING COMMITMENT, WE WERE UNDERSTANDBLY SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT THE PROPOSED DISTRICT BUDGET FOR FY 1973-74 INCLUDES NO FUNDS FOR PHASE I OF THE OXNARD COLLEGE PROJECT. HOWEVER, THE BUDGET DOES INCLUDE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUNDS FOR MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS AT BOTH VENTURA AND MOORPARK COLLEGES. WHILE THESE BUILDINGS MAY BE NEEDED, WE FIND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND HOW THEY CAN POSSIBLY RECEIVE HIGHER PRIORITY THAN PHASE I OF THE OXNARD COLLEGE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE CONTINUED EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAMS AT VENTURA AND MOORPARK COLLEGE MAY ALSO LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF OPERATING FUNDS WHICH WILL BE AVAILABLE TO OXNARD COLLEGE. WE THINK IT WHOLLY INADVISABLE TO ADD TO THIS POTENTIAL PROBLEM BY CONTINUING TO EXPAND THE PROGRAMS OF THE OTHER CAMPUSES.

IT IS REALLY UNNECESSARY FOR US TO EXPLAIN THE CRITICAL NEED FOR A COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACILITY IN THE OXNARD AREA; THIS NEED HAS BEEN WELL DOCUMENTED BY YOUR STAFF ON MANY OCCASIONS IN THE PAST. YOU ARE ALL WELL AWARE THAT THE OXNARD AREA IS THE LARGEST URBAN CENTER WITHIN THE DISTRICT; IT IS THE AREA WITH THE GREATEST NEED FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS WHICH FACILITATE THE TRANSITION FROM AN AGRICULTURAL TO A HIGHLY DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY; IT IS THE AREA WITH THE GREATEST NUMBER OF MINORITY GROUP MEMBERS AND ECONOMICALLY

IT IS BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANCE AND IMMEDIACY OF THESE NEEDS THAT WE ASK THE DISTRICT TO UNDERTAKE RESPONSIVE ACTION. WE CERTAINLY DO NOT FEEL THIS REQUEST WILL BE VIEWED AS UNREASONABLE WHEN THE BOARD CONSIDERS THAT OXNARD PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COLLEGE DISTRICT, THAT OXNARD'S HIGH ASSESSED VALUATION HAS BEEN LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOORPARK COLLEGE AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF VENTURA COLLEGE, AND THAT THE MANY MILLIONS OF TAX DOLLARS WHICH OXNARD AREA RESIDENTS HAVE PAID TO THE DISTRICT HAVE ALLOWED THE COLLEGE DISTRICT TO MAINTAIN A FINE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.

AFTER CAREFULLY CONSIDERING THE NEED FOR AN OXNARD COLLEGE AND THE OXNARD AREA'S CONTINUING CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISTRICT, THE OXNARD CITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS. FIRST, WE APPLAUD THE DISTRICT'S PLANS TO EXPAND ITS OFFERING OF CLASSES IN THE OXNARD AREA THIS FALL; THIS WILL HELP TO PROVIDE AN INTERIM RESPONSE TO THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY UNTIL THE OXNARD COLLEGE CAN BE CONSTRUCTED. HOWEVER, WE ALSO URGE THE BOARD TO REORDER ITS PRIORITIES IN A MANNER WHICH ALLOWS THE DISTRICT TO IMPLEMENT PHASE I OF THE OXNARD COLLEGE PROJECT DURING FY 1973-74. WE ALSO ENCOURAGE THE BOARD, IN UPDATING ITS "TEN YEAR MASTER PLAN" FOR SUBMISSION TO THE STATE, TO ESTABLISH THE MOST EXPEDITIOUS POSSIBLE SCHEDULE FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE OXNARD COLLEGE. WE BELIEVE THIS COURSE OF ACTION IS FULLY CONSISTENT WITH THE BOARD'S PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT OF THE NEED FOR THE OXNARD COLLEGE AS EXPRESSED ON PAGE 4 OF SECTION 4 OF THE "TEN YEAR CONSTRUCTION PLAN" DATED NOVEMBER 1, 1972; I QUOTE "AN EARLY OPENING OF OXNARD COLLEGE IS ESSENTIAL TO PROVIDE EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE DISTRICT".

THE OXNARD CITY COUNCIL APPRECIATES THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO YOU ON THIS MATTER. MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND THE OXNARD COMMUNITY ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS WE HAVE PLACED BEFORE YOU. THANK YOU.

-- END --