Section 5.0: Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes and Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

The approval of the proposed Guasti Plaza Specific Plan Amendment and future residential development that may be built on the site, as allowed under a proposed Residential Overlay Zone in the amended Specific Plan, would result in some forms of irreversible environmental changes. Primary resources that would be eliminated include the incremental loss of vacant land in the City of Ontario. However, the site is designated for urban uses under the City's Land Use Plan and Zoning Map and the Guasti Plaza Specific Plan. Thus, development with urban uses has been anticipated and would likely occur in the future.

Future residential development would entail the commitment of energy and natural resources for construction and operation of residential land uses. This commitment would be proportionate with that of other development projects of similar land use and size. Labor would also be committed for the construction of buildings and the upgrading and maintenance of infrastructure systems and public facilities necessary to support the proposed development. The use of these non-renewable resources would be short-term but irreversible. Once constructed, occupancy of the dwelling units on the site would also entail a commitment of energy resources in the form of fossil fuels and electricity. This commitment would be a long-term obligation, since the proposed structures are likely to have a useful life of 30 years or more. However, future energy consumption is not considered a significant adverse environmental impact.

In addition, future residential development under the proposed Amendment would involve the following environmental changes:

- The development of approximately 11.72 acres of land with residential uses would result in the loss of largely vacant land and the potential to return the site to a primarily undeveloped condition. On-site improvements would include roadways, residential structures, and infrastructure systems. The site would become an urbanized area, similar to the more developed sections of the City. Removal of all proposed buildings and infrastructure would be necessary to revert the site back to its largely vacant condition.

- Future residential development would introduce as many as 500 households, with approximately 1,001 residents who would be residing at the project site. The introduction of residents to the site could only be reversed with the discontinuation of residential land uses.

- Approximately 2,993 new vehicle trips by residential uses could be generated and would utilize area roadways and freeways such as Turner Avenue, New Guasti Road, Old Guasti Road, Archibald Avenue, I-10 Freeway, internal roads, and other surrounding roadways. Future residential development would include the construction of on-site and adjacent roadways, as well as the payment of fees to fund roadway improvements in the City. These would allow the local roadway network to handle the additional vehicle trips at acceptable levels of service. These trips would occur until the discontinuation of residential uses.

- Pollutant emissions from construction activities would occur but would be short-term and would be minimized by the implementation of standard conditions and mitigation measures. New vehicle trips on the roadway network would also generate air pollutants associated with vehicle exhaust. Stationary source pollutants from residential uses would also add to area-wide and basin-wide air pollution levels. These emissions would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds of significance. However, future development would contribute to existing

violations of ozone and particulate matter standards and would not be consistent with the AQMP.

- Future residential development would be exposed to diesel exhaust from trains and freeway trucks near the site. Impacts on residents would be less than significant after mitigation and would occur until the discontinuation of residential land uses.

- Construction noise impacts would be incremental, temporary, and short-term as buildings, roads, and infrastructure systems are constructed on and near the site. Future residential development would also introduce long-term noise from vehicles traveling to and from the site. Stationary noise would also be generated by residential uses and maintenance activities at the site. While exterior and interior noise levels from on-site uses and passing vehicles can be reduced by perimeter walls and acoustical treatment of structures, the impacts would continue for the life of the noise source.

- Future residential development would be exposed to noise levels that exceed the City's exterior noise standards, due to train, aircraft and freeway/roadway noise near the site. This impact would occur until the discontinuation of residential land uses.

- Future residential development would require grading, which would permanently alter the surface soils and topography of the project site. However, the project site has a relatively flat terrain and future residential development under the proposed Specific Plan Amendment is expected to maintain the flat terrain. Excavation activities needed for the construction of future structures, roadways, and infrastructure would alter the surface soils on the site. This impact would be irreversible but not significant.

- Future residential development would change drainage patterns at the site and increase stormwater runoff volumes and rates into the storm drain system serving the site. Changes in stormwater runoff quality would also occur as pollutants associated with residential uses and maintenance activities are introduced into the stormwater. Stormwater pollutant treatment control measures would reduce soil erosion and pollutants during construction, use and occupancy of the dwelling units. This impact would be irreversible but not significant after mitigation.

