

3.1.6 Population and Housing

This section addresses the potential population and housing impacts associated with implementation of The Villages – Escondido Country Club Project (Project). This section also assesses the applicable regulatory setting, and analyzes the Project's effects on population and housing consistent with the significance thresholds set forth in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. The information presented in this section was collected from a number of sources, including the *City of Escondido General Plan* (General Plan; City of Escondido 2012), San Diego Association of Governments' (SANDAG's) 2050 regional growth forecast (SANDAG 2017), and applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines.

3.1.6.1 Existing Conditions

3.1.6.1.1 Environmental Setting

The City of Escondido (City) is situated in northern San Diego County, about 30 miles north of downtown San Diego via Interstate 15 (I-15). The Project is approximately 0.5 miles to the west of I-15, and about 2 miles north of State Route 78. The Project site is located in the northwest portion of the City, along both sides of West Country Club Lane west of Nutmeg Street. The Project site itself currently has an address of 1800 West Country Club Lane and consists of approximately 109 acres.

Surrounding Development

The Project site is a former 18-hole golf course surrounded by existing residential development. The surrounding residential development consists of single-family detached residences on a variety of lot sizes, attached single-family residences (duplexes) of several different densities, and several common-interest developments. A large mobile-home park is located to the south on El Norte Parkway within the City of San Marcos. The City of San Marcos boundary is approximately 0.2 miles to the southwest. Please refer to Figure 1-9, Surrounding Land Uses, in Chapter 1, Project Description.

Existing development to the northwest of the Project site consists of detached single-family homes on approximately 5,000-square-foot lots that typically average from 40 to 45 feet in width. A smaller residential development abutting the Project site to the north consists of duplex residential units on 2,000-square-foot lots.

As the topography rises to the north of the Project site, another existing residential development adjacent to the former golf course consists of duplex residential units on lots of approximately 4,000 square feet. Another smaller residential development that protrudes into the Project site has duplex dwelling units on 2,000-square-foot lots.

To the south of the Project site, several residential developments with both duplex units with 2,000-square-foot lots and detached single-family homes on 2,300-square-foot lots that average about 40 feet in width have been constructed. Please refer to Figure 1-9.

Population

SANDAG is the council of governments and metropolitan planning organization responsible for developing demographic projections, including population, household, and employment projection for jurisdictions in the County, including the City of Escondido. SANDAG is required to update these forecasts every 4 years.

According to SANDAG population estimates, San Diego County supported over 3.2 million people as of January 1, 2015 (SANDAG 2016). By 2050, the San Diego County population is expected to reach over 4 million (SANDAG 2013). As of January 1, 2015, SANDAG estimated that the City of Escondido supported 147,294 people, and by 2050 it is anticipated that the City's population would reach over 173,500 residents (SANDAG 2016, 2013).

Housing

According to SANDAG housing estimates, San Diego County had 1,183,211 total housing units with a 4.8% vacancy rate as of January 1, 2015 (SANDAG 2016). By 2050, San Diego County is forecasted to have approximately 1,491,935 total housing units with a 5.6% vacancy rate (SANDAG 2013). As of January 1, 2015, SANDAG estimated that Escondido had approximately 44,857 total housing units with a 4.3% vacancy rate, and by 2050 it is anticipated that the City's total housing units would be approximately 56,100 with a 4.2% vacancy rate (SANDAG 2016, 2013).

3.1.6.1.2 Regulatory Setting

Federal

No federal regulations related to population and housing apply to the Project.

State

California Environmental Quality Act

Primary environmental legislation in California is found in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and its implementing guidelines (CEQA Guidelines), which require that projects with potential adverse effects (or impacts) on the environment undergo environmental review. Adverse environmental impacts are typically mitigated as a result of the environmental review process in accordance with existing laws and regulations.

