
6. POPULATION AND HOUSING

This chapter addresses anticipated impacts of the proposed Downtown Precise Plan on population and housing in the project area and greater Redwood City. Information presented in this chapter also provides the statistical basis for determining population- and housing-related impacts in subsequent chapters of this EIR (e.g., transportation, public services and utilities).

6.1 SETTING

6.1.1 Local and Regional Population and Housing Trends

(a) Population. Table 6.1 shows current population totals and trends compiled by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) for the City of Redwood City and San Mateo County; historic data are from the U.S. Census, and projections are as derived by ABAG. ABAG estimates that the year 2005 population of Redwood City was 77,300 people. This total represents approximately 10.7 percent of the ABAG-estimated year-2005 San Mateo County population total (723,200 people).

The data in Table 6.1 also indicate that the population of Redwood City grew by approximately 2.5 percent (an increase of 1,898 people) over the five-year period between 2000 and 2005. During the same period, the population of San Mateo County grew by approximately 2.3 percent (an increase of 16,037 people). For the five-year period from 2005 to 2010, the ABAG-projected population increase for Redwood City is also approximately 2.5 percent (an increase of 1,900 people). This projected 2005-to-2010 City population growth rate is about the same as that anticipated for the County as a whole (approximately 2.5 percent, or an increase of 17,800 people). City and County ten-year population growth rates between 2010 and 2020 are projected to be 10.0 and 8.8 percent, respectively.

(b) Population Per Household. There were an estimated 2.66 persons per household in the City in 2005. Based on ABAG projections, average household size in the City will decrease slightly to approximately 2.64 by 2010, and increase to approximately 2.68 by 2020. By comparison, the County has a larger average household size, estimated at 2.77 persons per household for 2005 and projected to be 2.76 in 2010 and 2.79 in 2020.¹

(c) Housing. As listed in Table 6.1, the number of households in the City (which roughly equates to the number of housing units) totaled approximately 29,070 in 2005, representing approximately 11 percent of the countywide total (261,280 households). The City household total increased by approximately 3.6 percent (1,010 households) between 2000 and 2005. The number of households in the County as a whole increased at a slightly lower rate, 2.8 percent

¹Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). Projections 2005, December 2004.

Table 6.1
**ABAG-PROJECTED POPULATION AND HOUSING TRENDS IN REDWOOD CITY AND
 SAN MATEO COUNTY, 2000 TO 2020**

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Change (5 years) 2000-2005</u>	<u>Projected Year 2010</u>	<u>Projected Change (5 years) 2005-2010</u>	<u>Projected Year 2020</u>	<u>Projected Change (10 years) 2010-2020</u>
<i>Redwood City</i>							
Population	75,402	77,300	1,898 (+2.5%)	79,200	1,900 (+2.5%)	87,100	7,900 (+10.0%)
Households	28,060	29,070	1,010 (+3.6%)	29,960	890 (+3.1%)	32,500	2,540 (+8.5%)
<i>San Mateo County</i>							
Population	707,163	723,200	16,037 (+2.3%)	741,000	17,800 (+2.5%)	806,500	65,500 (+8.8%)
Households	254,104	261,280	7,176 (+2.8%)	268,450	7,170 (+2.7%)	289,550	21,100 (+7.9%)

SOURCE: Association of Bay Area Governments, Projections 2005, December 2004; Wagstaff and Associates, 2006.

(7,176 households) over the same period. The City has a higher percentage of multifamily units (housing structures with five or more units per structure) (33 percent) than the County as a whole (27 percent).¹

The ABAG projections in Table 6.1 indicate that, similar to population growth, the rate of housing growth experienced in Redwood City will be approximately 3.1 percent for the five-year period between 2005 and 2010 and 8.5 percent for the ten-year period between 2010 and 2020. In San Mateo County as a whole, the housing growth rate is projected to be 2.7 percent over the 2005-to-2010 period and 7.9 percent between 2015 and 2025.

6.1.2 Projected Redwood City Housing Needs

(a) **ABAG Housing Needs Determinations.** Under section 65581.4 of the California Government Code, cities and counties are required to make a sustained, serious effort to provide for their appropriate share of regional housing needs, as determined by local councils of governments. To help achieve this mandate, ABAG, which is the council of governments for the nine-county San Francisco Bay region, periodically makes housing needs determinations for each city and county in the region. The determinations are based on anticipated employment opportunities, commuting patterns, and site availability for residential development in the planning area. The ABAG Executive Board released the 1999-2006 determinations on March 15, 2001.² No updated determinations have been released by ABAG since March 2001.

