

Section 3.11

Population and Housing

Summary

Table 3.11-1 below provides a summary of the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Project related to population and housing. As shown in Table 3.11-1, the Proposed Project would have less than significant impacts on population and housing within the project area.

Table 3.11-1. Summary of Potentially Significant Population and Housing Impacts

Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
Impact POP-1: Direct Inducement of Substantial Population Growth	Less Than Significant	Mitigation not required.	Less Than Significant
Impact POP-2: Displacement of Existing Housing or Population	No Impact	Mitigation not required.	N/A

Introduction

This section describes the affected environment for population and housing issues, the regulatory settings associated with population and housing, the impacts on population and housing that would result from the Proposed Project, and the mitigation measures that would reduce these impacts.

Growth-inducing impacts are discussed in Chapter 4.0.

Sources of Information

The key sources of data and information used in the preparation of this section include:

- City of Union City Official Website
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2006. *Fact Sheet [by Geography]*.
- California Department of Finance, 2009

- City of Union City General Plan Housing Element, adopted March 26, 2002
- Association of Bay Area Governments, Projections 2009

Regulatory Setting

State

State law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan for future growth. This plan must include a housing element that identifies housing needs for all economic segments and provides opportunities for housing development to meet those needs. At the state level, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) estimates the relative share of California's projected population growth that will occur in each county in the state based on the California Department of Finance's population projections and historic growth trends. Population projections are provided by HCD to the councils of governments, which then assign a share of the regional housing need among each county and their cities.

Each city and county is required by statute to update its general plan housing element on a regular basis, generally on 5-year cycles. Among other things, the housing element must incorporate policies and identify potential sites that will accommodate a city or county's share of the regional housing need. Before adopting an update to its housing element, the city or county must submit the draft element to HCD for review. HCD will then inform the local jurisdiction whether its housing element complies with the provisions of California Housing Element Law.

Local

The City of Union City General Plan Housing Element (City of Union City, 2002) lists the following relevant goals and policies with regard to population and housing:

Housing Element

Goal HE-H1 To promote mixed use and transit-oriented development, especially around the intermodal station, that has good connectivity with the rest of the city while integrating well with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy HE-H.1.1 As appropriate, the City shall ensure that residential development occurs concurrently with or following other types of development to create a mixed-use district identity and infrastructure.

Policy HE-H.1.2 The City shall locate high density/mixed-income residential uses close to the intermodal facility.

Policy HE-H.1.3 Where necessary, the City shall provide a transition from existing or planned lower density residential uses to new office, light industrial, and service commercial areas and/or retail commercial use areas. Land use intensity/density should be highest adjacent to the intermodal facility and transition to lower intensity/density land use toward the edge of the Station District.

Policy HE-H.1.5 The City shall encourage a mix of residential densities within the Station District when such mix will enhance the opportunities for neighborhood design. Specific objectives include unique streetscapes with a sense of openness, landscaping opportunities, and varied building setbacks. Further, mixed densities should be permitted when this approach will allow maximizing open space and recreational opportunities within the neighborhood.

Policy HE-H.1.6 The intermodal facility shall be designed and linked to reduce the need for area residents to use private automobiles for daily work, shopping and service needs.

Policy HE-H.1.7 The City shall create opportunities for mixed uses within the Station District so that people can live close to work, shopping, and service activities.

Policy HE-H.1.8 The City should ensure that Station District land uses are in balance with citywide uses to help ensure that Union City will be a complete community, serving the diverse needs of its residents.

Environmental Setting

The Proposed Project is located in Union City, California (Figure 2-1) Union City is located in the San Francisco Bay region, approximately 30 miles southeast of San Francisco and 20 miles north of San Jose. The City is accessed regionally by Interstate 880 (I-880) from the north or south, Interstate 580 (I-580) from the east and Highway 101 (Hwy 101) from the north (Union City Website, 2008).