California Planning and Zoning Law

The legal framework in which California cities and counties exercise local planning and land use functions is provided in the California Planning and Zoning Law (Sections 65000 through 66499.58 of the California Government Code). Under state planning law, each city and county must adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan. State law gives cities and counties wide latitude in how a jurisdiction may create a general plan, but there are fundamental requirements that must be met. These requirements include seven mandatory elements described in the California Government Code. Each of the elements must contain text and descriptions setting forth objectives, principles, standards, policies, and plan proposals; diagrams and maps that incorporate data and analysis; and implementation measures.

California Building Standards Code

In 2001, California consolidated the Uniform Building, Plumbing, Electrical, and Mechanical codes into the California Building Standards Code, which is contained in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. The California Building Standards Code contains 11 parts: Electrical Code, Plumbing Code, Administrative Code, Mechanical Code, Energy Code, Residential Building Code, Historical Building Code, Fire Code, Existing Building Code, Green Building Standards Code, and the Reference Standards Code. These codes promote public health and safety and ensure that safe and decent housing is constructed in the County's unincorporated areas. The codes serve to protect residents from hazards and risks, and are not considered to be undue constraints to housing production. The 2013 California codes became effective January 2014.

Senate Bill 375

Senate Bill 375 (codified in the Government Code and Public Resources Code), took effect in 2008 and provides a new planning process to coordinate land use planning, regional transportation plans, and funding priorities in order to help California meet the greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals established in Assembly Bill 32. Senate Bill 375 requires metropolitan planning organizations to incorporate a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) in their Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) that will achieve GHG emissions reduction targets by reducing vehicle miles traveled from light-duty vehicles through the development of more compact, complete, and efficient communities.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) is mandated by State Housing Law as part of the periodic process of updating local housing elements of the General Plan. The RHNA quantifies the need for housing within each jurisdiction during specified planning periods.

Communities use the RHNA in land use planning, prioritizing local resource allocation, and in deciding how to address identified existing and future housing needs resulting from population, employment, and household growth. The RHNA does not necessarily encourage or promote growth, but rather allows communities to anticipate growth, so that collectively the region and subregion can grow in ways that enhance quality of life, improve access to jobs, promotes transportation mobility, and addresses social equity, fair share housing needs.

Regional

San Diego Association of Governments

SANDAG is a public agency, composed of 18 cities and the County, which builds strategic plans guiding the San Diego region in land use, growth, economics, and the environment. SANDAG offers planning, coordination, and technical assistance to their members, administers programs at the regional level, and acts as an intermediary between the local government and the state and federal government. In terms of population and housing, SANDAG serves a crucial role in developing a big-picture vision for how the region will grow over the next 35 years. Through the development of a regional comprehensive plan, the region identifies smart growth.

Over the years, SANDAG has coordinated regional efforts to address a large number of important issues. In 2011, SANDAG approved the RTP/SCS. This approval marked the first time SANDAG's RTP included an SCS, consistent with the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008, also known as Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg 2008). This RTP/SCS provided a blueprint to improve mobility, preserve open space, and create communities, all with transportation choices to reduce GHG emissions and meet specific targets set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) as required by the 2008 Sustainable Communities Act.¹ In 2010, CARB established targets for each region in California governed by a metropolitan planning organization. SANDAG is the metropolitan planning organization for the San Diego region.

The SANDAG target, as set by CARB, is to reduce the region's per capita emissions of GHG emissions from cars and light-duty trucks by 7% by 2020, compared with a 2005 baseline. By 2035, the target is a 13% per capita reduction. There is no target set beyond 2035. To achieve the 2020 and 2035 targets, SANDAG and other metropolitan planning organizations are required to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as an element of its RTP. The SANDAG SCS integrates land use and transportation plans to achieve reductions in GHG emissions and meet the CARB-required targets.

¹ SANDAG's EIR under CEQA assessing the environmental consequences of its 2050 RTP/SCS is the subject of review by the California Supreme Court in *Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Association of Governments*, Case No. S223603.

