

## **4.11 POPULATION AND HOUSING**

This chapter describes the existing population and housing characteristics in Santa Rosa and evaluates the potential environmental consequences of future development that could occur by adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory setting and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of the proposed project and cumulative impacts.

### **4.11.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

#### **4.11.1.1 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

##### **State Regulations**

###### *California Housing Element Law*

California Housing Element Law includes provisions related to the requirements for housing elements of local government General Plans.<sup>1</sup> Among these requirements, some of the necessary parts include an assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to the meeting of these needs. Additionally, in order to assure that counties and cities recognize their responsibilities in contributing to the attainment of the State housing goals, this section of the Government Code calls for local jurisdictions to plan for, and allow the construction of a share of the region's projected housing needs.

##### **Regional Regulations**

###### *Association of Bay Area Governments Projections 2013*

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is the official regional planning agency for the San Francisco Bay Area region, which is composed of the nine Counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma, and contains 101 cities, including Santa Rosa. ABAG produces growth forecasts on four-year cycles so that other regional agencies, including the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), can use the forecasts to make project funding and regulatory decisions.

##### **Local Regulations**

###### *General Plan 2035*

The Housing (H) element of the General Plan 2035 includes the following goals and policies specific to housing and applicable to the proposed project:

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<sup>1</sup> Government Code Section 65580-65589.8.

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- **Goal H-A:** Meet the housing needs of all Santa Rosa residents.
  - **Policy H-A-1:** Ensure adequate sites are available for development of a variety of housing types for all income levels, throughout the City, such as single- and multifamily units, mobile homes, transitional housing, and homeless shelters.
  - **Policy H-A-2:** Pursue the goal of meeting Santa Rosa’s housing needs through increased densities, when compatible with existing neighborhoods. Development of existing and new higher-density sites must be designed in context with existing, surrounding neighborhoods. The number of affordable units permitted each year and the adequacy of higher-density sites shall be reported as part of the General Plan Annual Review report.

### 4.11.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Santa Rosa is home to an estimated 175,667 residents with an average of 2.59 persons per household. Between 2015 and 2016, Santa Rosa experienced a 0.7 percent population increase, compared to the 0.4 percent increase in Sonoma County as a whole.<sup>2</sup> There are a total of 68,803 housing units in the city with a 3.5 percent vacancy rate, compared to the 7.4 percent vacancy rate countywide.<sup>3</sup> Per the General Plan 2035, the city is expected to grow to 237,000 residents, with 96,295 housing units, and 125,180 employees by the horizon year 2035.

As described in Chapter 3, Project Description, of this Draft EIR the Southeast Greenway Area is comprised of vacant parcels. As such, no housing units or residents currently exist on the project site.

### 4.11.2 STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of the proposed project would result in a significant impact to population and housing if it would:

1. Induce substantial population growth, or growth for which inadequate planning has occurred, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).
2. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
3. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

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<sup>2</sup> California Department of Finance, E-1 State/County Population Estimates with Annual Percent Change, January 1, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> California Department of Finance, Table 2: E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates, January 1, 2016.

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### 4.11.3 IMPACT DISCUSSION

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**POP-1      Implementation of the proposed project would not 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).**

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Implementation and adoption of the proposed project could result in the potential future development of up to 244 multi-family housing units, which could generate up to 632 new residents, assuming an average household size of 2.59 persons per household.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the 12,000 square feet of commercial land use could generate up to 40 employees.

As discussed in Chapter 4.9, Land Use and Planning, the proposed project would amend the General Plan 2035 to assign land use designations and conforming zoning to the Southeast Greenway Area. As such, once the proposed project is adopted, the proposed development potential would conform to the standards and regulations set forth in the General Plan 2035 and the Santa Rosa City Code (SRCC).

The project site is well-served by utility and transportation infrastructure and therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not require significant off-site infrastructure improvements. As described in Chapter 3, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, the proposed project would accommodate the installation of a pipeline through the Southeast Greenway Area in order to provide needed redundancy in the regional water system and existing and new water and sewer lines through the area. However, this pipeline improvement is not part of the proposed project and specific details associated with the installation of future utilities are not known at this time; thus, are not evaluated in this Draft EIR. Once utility and pipeline projects are planned and the details are known, additional environmental review may be required. Therefore, the proposed project would not indirectly induce substantial growth through the extension of roads or other new infrastructure that would lead to additional growth outside the project site. Accordingly, indirect impacts related to substantial population growth would be *less than significant*.

Per the General Plan 2035, the city is expected to grow to 237,000 residents, with 96,295 housing units, and 125,180 employees by the horizon year 2035. The future 244 multifamily residential units and associated 632 new residents and the 12,000 square feet of commercial development and associated 40 new employees of the proposed project represent less than one percent of the projected growth in the city. Accordingly, this does not represent substantial population growth in the city or region.

As discussed in other chapters of this Draft EIR, implementation and adoption of the proposed project would not result in physical impacts to the environment as a result of introducing new housing and population on the project site. While implementation of the proposed project could result in new housing and population, it would not substantially induce new population growth either directly or indirectly. In addition, the proposed project would be required to comply with the General Plan Housing Policies (listed above) which seek to provide adequate housing opportunities for all residents and meet the City's

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<sup>4</sup> 244 dwelling units x 2.59 persons per household = 631.9 total residents.

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housing needs through increased densities. Accordingly, impacts related to substantial population growth would be *less than significant*.

**Significance Without Mitigation:** Less than significant.

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<b>POP-2</b>	<b>Implementation of the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.</b>
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As described above under Section 4.11.1.2, Existing Conditions, the project site is comprised of vacant parcels and does not contain any residential units. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not displace existing housing or people and *no impact* would occur.

**Significance Without Mitigation:** No impact.

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<b>POP-3</b>	<b>Implementation of the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.</b>
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As described above under Section 4.11.1.2, Existing Conditions, the project site is comprised of vacant parcels and no residents currently occupy the site. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the displacement of people and *no impact* would occur.

**Significance Without Mitigation:** No impact.

### 4.11.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

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<b>POP-4</b>	<b>Implementation of the proposed project, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, would not result in significant cumulative impact with respect to population and housing.</b>
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The methodology used for cumulative impact analysis is described in Chapter 4.0, Environmental Evaluation, of this Draft EIR. Impacts of cumulative growth are considered in the context of their consistency with regional planning efforts. As described above, the proposed project would not induce a substantial amount of growth or require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Although the proposed project would increase the residential development potential by 244 multi-family units compared to the development scenario assumed under the General Plan 2035, the proposed would amend the General Plan 2035 in order to account for this growth. Thus, the proposed project would not contribute to cumulative growth that would not displace substantial numbers of people or housing or exceed planned levels of growth. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be *less than significant*.

**Significance Without Mitigation:** Less than significant.