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## 14. POPULATION AND HOUSING

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This EIR chapter describes population and housing characteristics in Solano County and the plan area vicinity and identifies the anticipated impacts of the proposed Specific Plan on those characteristics. The demographic information presented in this chapter also provides the statistical basis for determining population- and housing-related impacts in other chapters of this EIR (e.g., climate change, public services and utilities, etc.).

### 14.1 SETTING

The population and housing information described in this section is based on the most recent existing and projected long-term household and population data for Solano County developed by the Bay Area's designated regional land use planning agency, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). Every two years, ABAG issues long-term growth forecasts for each of its member cities and counties. The latest ABAG *Projections and Priorities 2009* forecasts are designed to be realistic assessments of growth based on emerging market and demographic trends and land available for development, as determined by local land use policy.<sup>1</sup>

#### 14.1.1 Population

Table 14.1 shows projected 2010 and 2030 population in Solano County, based on demographic data developed by ABAG. As shown, unincorporated Solano County's projected year 2010 population of 23,000 is projected to grow to 25,800 by 2030, a 12-percent increase over the 20-year period. The population of unincorporated Solano County represented approximately 5.2 percent of the countywide population in 2010 and would also represent approximately 5.2 percent of the countywide population in 2030.

#### 14.1.2 Housing

Table 14.1 and the following discussion describe ABAG estimates of existing and projected household totals for Solano County. The terms "households" and "dwelling units," as defined by ABAG, are similar but not equivalent; a household is defined as an occupied dwelling unit.

In 2010, ABAG projected that there would be approximately 7,830 households in unincorporated Solano County and approximately 8,680 households by 2030, representing a projected 10.9-percent increase. The number of households in the unincorporated area is projected to represent approximately 5.3 percent of the countywide total in 2010 and approximately 5.2 percent of the countywide total in 2030.

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<sup>1</sup>ABAG, *Projections and Priorities 2009: Building Momentum*, August 2009; pages 132-134.

Table 14.1

**PROJECTED SOLANO COUNTY POPULATION AND HOUSING GROWTH, 2010-2030**

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>Change 2005-2030</u>	<u>Percent Change 2005-2030</u>
<b>Unincorporated Solano County</b>				
Total population	23,500	25,800	+2,800	+12.17
Total households	7,830	8,680	+850	+10.86
Persons per household	2.94	2.97	+0.02	+0.68
<b>Total Solano County (unincorporated area + cities)</b>				
Total population	443,100	495,800	+52,700	+11.89
Total households	148,160	166,490	+18,330	+12.37
Persons per household	2.88	2.88	0.00	0.00

SOURCE: ABAG, Projections and Priorities 2009, August 2009.

**14.1.4 Existing Population in the Specific Plan Area**

The Middle Green Valley Specific Plan area contains approximately 55 single-family houses and ancillary agricultural structures.<sup>1</sup> The houses are located in small subdivisions and on larger agricultural parcels on both the east and west sides of Green Valley Road, as shown on Figure 12.5 in chapter 12, Land Use and Planning, of this EIR.

Assuming a total of 55 single-family houses and 2.93 persons per household (the average household size in unincorporated Solano County between 2005 and 2010), the existing population in the plan area is approximately 160 people.

**14.2 PERTINENT PLANS AND POLICIES**

CEQA requires an EIR to identify the plan and policy setting within which the project is proposed and discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and these applicable plans and policies adopted to minimize environmental impacts [CEQA Guidelines sections 15124(b) and 15125(d)]. Adopted state and local policies and regulatory requirements pertinent to consideration of the potential population and housing impacts of the proposed Specific Plan are described below.

<sup>1</sup>Solano County, Middle Green Valley Specific Plan, Preliminary Draft, October 28, 2009, page 2-6.

### **14.2.1 Regional Housing Needs Allocation**

The State of California requires every city and county to accommodate its fair share of regional growth through a process called the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) administers the RHNA process in the San Francisco Bay Area. ABAG allocates housing needs to each of the nine counties and 100+ cities in the region, identifying the number of units that must be accommodated in each of four income categories. Although cities and counties are not actually required to build the allocated number of units, they must show that their communities contain the capacity to build these units, i.e., that land is zoned to accommodate the new units.

