

4.5 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section documents the existing population and housing conditions in the City of Rocklin and evaluates the effects on those conditions that would result with project implementation. This section also focuses on any population and housing changes that could trigger adverse physical environmental effects in the City or the region.

4.5.1 EXISTING SETTING

POPULATION

From 1990 to 2000, the population of the City of Rocklin increased from 19,033 to 36,330, representing a 91-percent increase over the 10-year period (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Population has continued to grow at a relatively rapid pace. The current population as of January 1, 2009 is estimated to be 54,754 (California Department of Finance Table E-5a 2009).

The *City of Rocklin General Plan* (City General Plan) identifies the City's planning area as all of the area within the City boundaries (approximately 12 square miles), plus an additional 9 square miles outside the City boundaries that are included within the City's sphere of influence. Substantial annexation activity occurred in the City since the last General Plan update. As of September 2003, approximately 19.8 square miles were within the City limits, with an additional 1.2 square miles outside the City boundaries, but within the City's sphere of influence. The population projections in the City General Plan were prepared in 1990 based on population projections included in the City's 1988 Public Facilities Master Plan, which assumed a growth rate of 8 percent through 2010. The City General Plan projected the population within Rocklin, including its sphere of influence, would be approximately 48,610 people by 2010 (City of Rocklin 1991). The City's existing population exceeded this projection by 6,144 people in 2009.

HOUSING

Rocklin is a community with a low vacancy rate and relatively small households, with housing prices and a residential population that have increased dramatically in the recent past. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that the number of housing units in Rocklin increased from 7,481 in 1990 to 14,421 in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). The City's housing growth rate was approximately 93 percent, with the supply and composition of housing changing very little in this 10-year period. In 1990, 68 percent of housing units were single-family detached structures. This increased to 71 percent in 2000. The State Department of Finance estimated a 2003 housing inventory of 18,048 with a similar distribution of housing types as in 2000 (City of Rocklin, 2004). As of 2007, Rocklin's housing stock consisted of 76% single family and 22% multi-family units (the rest are mobile homes) (Department of Finance 2009). The number of housing units in Rocklin is anticipated to increase with the construction of new and proposed residential projects. Median home prices within the city increased by 31.7 percent in a 1-year period (December 2004 to December 2005), from \$350,000 to \$461,000 (Sacramento Bee 2006). The median home price decreased slightly in 2007 to \$449,000 (City of Rocklin 2007).

According to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) (2000), a housing vacancy rate of 5 percent is considered normal. Vacancy rates below 5 percent indicate a housing shortage in a community. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that Rocklin had a vacancy rate of 1.7 percent for owner-occupied units and 17.1 percent for rental units in 2000. The high vacancy rate for rentals could be attributed to the fact that many large apartment complexes were under construction at the time of the Census and were not fully occupied. A survey conducted by the City in September 2001 indicates that the vacancy rate for apartments (as opposed to all rental units which include single-family homes, condominiums and townhomes, apartments, and other dwellings available for rent) is actually significantly lower than the overall rental vacancy rate documented by the Census. Of the 27 apartment complexes surveyed, the vacancy rate ranged from 0 to 4%. In addition, nearly all of

the publicly-assisted developments surveyed were fully occupied and had waiting lists. Placer County had a vacancy rate of 1.2 percent for owner-occupied units and 6.4 percent for rental units in 2000.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation

A Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP) is mandated by the State of California (Government Code Section 65584) for regions to address housing issues and needs based on future growth projections for the area. The RHNP is developed by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) and allocates to cities and counties their “fair share” of the region’s projected housing needs based on household income groupings over the planning period for each specific jurisdiction’s housing element. The RHNP also identifies and quantifies the existing housing needs for each jurisdiction.

On February 21, 2008, the SACOG Board of Directors adopted the 2006-2013 RHNP. Table 4.5-1 shows Rocklin’s portion of the regional housing allocation according to the four income groups.

Income Grouping	Additional Housing Units
Very low	671
Low	487
Moderate	484
Above moderate	596
Total	2,238
Source: SACOG 2008	

SACOG anticipates that a total of 2,238 housing units, allocated to income groups as listed above, would be needed to meet regional housing needs for Rocklin during the current planning period (2006-2013).

EMPLOYMENT

Employment growth is one of the primary determinants of housing demand. Working-age individuals will often choose a place to live based on their current or prospective places of employment. Therefore, employment trends are an important indicator of housing demand. The rate of employment growth, and the types of jobs most likely to be created, would determine how much housing would be needed by type and cost. For example, an economy based on seasonal tourism will generate different housing needs for local workers than an economy based on government, education, research, and technology.

As of 2006, the total employment within the City was 24,900 people and the unemployment rate was 2.5% (City of Rocklin 2007). As of January 2008, the total workforce in Rocklin is 27,000. With a 4% unemployment rate, 25,900 residents are employed (not seasonally adjusted) (California Employment Development Department 2008).

Per the 2000 Census, the two largest occupational categories for residents of the City were managerial/professional and sales/technical/administrative. These categories accounted for 44 percent and 31 percent of the employed residents, respectively. Other occupational categories in the city include services (10.8%), production and repair (7.1%), operators/fabricators/laborers (7.2%).

4.5.2 REGULATORY SETTING

CITY OF ROCKLIN GENERAL PLAN

The following goal and policies from the Housing Element of the City General Plan (2004) are applicable to the proposed project:

Goal 2: Facilitate the provision of a range of housing types to meet the diverse needs of the community.

- ▶ **Policy 2.1:** Provide high quality housing for current and future residents with a diverse range of income levels.
- ▶ **Policy 2.2:** Provide expanded housing opportunities for the community's workforce.