SANDAG is required by law to update its regional transportation plan every 4 years. In October 2015, SANDAG certified a new EIR and adopted the latest update to its RTP/SCS. SANDAG's 2015 RTP/SCS integrates the elements of its prior Regional Comprehensive Plan and combines those elements with its 2015 RTP/SCS.

The 2015 RTP/SCS is now called San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan. The 2015 RTP/SCS updates growth forecasts and is based on the most recent planning assumptions considering adopted general plans, and other factors, from all 18 cities of the region and the County. It shows how the regional development pattern and the transportation network, policies, and programs can work together to achieve per capita GHG emission reduction targets for cars and light-duty trucks. As stated above, CARB has set a target for the San Diego region to lower GHG emissions from cars and light-duty trucks. The 2015 RTP/SCS will result in reduced GHG emissions that will exceed the state's emission reduction targets, reaching per capita reductions of 15% by 2020 and 21% by 2035.

The 2015 RTP/SCS is based on the currently adopted land use plans, as reflected in general plans, including the County's General Plan. SANDAG's latest 2015 RTP/SCS will necessarily change in response to the ongoing land use planning of the County and comprising cities. For example, the County's General Plan and other local general plans of cities. These land use inputs may change based on general plan amendments initiated by the jurisdiction or landowner applicants. The general plan amendments may result in increases in development densities by amending the Regional Category designations or zoning classifications. Accordingly, SANDAG's RTP/SCS latest forecasts of future development in the San Diego region, including location, must be coordinated closely with each jurisdiction's ongoing land use planning because that planning is not static, as recognized by the need for updates to SANDAG's RTP/SCS every 4 years.

Since 1972, SANDAG has produced long-range forecasts of population, housing, and employment for the San Diego region that are used as a basic resource for numerous purposes. For example, SANDAG uses these forecasts to develop its sustainable communities strategy and supporting transportation network in the 2015 RTP/SCS; water agencies (e.g., San Diego County Water Authority and local retail water districts) use the data for water planning purposes; and utility providers use the data for long-range planning. The County and local jurisdictions also use the forecast data for general plan and infrastructure planning purposes.

SANDAG's most recent forecast — the Regional Growth Forecast (also known as the Series 13 Forecast) — is the basis for the 2015 RTP/SCS. These forecasts represent an assessment of the changes that SANDAG anticipates for the San Diego region based on the best available information and computer modeling. As stated above, the forecasts are based on the most recent planning assumptions, considering local general plans and other factors, per Senate Bill 375 (Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)). The SANDAG forecasts are meant to help decision-makers prepare for the future and, according to SANDAG, are “not an expression for or against growth” (SANDAG 2011, Appendix J: 2050 Regional Growth Forecast).

SANDAG is required by state law (Government Code Section 65584(a)) to complete a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), in consultation with the California Department of Housing and Community Development, to determine the region's housing needs in four income categories: very low, low, moderate, and above moderate. The adopted RHNA for the San Diego region covers the 8-year period from January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2020.

The RHNA allocates housing needs in the four income categories for each of the cities and the County to use in their housing element. The cities and County are required to update their housing elements to include RHNA allocations every 8 years.

Local

City of Escondido General Plan Housing Element

The Housing Element is a component of the General Plan that assesses the housing needs of all economic segments of the City of Escondido. In addition, the Housing Element defines the goals and policies that will guide the City's approach to resolving those needs and recommends a set of programs that would implement policies over the next few years. The Housing Element is concerned with specifically identifying ways in which the housing needs of existing and future resident residents can be met. The current Housing Element covers the planning period of January 1, 2013, through December 31, 2020, and identifies strategies and programs that focus on the following:

- Conserving and improving existing affordable housing
- Providing adequate housing sites
- Assisting in the development of affordable housing
- Removing governmental and other constraints to housing development
- Promoting equal housing opportunities

City of Escondido General Plan

Housing Element

V. City Housing Goals and Policies

Goal 1: Plan for quality, managed, and sustainable growth.

