

3.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section reviews population and housing conditions for Sonoma County and the vicinity of the proposed project. Although the project would be constructed within a specific group of parcels, population and housing impacts have the potential to extend beyond the physical project area. As such, the study area analyzed in this section is Sonoma County Planning Region 5, the Santa Rosa and Environs Planning Area, as designated in the Sonoma County General Plan. The Santa Rosa and Environs Planning Area includes the proposed project site, the City of Santa Rosa, and the unincorporated Mark West Springs area to the north.

3.12.1 Environmental Setting

The site is located at the interchange of US 101 and Mark West Springs Road. It is generally bordered by US 101 on the west, Mark West Springs Road on the north, Old Redwood Highway on the east, and vineyards on the south. Residential development surrounds the site to the east and north.

Growth in Sonoma County and its incorporated cities is the result of both new residential development and annexations of existing households. Net population changes in the unincorporated areas include losses due to annexations into urban service areas as well as growth attributed to new residential development, while growth in cities is attributed to increases from annexations as well as new development. By 2020, the population of the nine Sonoma County cities is expected to increase by approximately 68,350 persons and contain 73 percent of the county's total population, compared to 68 percent in 1990. The unincorporated areas are expected to add a net growth of about 19,100 persons and contain 27 percent of the total county population, down from 32 percent in 1990. This pattern of growth with most of the new development occurring in cities as opposed to unincorporated areas is in compliance with the General Plan 2020 policy of slowing the growth in unincorporated areas of Sonoma County and having new development locate within pre-existing city boundaries.

The two most significant demographic trends shown in the 2000 census data are the percent change in Latino populations, doubling from 6.9 percent in 1980 to 17.3 percent in 2000, and the aging of the county's population. Between 1990 and 2000, the total number of persons between the ages of 18 and 44 grew by 2 percent compared to 36 percent over the 1980 to 1990 period. At the same time, the number of persons between the ages of 45 and 64 age range grew by nearly 65 percent, compared to 26 percent over the 1980 to 1990 period. These trends were more pronounced in the unincorporated areas, where housing costs during the late 1990s discouraged families with children from living in Sonoma County, particularly in costly rural areas.

Overall, housing unit growth in Sonoma County has decreased in the unincorporated county since 1990 and is projected to continue on that track. Between 1990 and 2000 the county added 19,353 units of which 4,157 (21%) were constructed outside of city limits. From 2000 to 2006 13,397 units were added with 2,520 (19%) units constructed within the unincorporated county. Projections for housing growth from 2007 to 2014 estimate 13,650 units within the county with 1,364 (10%) units constructed in the unincorporated county (Sonoma County General Plan 2020, ABAG 2014 housing projections, California Department of Finance E-5 Estimates).

3.12.2 Impact Analysis

3.12.2.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

According to Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the proposed project could have a significant impact if it would:

- Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure);
- Displace substantial amounts of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; or
- Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

3.12.2.2 *Approach and Methodology*

The population and housing effects that could result from the implementation of the proposed project are evaluated in the context of current and projected population for the Santa Rosa and Environs Planning Area.

3.12.2.3 *Less Than Significant Impacts Not Requiring Further Analysis*

No housing exists at the project site, and no people reside there. Therefore, no residences or people will be displaced by the proposed project.

3.12.2.4 *Impacts and Mitigation*

Impact PH-1: Indirect Growth Inducement Implementation of the proposed project could indirectly induce growth in the area.

Significance: Less than significant

Discussion:

Changes in population, employment, and housing demand are social and economic effects, not environmental effects. According to CEQA and *CEQA Guidelines* (see Section 15382), these effects should be considered in an EIR only to the extent that they create adverse impacts on the physical environment. Typically, a significant impact on population and housing stems from the construction of new housing or facilities for services. An increase in population could result in increases in the demand for services and housing, the construction of which could result in significant environmental impacts.

The project would not directly or indirectly induce new growth. Sutter Hospital is replacing facilities that currently exist at the Chanate facility in Santa Rosa with new facilities at the proposed site at 50 Mark West Springs Road. The LBMF is not expanding their presentation of fine arts entertainment and education at the WFC and will not increase the number of full-time employees. The project would improve road conditions and provide signalization of the shared entry road, provide new infrastructure on-site, and enhance fire flow. However, the

improvement of road conditions addresses existing deficiencies and provides adequate access to the hospital, rather than providing access to currently undeveloped areas. Road improvements address safety issues (e.g., signalization, or ambulance access to the hospital).

A General Plan amendment would be required to include the project site within the Urban Service Boundary, in order to allow annexation to the Airport-Larkfield-Wikiup Sanitation Zone. While these actions are requested only for the project site, it is possible that expansion of these boundaries could induce nearby development. Medical support businesses, as well as retail and other goods and services that support the employees may establish themselves in the project vicinity. These would have the potential to induce growth through the jobs they create, however this growth is expected to be within the projected growth predicted by the Sonoma County General Plan 2020 and analyzed in the General Plan EIR.

The project could attract support and ancillary business development to the area. However, this localized growth in businesses should not have an impact on population and housing because there would not be a net increase in the creation of jobs. While new businesses may locate near the new hospital facility, businesses that serve the current hospital will either shut down or relocate near the new hospital site. With no new jobs being created, impacts associated with population and housing increases as a result of the proposed project will be less than significant.

No people or housing units are being displaced by the proposed project due to no residences being located on the project site. As a result no new housing units will need to be constructed because of the project. With the project not inducing population growth and not displacing residents population and housing impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation required

**Impact PH-2:
Cumulative Population
and Housing Impacts** Implementation of the proposed project could result in a considerable contribution to significant cumulative population and housing impacts.

Significance: Less than significant

Discussion:

The project consists of the replacement of an existing hospital with new facilities and thus does not result in the creation of new jobs or an increased demand for housing. Thus, no cumulative impact on population and housing is expected.

Mitigation: No mitigation required