Table 14.2 shows the current RHNA assignment for unincorporated Solano County for the period from 2007 to 2014. As the table shows, the RHNA assignment calls for the unincorporated areas of the county to provide for development of a total of 99 housing units during the 2007-2014 period, consisting of 26 units for very low-income households, 16 units for low-income households, 18 units for moderate-income households, and 39 units for above moderate-income households.

### **14.2.2 Solano County General Plan**

Those policies and implementation programs from the 2008 Solano County General Plan that are pertinent to consideration of proposed Specific Plan and its potential population and housing impacts are listed below. Where any proposed Specific Plan land use and development policy or standard is found in this EIR to be potentially inconsistent with one or more of these policies or implementation programs, a potentially significant environmental impact and one or more associated mitigations is identified for incorporation into the Specific Plan to reduce the impact and better implement the General Plan. Otherwise, the proposed Specific Plan will be considered consistent with the population and housing goals, policies and implementation programs listed below.

The Land Use chapter of the Solano County General Plan contains the following policies relevant to consideration of the population and housing impacts of the proposed Specific Plan:

- *Provide sufficient residential lands jointly with the cities to meet Solano County's projected housing needs.* (Policy LU.P-13)
- *Require a variety of housing types (affordable and market rate) near jobs, services, transit, and other alternative transportation serving locations (e.g., rideshare lots).* (Policy LU.P-18)

In addition, the Housing Element of the General Plan contains objectives, policies, and programs formulated to achieve various socio-economic objectives with respect to the range of available housing types, special housing needs, neighborhood quality and character, and housing rehabilitation, as well as policies formulated to avoid undesirable adverse physical (environmental) housing and employment conditions. The listing that follows of pertinent policies from the Housing Element has been limited to those adopted for the purpose of

Table 14.2  
REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION (RHNA) FOR UNINCORPORATED SOLANO  
COUNTY, 2007-2014

<u>Income Category</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>Number of Housing Units</u>
Very Low Income	26
Low Income	16
Moderate Income	18
Above Moderate Income	39
<b>Total:</b>	<b>99</b>

SOURCE: Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), San Francisco Bay Area Housing Needs Plan, 2007-2014 (viewed at <http://www.abag.ca.gov/planning/pdfs/SFHousingNeedsPlan.pdf>), June 2008, pages 33 and 49.

<sup>1</sup> Income categories are defined as follows:

Very low income = up to 50 percent of regional median income

Low income = between 50 and 80 percent of regional median income

Moderate income = between 80 and 120 percent of regional median income

Above moderate income = above 120 percent of regional median income

avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect<sup>1</sup> (e.g., policies for identifying appropriate areas for housing development and appropriate types of housing):

- *In concert with the Cities provide sufficient land to accommodate Solano County's projected housing needs...* (Objective B)
- *The County shall seek to achieve coordination of housing goals, objectives, policies and plans between the County and the cities within the County. After accounting for housing production responsibility transferred to the Cities (see Programs, below), the County shall maintain an inventory of sites adequate to satisfy its remaining unmet need for housing production through the remainder of the Housing Element Planning period. Should the County satisfy all of its housing need allocations through production in the unincorporated area or by transferring responsibility to cities, the County shall maintain information regarding vacant land available within the unincorporated areas, such as English Hills and Homeacres, that is available and appropriate to accommodate additional housing development.* (Policy B.1)

<sup>1</sup>The CEQA Guidelines explain that an economic or social change alone is not considered a significant environmental effect, but an economic or social change or effect that can be related to a significant physical--i.e., "environmental"--change may be considered (CEQA Guidelines sections 15064(f) and 15382). In this light, the policies listed here are limited to those that appear to have been adopted for the purposes of avoiding or mitigating an adverse environmental effect.