Housing Policy 1.1: Expand the stock of all housing while preserving the health, safety, and welfare of residents, and maintaining the fiscal stability of the city.

Housing Policy 1.2: Pursue a balance of jobs to housing.

Housing Policy 1.3: Channel residential growth to areas where the concurrent provision of services and facilities, including schools, parks, fire and police protection, and street improvements can be assured.

Housing Policy 1.4: Encourage a compact, efficient urban form that conserves land and other natural and environmental resources, and that promotes transit, supports nearby commercial establishments, and takes advantage of infrastructure improvements installed to accommodate their intended intensities.

Housing Policy 1.5: Encourage creative residential developments and partnerships that result in desirable amenities and contribute to infrastructure needs.

Housing Policy 1.6: Incorporate smart growth principles in new residential subdivisions, multi-family projects, and Mixed Use Overlay areas.

Goal 2: Provide a range of housing opportunities for all income groups and households with special needs.

Housing Policy 2.1: Accommodate the regional share of housing for all income groups.

Housing Policy 2.2: Increase homeownership in the city through education, availability, and affordability.

Housing Policy 2.4: Seek ways to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on race, ancestry, national origin or color, religion, sex, familial or marital status, disability, medical condition, age, sexual orientation, or source of income in obtaining housing.

Goal 3: Enhance the quality of the city's housing stock and preserve the integrity of neighborhood character.

Housing Policy 3.1: Maintain and enhance the existing housing stock as a source of low- and moderate-cost housing and as a conservation measure.

Housing Policy 3.3: Utilize code enforcement measures and incentive programs as necessary to ensure that building and safety regulations are met and to promote property maintenance (City of Escondido 2012).

3.1.6.2 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance

3.1.6.2.1 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

For purposes of this EIR, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) will apply to the direct, indirect, and cumulative impact analyses. A significant impact to population and housing would result if the Project would:

- A. Induce substantial population growth in the area either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and business) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)
- B. Displace substantial number of existing housing units or create demand for additional housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing
- C. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacements housing elsewhere

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.2(d), requires an EIR to discuss growth inducement. That subsection notes: “[i]t must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.” Growth inducement is analyzed in this EIR in Section 1.8, Growth-Inducing Impacts.

3.1.6.2.2 Analysis

- A. *Would the Project induce substantial population growth in the area either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and business) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?***

As shown in Table 3.1.6-1, Dwelling Units by Village, the Project would be composed of three interrelated villages and introduce a total of 392 residential units to the area, which would increase population of the Project site and in the area. The Project Area is currently developed as a former golf course, and implementation of the Project would convert the former golf course into housing.

According to the City’s General Plan, the Project area is designated as Residential Urban I in the Land Use Element. This designation allows up to 5.5 dwelling units per acre (du/acre). Additionally, the City of Escondido Zoning Map designates the Project area as R-1-7, which allows single-family residential units with lots at a minimum of 7,000 square feet. The General Plan and Zoning Ordinance allow for Planned Developments, which authorizes clustering on substantially smaller lots. The Land Use Element also designates the area abutting the Project site as Urban I. Other adjacent land use designations include Suburban, Estate I, Estate II, and Rural I. We refer to adopted general plans to forecast, inventory and allocate regional land use

and development-related assumptions. As stated earlier in this section, they are used in statewide and regional planning efforts. As such, projects that propose development that is equal to or less than population growth projections/adopted general plan assumptions and land use intensity are inherently consistent. Projects that propose development that is greater than anticipated in the growth projections warrant further analysis to determine consistency. Forecasted growth under the Project is analyzed herein to determine the change in population and housing as a result of Project implementation. To determine if this change was significant, the analysis then assesses if the potential population and housing change would result in physical environmental effects related to the development of the Project.

