

## 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 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, 2006 is estimated to be 50,920 (California Department of Finance Table E-5a 2006).

The *City of Rocklin General Plan* (City General Plan) identified 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. As of September 2003, approximately 19.8 square miles are 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 2,310 people in 2006.

#### 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). The number of housing units in Rocklin is anticipated to increase with the construction of new and proposed residential projects, including the proposed 179-unit Rocklin 60 residential project located directly adjacent to the project site. 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 (City of Rocklin 2004). Placer County had a vacancy rate of 1.2 percent for owner-occupied units and 6.4 percent for rental units in 2000.

A survey conducted by the City in September 2001 indicated 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, reflecting the significant need for affordable rental housing (City of Rocklin 2004).

### 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. Table 4.5-1 shows Rocklin’s portion of the regional housing allocation according to the four income groups.

<b>Table 4-5.1 City of Rocklin Regional Housing Needs Allocation for 2000–2007</b>	
Income Grouping	Projected Housing Units (2007)
Very low	876
Low	610
Moderate	640
Above moderate	1,227
Total	3,353

Source: City of Rocklin 2004

SACOG anticipates that a total of 3,353 housing units, allocated to income groups as listed above, would be needed to meet regional housing needs for Rocklin during the current planning period (2000–2007) (City of Rocklin 2004).

### 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). 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%). Larger employers in the Rocklin area include high technology firms, such as Hewlett Packard, NEC, and Oracle. With over 5,000 employees, Hewlett Packard is by far the largest employer in the Rocklin area (City of Rocklin 2004).

## 4.5.2 REGULATORY SETTING

### CITY OF ROCKLIN GENERAL PLAN

The following policy from the Land Use Element of the City General Plan (1991) is applicable to the proposed project:

- ▶ **Policy LU-37:** To attract job generating land uses that will provide a variety of employment opportunities for those who live, or are likely to live, in the community or South Placer subregion.

## 4.5.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### METHOD OF ANALYSIS

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.

### 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**      **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**.*

4.5-1

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. 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 measures are necessary.

#### Level of Significance After Mitigation

The project's temporary demand for housing associated with construction employment would be considered a less-than-significant impact.

**IMPACT**     **Increase in Housing Demand during Operations.** *The proposed project could directly and indirectly induce population growth in Rocklin by generating employment for approximately 800 people. However, adequate housing is available within the City and the surrounding region to accommodate this population growth. Therefore, the project's contribution to population growth and its effect on the available housing supply would be considered a less-than-significant impact.*

4.5-2

The proposed project is generally consistent with the City's General Plan and by extension, the employment, commercial development, and housing assumptions evaluated in the City's General Plan EIR. The proposed project would require a General Plan Amendment to change approximately 1.23 acres from retail commercial/medium density residential to retail commercial. However, this General Plan amendment affects a very small portion of the proposed project site. Implementation of the proposed project would generate employment opportunities for current and future residents consistent with the General Plan's goals and policies. Also, new housing has been constructed in the recent past and is being constructed within the City, which could accommodate planned employment growth, consistent with the General Plan land use designations and the City's Housing Element requirements. The City's Housing Element identifies a number of multi-family housing developments that have been approved and completed in recent years including The Meridian (452 units), Sunset Summit (344 units), The Winstead (208 units), Stanford Heights (170 units), and Emerald Pointe (164 units). The 2004 Housing Element also identified two multi-family projects totaling 542 units as being under construction and a third project providing an additional 192 units as being approved (City of Rocklin 2004). Therefore, the project would not be expected to induce substantial unplanned population growth in either the City or in the counties of Sacramento or Placer.

The proposed project would generate new employment within the City of Rocklin, which could contribute to the demand for housing. At full buildout, the site is expected to employ approximately 800 people. The employment growth anticipated with the proposed project would represent an increase in total employment within the City of approximately 3.2%. However, due to the project's location along the primary transportation corridor within Placer County, employees for the project would be drawn from throughout the region. Also, due to the relatively high median home prices within the City and the majority of the project's employment consisting of lower-paying service/retail jobs, only a relatively small percentage of the project's employees may come from within the City. Employees would logically be expected to reside in communities along the Interstate 80 corridor in both Placer and Sacramento counties. Due to the density of urban development within these communities, a wide variety of housing options are available for project employees. For Placer County in particular, the rental unit vacancy rate was 6.4 percent in 2000. The expected dispersal of employees across the region would minimize the effects of increased housing demands within the City. For these reasons, the proposed project would not be expected to generate a substantial demand for new housing. This impact would be considered **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measure 4-5.2 Increase in Housing Demand during Operations.**

No mitigation measures are necessary.

**Level of Significance After Mitigation**

The demand for housing associated with project operations would be considered a less-than-significant impact.