- *The unincorporated County's principal housing role shall be to accommodate future residential development that constitutes an accessory use to agriculture (farm residence and farm labor quarters) and a moderate amount of rural residential development. (Policy B.2)*
- *Housing units in the unincorporated County shall consist primarily of single-family homes. These include conventional stick-built homes as well as manufactured dwellings certified under the National Mobile Home Construction and Safety Standard Act which meet minimum County architectural and development standards. (Policy B.3)*
- *The County shall actively encourage and facilitate the development of companion dwelling units, accessory dwelling units, and secondary dwelling units as a means to expand the overall supply of housing, especially as a means of providing relatively affordable housing for people employed in the agricultural areas, or for the elderly or disabled, who may need to receive assistance from a relative or caregiver residing on the same property. (Policy B.5)*
- *Provide housing to meet the needs of all economic segments of the community, including very low-, low-, moderate-, and above moderate-income households. While the County, in coordination with Solano County cities, will provide sites to accommodate its full housing need allocation for the planning period, it is recognized that the County does not directly participate in production of most new housing units and that the ultimate number of new housing units is highly dependent on factors beyond the County's control... (Objective C)*
- *The County shall make every effort to reduce the cost of housing to lower and moderate income groups through local, state and federal housing assistance programs. (Policy C.1)*
- *The County shall support the construction of new subsidized housing units in those areas which are best equipped to provide the necessary services and facilities to support such development, such as the Homeacres area. (Policy C.2)*
- *Manufactured, modular, and innovative housing designs that make use of new technologies and materials that bring about cost and energy efficiency shall be encouraged by the County. (Policy C.3)*
- *The County shall work and coordinate with public and non-profit agencies and the private sector in seeking solutions to providing affordable housing. (Policy C.5)*
- *Consistent with State laws, the County shall provide regulatory concessions for qualifying affordable housing developments. (Policy C.6)*
- *Where consistent with Solano County's local "smart growth" philosophy to direct most development to the cities, minimize constraints to the production of housing within the unincorporated areas of the County where limited residential development is appropriate. Coordinate to have the cities accept responsibility for housing production needs that cannot be met in the unincorporated areas. (Objective E)*
- *Take a leadership role to coordinate with the cities so that they collectively accept responsibility to provide sites within their boundaries to address any shortfall of sites to meet housing production needs in the unincorporated areas. (Policy E.1)*

- *Consistent with the requirements of SB 520, remove constraints and allow for “reasonable accommodations” for the disabled in housing development standards. (Policy E.2)*

### **14.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

#### **14.3.1 Significance Criteria**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines,<sup>1</sup> the proposed Specific Plan would be considered in this EIR to have a significant adverse impact on population and housing conditions if it would:

- (a) induce substantial population growth either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure); or
- (b) displace substantial numbers of people or existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

#### **14.3.2 Relevant Project Characteristics**

The land uses proposed by the Specific Plan are described in chapter 2, Project Description, and chapter 12, Land Use and Planning, of this EIR. In summary, the Specific Plan proposes development of:

- up to 400 new primary housing units, at densities ranging from one housing unit per five acres to up to eight units per acre; and
- up to 100 new secondary housing units.

This EIR assumes that, with development as proposed by the Specific Plan, all 55 housing units that currently exist in the plan area would remain.

#### **14.3.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

**Growth Inducement Impact.** Residential development in accordance with the Specific Plan would produce an increase of up to 400 new primary housing units, plus an additional increase of up to 100 new secondary housing units. These new housing units would accommodate an increase of approximately 1,485 residents, assuming an average of 2.97 people per household (the ABAG-projected average household size for unincorporated Solano County in 2030). Based on standard job rates for retail and industrial (including agricultural production) areas, the proposed neighborhood commercial and agricultural tourism areas would provide jobs for an estimated 136 additional employees in the plan area. Other proposed uses, such as the chapel, farm stand, recreation center, land conservancy office, and inn, would produce an additional

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<sup>1</sup>CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, Items XII(a) through XII(c).

small number of jobs.<sup>1</sup> Development in accordance with the Specific Plan would also extend roads and other infrastructure to the area.

