

4.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section evaluates the potential population and housing impacts from implementation of the project. For the purposes of this analysis, the project is anticipated to be fully operational after 18 months. Analysis is based on existing and projected demographic information for the unincorporated Alamo community (Alamo) drawn from multiple sources, including:

- The *Contra Costa County General Plan 2005-2020* (General Plan)
- Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Projections, 2013
- ABAG Regional Housing Need Plan for the San Francisco bay Area: 2014-2022, 2013
- AGAB San Francisco Bay Area State of the Region; Economy Population Housing 2015, 2015

These documents are available for review at the Contra Costa County (County) Department of Conservation and Development, Community Development Division, 30 Muir Street, Martinez, California.

No comments regarding population and housing were submitted in response to the Notice of Preparation for this draft environmental impact report (draft EIR).

4.14.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Population

The project site is located in Alamo, an unincorporated community in Central Contra Costa County (Central County) subregion between the cities of Walnut Creek and Danville. Central County is an urbanized area and had a population of approximately 491,232 in 2015 (United States Census Bureau, 2015). Alamo's population was 16,301 according to the same survey.

Table 4.14-1 summarizes regional population and housing statistics as well as projections through 2040. According to ABAG, growth in the County will primarily occur in 38 Priority Development Areas (PDAs), which are projected to accommodate about 60 percent of the County's household growth and 57 percent of job growth by 2040 (ABAG, 2013a). The Central County PDAs are located in regional urban hubs, such as the cities of Concord, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek.

Table 4.14-1 Demographic Information for Contra Costa County

Jurisdiction	Estimated 2015	Projected 2040	Percent Increase
Contra Costa County			
Population	1,085,700	1,338,400	14%
Households	387,870	464,150	16%
Average Household Size	2.77	2.85	5%
Total Jobs	374,610	467,390	20%
Unincorporated Contra Costa County			
Population	162,900	182,500	12%
Households	58,700	63,790	1%
Average Household Size	2.76	2.84	3%
Total Jobs	43,760	54,040	26%

Source: ABAG, 2013a; Contra Costa County, 2014.

Housing

Single family homes are the predominant housing type in the Unincorporated Contra Costa County (Unincorporated County), comprising 80 percent of the housing stock.¹ Countywide, single-family homes account for 74.4 percent of the housing stock. As shown in **Table 4.14-1**, the total estimated number of Unincorporated County households in 2015 was 58,700. The number of households is expected to grow modestly to 63,790 by 2040 (a 1 percent increase). Countywide, the number of households is expected to grow by 16 percent (ABAG, 2013a). This discrepancy in housing growth between Unincorporated County and County can be attributed to the PDA focus in incorporated cities.

Average Household Size

The number of persons per household in Unincorporated County in 2015 was 2.72 persons, slightly lower than the countywide estimate of 2.86 persons per household. In order to account for growth based on the larger-size single family homes that characterize development in much of Alamo, a conservative multiplier of 3.0 persons per household is assumed for the project, compared to the ABAG estimate of 2.73 persons per household in 2020 for Unincorporated County (ABAG, 2013a).

¹ Multi-family units accounts for 15.5 percent of housing stock; mobile homes account for 4.5 percent of housing stock.

Regional Housing Need Determination

In 2013, ABAG released the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), which projects each County’s share of the Bay Area’s future growth and housing demand based on forecasts from the *San Francisco Bay Area Housing Needs Plan 2007-2014*. As illustrated in **Table 4.14-2**, the total RNHA allocation for the County between 2014-2022 is 20,630, down from 27,072 in the previous planning period. From 2007-2014, Contra Costa County issued 14,844 affordable housing permits and met 55 percent of their RHNA (ABAG, 2015). For the 2014-2022 planning period, Unincorporated County is assigned approximately 1,367 affordable housing units, approximately seven percent of the entire housing allocated to the County.

Table 4.14-2 Share of Regional Housing Needs for 2014-2022

Income Group	Total RHNA Allocation for Contra Costa County	RHNA Allocation for Unincorporated Areas	RNHA units provided in Unincorporated Areas (2007-2014)
Very Low	5,264	374	88
Low	3,086	218	53
Moderate	3,496	243	330
Above Moderate	8,784	532	1,672
Total	20,630	1,367	2,143

Source: ABAG, 2013b; Contra Costa County, 2014.

Employment

The County has a fast growing workforce and is projected to add 45,450 new jobs between 2015 and 2025. However, ABAG expects the region will primarily provide “bedroom communities” for the workforce of other Bay area counties, as the County is expected to gain an estimated 14,050 more employed residents than jobs between 2010 and 2040 (Contra Costa County, 2014). **Table 4.14-1** illustrates the number of jobs projected for the entire County.

4.14.2 REGULATORY SETTING

Contra Costa County General Plan

The Land Use Element of the General Plan contains the following relevant policies related to population and housing.

Land Use Element

3-21: The predominantly single-family character of substantially developed portions of the County shall be retained. Multiple-family housing shall be

dispersed throughout the County and not concentrated in single locations. Multiple-family housing shall generally be located in proximity to facilities such as arterial roads, transit corridors, and shopping areas.

- 3-25: Innovation in site planning and design of housing developments shall be encouraged in order to upgrade quality and efficiency of residential living arrangements and to protect the surrounding environment.
- 3-27: Existing residential neighborhoods shall be protected from incompatible land uses and traffic levels exceeding adopted service standards.
- 3-28: New residential development shall be accommodated only in areas where it will avoid creating severe unmitigated adverse impacts upon the environment and upon the existing community.
- 3-29: New housing projects shall be located on stable and secure lands or shall be designed to mitigate adverse or potentially adverse conditions. Residential densities of conventional construction shall generally decrease as the natural slope increases.