4.5.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

METHODOLOGY

The examination of population and housing conditions in this section is based on a review of the plans for the proposed project; review of available population and housing projections from the City, the U.S. Census Bureau, and other sources; and review of applicable elements and policies from the City General Plan. Population projections for the proposed project were calculated based on the construction of 179 single-family dwelling units multiplied by the City General Plan Housing Element estimate of 2.74 persons per dwelling unit (City of Rocklin 2004).

Specific indirect impacts associated with increased population and housing, such as traffic congestion, air quality degradation, and noise generation, are addressed in each technical section of this EIR, as appropriate. These technical sections provide a detailed analysis of other relevant environmental effects as a result of development of the project; therefore, discussion of indirect impacts is not duplicated in this section.

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

A population and housing impact is considered significant, as defined by the State CEQA Guidelines (Appendix G), if the proposed project would:

- ▶ induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (by proposed new homes and businesses) or indirectly (through the extension of roads or other infrastructure);
- ▶ generate a substantial demand for new housing, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts; or,
- ▶ displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The project site is currently vacant and the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. This issue area will not be evaluated further in this DEIR.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

IMPACT 4.5-1 **Increase in Housing Demand during Construction.** *Project implementation would increase construction employment within the City of Rocklin for the duration of the project's construction activities. Because an adequate labor force is available in the local region, this temporary increase in employment would not be expected to substantially increase the local demand for housing. This impact is considered **less than significant**.*

Project implementation would increase construction employment within the City of Rocklin for the duration of the project's construction activities. This temporary increase in employment could increase the demand for temporary housing. However, because the location of construction jobs moves frequently, construction workers tend to travel longer distances to a construction site, rather than move to the location of the project for short periods. According to the latest labor data available from the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), 1,164 residents in Rocklin and 10,860 residents in Placer County are employed in the construction industry. Construction workers serving the project would be expected to come from Rocklin and from nearby communities in Placer and Sacramento counties. There were almost 64,000 construction workers living in Placer, Sacramento, Yuba, Sutter, Nevada, and El Dorado counties as of the last census (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Due to the size of the construction industry in the region, the local labor supply is expected to be of sufficient size to meet the project's construction labor needs without requiring substantial employees from out of the region. Local construction workers that already have housing in the region would be expected to commute to the site while construction is ongoing. For construction workers located outside of the region, the temporary nature of the work would typically discourage a permanent relocation. Therefore, the anticipated temporary increase in construction employment would not be expected to result in a substantial demand for new housing within the City or region. This impact is considered **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measure 4.5-1: Increase in Housing Demand during Construction.

No mitigation is necessary.

IMPACT 4.5-2 **Increased Population Growth.** *The project would directly accommodate population growth in the City. However, the introduction of an additional 490 residents associated with project implementation would not be expected to create permanent employment growth nor would it be expected to cause other development that would result in significant adverse environmental impacts. The impact is considered **less than significant**.*

Implementation of the proposed project would be expected to increase the population in the City of Rocklin through the construction of 179 new single-family dwelling units. Based on the City General Plan Housing Element estimate of 2.74 persons per dwelling unit, the proposed project is estimated to accommodate 490 new residents in Rocklin at buildout.

Population growth by itself is not considered a significant environmental impact. Development of housing, infrastructure, and facilities and services to serve this growth can have significant environmental impacts through land conversion, commitment of resources, and other mechanisms. Direct impacts associated with the development needed to accommodate increased population are evaluated in appropriate sections of this DEIR. Growth-inducing impacts are detailed in Section 6.0 of this DEIR. Potential inconsistencies with local planning documents that may lead to significant environmental impacts are also evaluated in each section.

The project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (i.e., by proposed new unplanned homes) or indirectly (i.e., by fostering new businesses). The project is largely consistent with the on-site planned land uses as envisioned under the City's General Plan. As noted elsewhere in this document, the project proposes a General Plan amendment to change Low Density Residential, Retail Commercial, and Recreation/Conservation designations to Medium Density Residential and Low Density Residential. If the project were developed based on the land use designations in the General Plan, approximately 50 to 100 dwelling units

could be developed on the approximately 12 acres currently designated Medium Density Residential (using General Plan guidance for Medium Density Residential development of 4 to 8 dwelling units per acre). Approximately 33 to 100 units could be developed on the approximately 33 acres currently designated Low Density Residential (using General Plan guidance for Low Density Residential development of 1 to 3 dwelling units per acre). Approximately 13,500 square feet of retail building space could be developed on the 1.23 acres of Retail Commercial land on the project site under the General Plan. No development would occur on the approximately 10 acres with a Recreation/Conservation designation under the existing General Plan. While the proposed project could accommodate roughly 490 new residents, if the site were developed as envisioned under the General Plan, the City could anticipate approximately 227 to 548 new residents. Given the wide density ranges specified in the General Plan for residential development, the proposed land use designations for this project do not vary substantially from the existing General Plan land use designations. Therefore, the project does not directly induce substantial unplanned population growth.

The project also does not induce substantial population growth indirectly (through the extension of roads or other infrastructure). Roads are stubbed on the north side of the project site to connect to an area already designated for residential development (General Plan designation: LDR, Zoning: R1-12.5) by the City. This extension of infrastructure would not induce substantial population growth because the area to which the roads are stubbed is small (approximately 15 acres in size) and the area to which roads are extended is already planned and zoned for urban development.

The project does not generate a substantial demand for new housing, but rather provides housing. The project does not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing because no housing exists on the site. Therefore, this impact is considered **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measure 4.5-2: Increased Population Growth.

No mitigation is necessary.