The estimated population increase of 1,485 residents would represent approximately 5.8 percent of the ABAG-projected year 2030 population total of 25,800 for unincorporated Solano County and approximately 0.3 percent of the ABAG-projected 2030 population total of 562,900 for Solano County as a whole. The approximately 136 jobs produced by Specific Plan development would represent about one percent of the ABAG-projected 2030 job total of 11,260 for unincorporated Solano County and less than one percent of the ABAG-projected 2030 job total of 196,730 for the county as a whole.

These Specific Plan-generated population, housing and job increments would be generally consistent with the land use provisions of the Solano County General Plan and in and of themselves would represent a **less-than-significant environmental impact** (see criterion [a] under subsection 14.3.1, "Significance Criteria," above). As described in chapters 3 through 17 of this EIR, however, the Specific Plan-related household and population increases and infrastructure extensions would contribute to associated **potentially significant project and cumulative physical impacts**, including significant air quality, climate change, cultural and historic resources, hazardous materials exposure risk, noise, public services and utilities, and transportation impacts. These related impacts and associated mitigation measures are described in detail in chapters 3 through 17 of this EIR.

**Mitigation.** No significant adverse direct population or housing growth impact has been identified; no mitigation is required. Implementation of the mitigation measures identified in other chapters of this EIR related to project population-induced environmental impacts (e.g., air quality, noise, public services and utilities, and transportation) would reduce identified environmental impacts associated with the project-related population housing and employment increases to a **less-than-significant level**, with the exception of the unavoidable project impacts listed in section 20.2 (Significant Unavoidable Impacts) of this Draft EIR, which after implementation of the associated mitigation measures identified in this EIR would remain **significant and unavoidable**.

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**Housing Supply Impact.** The proposed Specific Plan would provide for an increase of up to 400 new primary housing units, plus the potential for up to 100 new secondary housing units. This housing unit increase would result in a local housing supply benefit and would exceed the County's ABAG-identified Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for 2007 through 2014 (99 housing units). The contribution to the ABAG-identified housing need for each income category ("very low," "low," "moderate," and "above moderate") has not been established. Housing development enabled by the Specific Plan would also further Solano County General Plan policies calling for rural residential development, secondary dwelling units as a means to expand the overall supply of housing, and provision of sufficient residential lands to meet the

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<sup>1</sup>Job estimates are based on the non-residential square footages listed in section 14.3.2 and the following job rates: 1 employee per 450 square feet of retail space (which applies to the proposed 10,000 square feet of "agricultural tourism retail" and up to 10,000 square feet of neighborhood commercial retail space), 1 employee per 350 square feet of office space, and 1 employee per 800 square feet of industrial space (which applies to the proposed 50,000 square feet of "agricultural commodity processing and commercial nurseries").

county's projected housing needs. The Specific Plan would therefore have a generally **beneficial impact** on the local housing supply.

**Mitigation.** No significant impact has been identified; no mitigation is required.

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**Cumulative Population and Housing Impacts.** In addition to the Specific Plan-facilitated housing unit, population, and job growth anticipated in the plan area, other development unrelated to the Specific Plan would continue to occur elsewhere in the county and subregion. This anticipated development would be required to be consistent with adopted General Plan policies for these areas. Thus, cumulative development and associated environmental impacts—including effects of cumulative housing unit, population, and job growth—have been considered in the preparation and adoption of the Solano County General Plan and County-certified General Plan EIR, as well as in similar documents prepared for and adopted in other nearby jurisdictions. The proposed Specific Plan, combined with anticipated development elsewhere in the county and subregion, would not result in any significant adverse cumulative impacts on population, housing, or employment. As described in chapters 3 through 17 of this EIR, however, cumulative household, population, and job increases would contribute to other types of **potentially significant cumulative physical (environmental) impacts**, including, for example, air quality, climate change and transportation impacts. These related cumulative impacts and associated mitigation measures are described in detail in chapters 3 through 17 of this EIR.

**Mitigation.** No significant cumulative population or housing impact has been identified; no mitigation is required.