Housing Element

An Updated Housing Element was adopted by the County in 2014. This document identifies state, regional, and local housing policies, assesses the County's housing needs, and inventories the resources and constraints relevant to the meeting those needs.

State law requires that this assessment include an analysis of population, household characteristics, employment trends, regional housing needs, and an inventory of suitable land for residential development. The assessment should also include an analysis of governmental and non-governmental constraints, special housing needs, opportunities for energy conservation, and publicly-assisted housing developments that may convert to non-assisted housing developments. The purpose of these requirements is to develop an understanding of the existing and projected housing needs within the County and to set forth policies that promote preservation, improvement, and development of diverse types and costs of housing throughout the County.

The Updated Housing Element contains the following relevant policies associated with population and housing:

- 7.1: Establish and maintain development standards that support housing development while protecting quality of life goals.
- 7.4: Continue to provide for timely and coordinated processing of residential development projects in order to minimize project holding costs and encourage housing production.

Policy Consistency Analysis

The project would be consistent with the applicable General Plan policies of the Land Use and Housing Elements related to population and housing. The project site is located within the Urban Limit Line (ULL), which identifies the project site and surrounding properties for urban development, consistent with policies 7.1 and 7.4.

As the project proposes 35 residential lots for single family homes, it would retain the predominantly single-family character of the County and be consistent with policy 3-21.

In reference to policy 3-27, the proposed single-family detached residential units would be designed for compatibility with the Alamo community.

The project design also includes dedication of open space areas and, as documented throughout this draft EIR, the project would not create severe unmitigated adverse effects upon the environment and upon the existing community, consistent with policies 3-28 and 3-25.

Contra Costa County Inclusionary Housing Ordinance

In 2006, The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors adopted an ordinance that requires new residential developments to include a minimum percentage of dwelling units that are affordable to very low, lower, and moderate income households. In residential developments of 5 through 125 units, 15 percent of the dwelling units must be affordable, or a fee may be paid in lieu of providing some or all of the required units.

Policy Consistency Analysis

The project does not propose dwelling units that would be affordable to very low, lower, or moderate income households. The project application would pay a fee in lieu. The fee in lieu amount would be established by the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development, and paid before the issuance of building permits.

4.14.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines identifies environmental issues a lead agency can consider when determining whether a project could have significant effects on the environment. The project would have a significant impact if it would:

- 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).

- Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Discussion of No Impacts

Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The project would remove the existing single family estate and caretaker's residence. Both of these units would be replaced with new housing as part of the project, which would result in a net increase of 33 units to the County's housing stock. No other replacement housing would be required, and no impact would occur.

Discussion of Less-Than-Significant Impacts

Would the project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The project would remove the existing single family estate and caretaker living quarters. Their removal would not displace a substantial number of people that would trigger the construction of replacement housing elsewhere in the region. This impact would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Would the project 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)?

Direct Growth

This draft EIR assumes the construction of 35 custom residential homes, which would directly increase the Unincorporated County population by an estimated 105 people.² Between 2015 and 2025, ABAG projects a Countywide population increase of 86,900 and an increase in population in Unincorporated County of approximately 6,800 (ABAG, 2013a). Population generated by the project represents approximately 1.5 percent of the projected growth in the Unincorporated County and 0.1 percent of the projected growth estimated Countywide for the same period.

² This number was determined using the Contra Costa County projected number of 3.0 persons per household for the Alamo area. It is anticipated that some of the residential units would be occupied by persons that already work and/or live in the County.

The project site and surrounding properties were included within the ULL to indicate an intention for future conversion to urban uses.³

Non-residential development is not included in this project, and few new jobs would be created onsite. In addition, the approximately 30 jobs in the existing office building onsite would be relocated offsite. There would be no substantial direct job growth as a result of the project.

Given that the direct population increase of 105 people associated with the project would not be substantial, this impact is considered less than significant and no mitigation would be required.

4.14.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The cumulative setting for population growth and housing includes the County as a whole. The General Plan stated that build-out of the General Plan could result in up to 145,206 new residents in the County by the end of the planning period (2020). The *Contra Costa County General Plan EIR Impacts and Mitigation Summary* also noted that adoption of the General Plan would concentrate population in urban areas, and would preclude development and extension of urban services and facilities outside of the ULL.

The General Plan did not identify a significant impact related to population growth, and therefore a cumulative impact related to population and housing does not exist.

The project is located within the ULL and would not require an extension of services outside the ULL boundary. The project in conjunction with other projects located within the ULL would therefore not generate a cumulatively significant impact related to direct or indirect growth.

³ The timing for the development of these areas is speculative. Regional population projections have attempted to account for a reasonable growth rate based on market conditions.

4.14.5 REFERENCES

Association of Bay Area Governments, 2013a. *Projections*, 2013.

Association of Bay Area Governments, 2013b. *Regional Housing Need Plan, San Francisco Bay Area: 2014-2022*.

Association of Bay Area Governments, 2015. *San Francisco Bay Area State of the Region; Economy Population Housing 2015*. Available: http://reports.abag.ca.gov/sotr/2015/section4-housing-goals-progress.php#section4_3. Accessed September 17, 2015.

Contra Costa County, 2014. Contra Costa County Housing Element Update. Revised Draft.

United States Census Bureau, 2015. *American Fact Finder*. Available: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_5YR_S0101&prodType=table. Accessed July 12, 2017.