In 2010, the City had a total population of 143,976 with 47,979 total housing units, and there was a housing vacancy rate of 5.1% (SANDAG 2015). As of 2016, the estimated population in the City was 150,760 people with 48,561 total housing units, and there was a housing vacancy rate of 4.4% (SANDAG 2017). Since 2010, the Escondido population has increased by approximately 6,784 residents and the total housing units has increased by approximately 582 units, meanwhile the amount of vacant housing has declined. By 2020, it was estimated that the total population in the City would be approximately 165,214 residents, which indicates over 18,000 new residents would be introduced to the area. Additionally, by 2050, it is anticipated that the City's population would be over 173,500 residents (SANDAG 2013).

To estimate the residents for the Project, the persons per household ratio for 2020 and 2035 from the SANDAG Series 13 Regional Growth Forecast were used to interpolate the persons per household ratio for the Project build-out year of 2023. The forecasted persons per household for both 2020 and 2035 was 3.20; therefore, the persons per household for 2023 was 3.20; see Section 2.4, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, for details. Therefore, the Project would bring approximately 1,254 new residents to the Escondido area.

In accordance with defined future housing needs, the City must balance land use activities to accommodate future housing development and meet RHNA's state housing law compliance for different affordability levels. To accommodate the City's projected growth in the area, appropriate housing should be maintained. The Project would be an infill development, constructed on previously developed land, and would provide appropriate housing stock to accommodate future growth within the City. Although the Project is likely to increase some growth as a result of the construction of utilities and associated utility lines, the growth is not considered to be substantial and it would not significantly increase existing population numbers within the Escondido Area. Moreover, in consideration of other residential land uses and housing development occurring City-wide, the anticipated 1,259 new residents are within the forecasted population growth of the Housing Element planning cycle. Potential population growth is further analyzed in this EIR in Section 1.8, Growth-Inducing Impacts, which concludes that the Project would not remove an obstacle to substantial population growth in the area, or require the

construction of a substantial amount of new community service facilities or encourage other activities or growth that could significantly affect the environment. Therefore, impacts associated with inducing substantial population growth would be **less than significant**.

B. Would the Project displace substantial number of existing housing units or create demand for additional housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing?

C. Would the Project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacements housing elsewhere?

The Project area is an infill development located on a former golf course, which does not contain any housing or residential units. Implementation of the Project would convert the former Escondido Country Club golf course to homes, infrastructure, and associated amenities, and would not displace any existing housing or people, or necessitate construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The Project would not displace housing or people; therefore, **no impact** would occur.

3.1.6.3 Cumulative Impact Analysis

The Project would provide housing options in the Escondido Area, and thereby contribute to an increase in local residents. However, because housing is in short supply in the City of Escondido (4.3% housing vacancy rate), and because the Project would result in a relatively small percentage (4.2%) of the anticipated population increase by 2050, the contribution to cumulative population growth as a result of the Project **would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact**. Rather, the Project would assist the City in accommodating its planned growth consistent with the City's General Plan.

No existing housing would be displaced and no people would be displaced; therefore, the Project **would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact** related to displacement of housing or people.

3.1.6.4 Conclusion

Based on the above analysis, implementation of the Project would accommodate projected growth within the City of Escondido. Impacts related to substantial population growth, displacement of existing housing, and displacement of people would be **less than significant**.

**Table 3.1.6-1
Dwelling Units by Village**

Lot Size	Dwelling Units
<i>Village 1</i>	
45 × 95 feet	71
45 × 75 feet	38
35 × 73 feet	46
<i>Subtotal</i>	155
<i>Village 2</i>	
45 × 95 feet	38
45 × 75 feet	21
35 × 73 feet	32
<i>Subtotal</i>	91
<i>Village 3</i>	
45 × 75 feet	32
35 × 73 feet	36
Age-targeted (clustered)	78
<i>Subtotal</i>	146
Total Number of Dwelling Units	392

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