- Future residential development would lead to the disturbance and removal of existing vegetation on-site, including the loss of ruderal vegetation and non-native grasses Ornamental trees would remain in place or be transplanted. Loss of foraging and nesting sites and habitat for common wildlife species, the California mastiff bat, migratory birds, and the burrowing owl would be mitigated by the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures. This impact would be irreversible but considered less than significant after mitigation.

- Future development within Guasti Plaza would include the rehabilitation and reuse of existing historic structures on the site, as well as the relocation of 2 historic structures into the site. Compliance with the recommended mitigation measures would prevent any significant adverse impacts. Exterior and interior changes to structures to allow for future reuse would be irreversible but impacts are expected to be less than significant after mitigation.

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- The project site does not possess any significant energy, oil, or agricultural resources that would be adversely affected by future residential development. Commitment of energy, water, and other natural resources for the construction, use and occupancy of the residences would occur. Resource utilization would be irreversible but is not expected to represent a significant use of available resources in the region.

- The increase in demand for public services would be served by current facilities and staffing of public service agencies. Payment of development impact fees would allow public facilities (fire, schools, libraries, and police) to expand or upgrade services and facilities to provide adequate services to the site and the City. Annual review of service levels for fire and police services would ensure acceptable service levels. This demand would continue to occur as long as future residential development on the site is in use.

- Future residential development would generate a demand for public utilities and would require the extension of existing infrastructure lines. The demands for electrical power, natural gas, water, sewage treatment, storm drainage, and solid waste disposal that would be required to serve the project site are within available supplies, resources, and facility capacities, with implementation of the standard conditions. This demand would continue to occur as long as future residential development on the site is in use.

- Future residential development may store, generate, utilize, or dispose of hazardous materials and hazardous wastes. Residential use would be limited to household quantities and is not expected to pose public health or safety hazards to the residents or adjacent land uses. The use of hazardous materials by future residential development would be made in accordance with current regulations. This impact would continue for the life of the development.

- Future residential development would be exposed to hazards posed by nearby trains, airport operations and jet fuel lines. Impacts would be less than significant after mitigation and would occur until the discontinuation of residential land uses.

- Future residential development would change the visual quality of the site through the construction of residential structures and other aboveground improvements. New light sources would also be introduced to the environment with future residential development under the proposed Specific Plan Amendment. Changes in the visual and aesthetic quality of the site would be irreversible.

- Future residential development would generate greenhouse gases that would contribute to global warming potential. These gases would be generated until the discontinuation of residential land uses on the site.

The loss of on-site vegetation, changes in surface soils, the commitment of energy and mineral resources, and changes to the existing historic structures would be irreversible but less than significant after mitigation. All other environmental changes can be reversed with the complete demolition of improvements and structures built on the site and the discontinuation of the proposed residential uses. Thus, returning the site to a largely vacant condition would eliminate most of the environmental changes outlined above. However, once developed, the site is unlikely to revert to an undeveloped state permanently. Rather, the site will most likely be redeveloped with other land uses or a higher intensity use.

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Based on the analyses in Section 4.0 of this SEIR, the environmental changes that would accompany future residential development under the proposed Amendment can be reduced to below levels of significance with the implementation of standard conditions and the recommended mitigation measures, expect for traffic, air quality, noise, and greenhouse gases and climate change. Transportation and circulation impacts would remain significant until off-site roadway and intersection improvements are implemented by the City under its Development Impact Fee program. Also, exterior noise levels from the adjacent freeway, railroad tracks, and aircraft overflights would exceed City standards for residential uses. Pollutant emissions and GHG emissions from future residential development would contribute to existing violations of clean air standards and to climate change, respectively.

These impacts would remain significant and unavoidable even after mitigation. However, discontinuation of residential uses on the site would eliminate the need for traffic improvements and noise exposure of future residential development that would be allowed under the proposed Specific Plan Amendment. It would also eliminate long term air pollutant emissions and GHG emissions.