The study area of the Project encompasses Blocks 2 and 3 of the City's Station District, as shown in Figure 2-3. The Station District is located adjacent to the Union City Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Station, south of Decoto Road between Mission Boulevard and Alvarado-Niles Road. The size of the project site is 6 acres. The Station District is designated as Station Mixed Use Commercial (CSMU) that allows for a mix of land-use types, including commercial and high-density housing. (City of Union City General Plan Housing Element, 2002)

Population Trends

The population of Union City was 73,977 in 2009 (California Department of Finance, 2009). This represents an approximate 10 percent increase from the 2000 population of 66,869 (California Department of Finance, 2010). The

Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimates a population of 85,200 by 2020 (Association of Bay Area Governments, 2009). About 8 percent (4,850) of Union City's population is under five years old and about 11 percent is 65 years or older. Eighty-three percent of the population age 25 or older has earned at least a high school diploma. Union City's median household income is \$76,223, compared to the state average of \$48,451 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006).

Housing Trends

As of 2000, there were 19,042 housing units in the city, representing a 10.8 percent increase over the previous 5-year mark (Union City General Plan Housing Element, 2002). By 2020, ABAG estimates that the number of households in Union City will increase to 23,470. This would add 4,428 units, representing an increase of approximately 19 percent over a 20-year timeframe (Association of Bay Area Governments, 2009). The Proposed Project would provide approximately 22 percent of the total number of housing units projected for Union City between 2000 and 2020.

Impact Analysis

This section describes the impact analysis relating to population and housing for the Proposed Project. It describes the methods used to determine the impacts of the Proposed Project.

Thresholds of Significance

For this analysis, an impact pertaining to population and housing was considered significant under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) if it would result in any of the following environmental effects, which are based on professional practice and State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G (14 CCR 15000 et seq.):

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

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact POP-1: Direct Inducement of Substantial Population Growth

If the Proposed Project were approved, it would directly contribute to future residential growth within Union City. The Proposed Project is estimated to

generate an average of 1.5 persons per bedroom, which comes to 2,184 residents for the projected 1,456 bedrooms (as described in Appendix D) in the planned 973 units (Joan Malloy, pers. comm.).

The proposed addition of up to 973 new residential units would induce population growth by creating new housing opportunities in excess of what is currently available. However, this increase would not contribute to a regional level of population substantially above the level of development currently projected by ABAG for the region. While the project would include more residential units than considered in the current General Plan for Union City, the project is expected to reduce the pressure regionally to develop more outlying areas that are less dense and that are further from transit. In addition, the proposed increase in population is consistent with the population projections for the year 2020, estimated in Projections 2009 for the Station District. As stated previously, the Station District has been identified as a Priority Development Area for the region. Although there would be increased population growth in Union City compared to that previously envisioned, the focus of planning in the region is to promote more compact, urban-oriented transit growth to reduce a host of environmental impacts including traffic, air quality, and the conversion of open space which the Project does. The project's demand for utility and public services (discussed in other chapters) are anticipated and planned for. Thus, the increase in local population growth at a local level more than previously anticipated would not result in significant secondary physical impacts on the environment that are not otherwise addressed in the other chapters in this document, which is the concern of growth inducement.

Furthermore, the growth attributed to the new residential development would not conflict with the goals and policies of the General Plan, which accommodate this level of growth and seek to concentrate new residential growth within the Station District. Because growth under the Proposed Project would not exceed that projected for the region and the project represents focused growth that will lower the secondary physical impacts of residential growth in the region (compared to that in the current general plan and prior ABAG projections), this impact is considered less than significant.

Impact POP-2: Displacement of Existing Housing or Population

Because the Proposed Project would develop residential and retail/commercial development on a currently undeveloped site, no existing housing or population would be displaced by construction. There is no impact related to displacement of existing housing or population.

Cumulative Impacts

As discussed above, the Proposed Project would generate substantial growth in Union City. However, this growth would not exceed what was projected by ABAG in the region by the year 2020. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable.

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