

17. Population and Housing

17.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This issue evaluates project-related and cumulative impacts to housing, including both direct physical impacts to existing housing stock as well as demand for housing, to determine whether the project could result in negative environmental effects associated with unplanned growth.

Chapter 2 of the Ventura County General Plan Background Report provides information on population and *household* trends, labor force patterns, population and employment projections for Ventura County overall, and includes more detailed information about the unincorporated areas. The Housing Element of the Ventura County General Plan ensures that there is adequate land to appropriately accommodate the County's fair share of population growth and housing needs. The purpose of the Housing Element is to identify the County's housing needs; state the County's goals and objectives with regard to housing production, rehabilitation, and conservation to meet those needs; and define the policies and programs that the County will implement to achieve the stated goals and objectives. Consistent with the No Net Loss Law (Government Code Section 65863), the County must ensure sufficient residential capacity is maintained to accommodate the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for all income categories.

The Ventura County Resource Management Agency Planning Division publishes an annual progress report that provides an overview of the actions taken by the County during the previous calendar year to implement the programs in the General Plan and to meet the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) objectives for the applicable housing element cycle.

17.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The determination of significance shall be made on a case-by-case basis and evaluated using the following thresholds of significance as specified below.

POP-1 A project may have a significant impact if it would induce substantial unplanned population growth either directly or indirectly.

POP-2 A project may have a significant impact if it would displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

17.3 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Guidance on addressing the questions from the Initial Study Checklist is provided below. In order to determine whether project impacts exceed or meet the criteria of the thresholds of significance in Section 17.2, the level of impact shall be evaluated based on the appropriate assessment methodologies as outlined below.

- (a) *Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly?*

Substantial unplanned population growth is typically considered as the growth exceeding the population projections in the Ventura County General Plan. Consider the following factors to determine whether the project would potentially induce substantial unplanned population growth and result in a level of population beyond the remaining development potential⁷ in designated areas and other planning boundaries as described in General Plan Policy LU-1.2 in which the project may be located:

- Anticipated population for the project, including residents and the projected workers in non-residential spaces.
- Anticipated residential population growth for the unincorporated Ventura County area as outlined in the General Plan.
- Potential impacts to population such as, but not limited to:
 - Proposing new homes and businesses.
 - Existing and potential future uses within the vicinity of the project.
 - Extension of utilities, roadways, public services, or other infrastructure into an area that is currently not served or has no existing population.
 - Housing impacts as analyzed in Initial Study Checklist question 22.3(b).

If the project would induce substantial unplanned population growth given the above considerations, then the project would potentially result in a significant impact and mitigation measures should be provided. Further analysis is required and shall be addressed in an environmental impact report (EIR) if there is *substantial evidence* that the project has the potential to induce unplanned population growth in an area directly or indirectly, and no mitigation measures have been identified that would reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

(b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

A project would have a potentially significant impact if it would remove *dwelling units* and does not propose to replace *dwelling units* in kind or in larger amounts, or if the project would displace more residents than it would provide housing for. The *Lead Agency* must first determine the number of existing *dwelling units* that would be eliminated by the project, if any. The project plans shall include an existing conditions sheet which shows the number and location of all *dwelling units*. This sheet shall contain a table that provides an inventory of the *dwelling units* including number of bedrooms and total square footage for living areas in each *dwelling unit* (not including garages), as well as the number of occupants in each *dwelling unit*. If any *dwelling units* would be lost due to the project, the applicant shall demonstrate how these units would be replaced to mitigate the impact on potential displacement of people or housing.

Note that various state laws address housing replacement requirements that may be applicable to the project, which generally include an analysis of whether the units to be demolished or eliminated are occupied by persons of *lower income* or *moderate income* categories. These state laws, as amended, include, for example:

⁷ “Remaining development potential” is the amount of development that could occur in a community beyond that which is already developed and accounting for constraints to future development.

- Mello Act (Government Code Section 65590)
- State Density Bonus Law (Government Code Section 65915 et seq.)
- Housing Element Law (Government Code Section 65583.2(g))
- Housing Crisis Act (Government Code Section 66300 et seq.)

Projects subject to state-mandated housing replacement requirements may include, but are not limited to, certain projects that are:

- Located in the coastal zone
- Located on non-vacant sites specifically identified in the Housing Element Site Inventory in the Ventura County General Plan
- Located in an “affected county” area as defined in the Housing Crisis Act
- Seeking a density bonus

Tenant income is typically reviewed as part of the analysis. If income is unknown, some state law provisions provide for a rebuttable presumption that the units are occupied by *lower income households* in the same proportion as renter *households* within the jurisdiction, as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy database (e.g., Government Code Section 65915(c)(3)(B)). The project should comply with applicable state law(s) when evaluating the number of *dwelling units* that would be lost and the appropriate means by which to replace those units.

Further analysis is required and shall be addressed in an EIR if there is *substantial evidence* that the project would displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, and no mitigation measures have been identified that would reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

17.4 RESOURCES & REFERENCES

| Source | Managing Agency/Organization | Online Access |
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| Resources | | |
| Ventura County CEQA Implementation Manual | Ventura County Resource Management Agency (RMA) Planning Division | PDF Website |
| Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, Introduction | Ventura County RMA Planning Division | PDF Website |
| Ventura County Initial Study Checklist Template | Ventura County RMA Planning Division | PDF Website |
| References | | |
| County of Ventura State-Mandated Annual Progress Report for the General Plan and Housing Element | Ventura County RMA Planning Division | Website |
| Regional Housing Needs Allocation | California Department of Housing and Community Development | Website |

Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines

| Source | Managing Agency/Organization | Online Access |
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| Ventura County General Plan Background Report, Chapter 2 | Ventura County RMA Planning Division | PDF Website |
| Ventura County General Plan, Housing Element | Ventura County RMA Planning Division | PDF Website |