¹City of Redwood City, *Redwood City Housing Element* (draft), March 4, 2004, chapter 3, p. 2.

²Available on the Internet at www.abag.ca.gov.

State law requires ABAG to allocate housing needs for each city and county in the region according to four specified income levels, so that each jurisdiction can make plans to provide for its "fair share" of regional housing needs by income group. To describe these housing needs, ABAG uses the income categories of **very low** for household incomes of up to 50 percent of the median income for the region (i.e., the county), **low** for 51 to 80 percent of the regional median income, **moderate** for 81 to 120 percent of the regional median income, and **above moderate** for household incomes greater than 120 percent of the regional median income.

(b) Housing Needs Determinations for Redwood City. Table 6.2 indicates ABAG-projected housing needs for Redwood City for the period 1999 to 2006. As listed in the table, ABAG has determined that a total of 2,544 housing units would be needed in Redwood City during this seven-year period, consisting of 534 units affordable to **very low-income** households, 256 units affordable to **low-income** households, 660 units affordable to **moderate-income** households, and 1,094 units affordable to **above moderate-income** households. These "fair-share" totals represent the ABAG-projected number of units that would need to be added to Redwood City's housing stock over the period 1999 to 2006 in order to achieve an equitable distribution of housing opportunities.

The *Redwood City Draft Housing Element* indicates that, between January 1, 1999 and July 31, 2001, 54 very low-income and 19 moderate-income units were added to the affordable housing stock in Redwood City through new construction. The remaining need for affordable housing therefore includes 480 very low-income units, 256 low-income units, and 641 moderate-income units.¹

The Draft Housing Element states that Redwood City has adequate sites to meet the housing need identified by ABAG through 2006. The City has also adopted and periodically amended a Redevelopment Plan that is intended in part to facilitate improved housing opportunity in the City. The Redevelopment Plan-designated redevelopment Project Area encompasses the entire Draft Precise Plan area. The Draft Housing Element indicates that the State redevelopment law affordable housing requirement applicable to the City-designated redevelopment Project Area (15 percent of all new units within redevelopment boundaries shall be affordable) will help assure that enough affordable units will be built in the City under current policies to meet the ABAG-projected need, assuming adequate private sector capability to build.²

6.1.3 Precise Plan Area Population and Housing Characteristics

The Precise Plan area currently contains approximately 630 housing units. Assuming an average household size of approximately 2.2 people per household in these (predominantly multifamily) housing units,³ it can be estimated that about 1,390 people live in the Precise Plan area.

¹City of Redwood City, 2004, chapter 7, p. 2

²City of Redwood City, 2004, chapter 7, pp. 1 and 2.

³The average household size assumption is based on the experience of the EIR preparers with multifamily housing projects and is the average of the following estimated household sizes: 2.10 persons per household in a two-bedroom/two-bath unit, 2.25 persons per household in a two-bedroom/2.5-bath unit, 1.60 persons per household in a one-bedroom/one-bath unit, and 2.90 persons per household in a three-bedroom/two-bath unit.

Table 6.2
ABAG-PROJECTED HOUSING NEEDS IN REDWOOD CITY BY INCOME CATEGORY,
1999 TO 2006

	<u>Very Low</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Above Moderate</u>	<u>Total Projected Need</u>
1999-2006	534	256	660	1,094	2,544

SOURCE: City of Redwood City, *Redwood City Housing Element* (draft), March 4, 2004.

6.2 PERTINENT PLANS AND POLICIES

6.2.1 Redwood City Strategic General Plan

(a) Currently Adopted General Plan. Adopted Redwood City Strategic General Plan goals and policies relevant to population, housing, employment, and jobs/housing balance include the following:

- *Residential development should be located only where services and facilities can be provided.* (Land Use Policy L-1, page 6-5)
- *Higher residential densities should be promoted at locations near or within commercial and financial centers, and transportation terminals.* (Land Use Policy L-3, page 6-5)
- *Promote the construction of lower-income housing developments located in areas that are convenient to public transportation, shopping, recreation, schools, hospitals, employment, and other community facilities.* (Housing Policy 1, page 8-28)
- *Encourage public/private partnerships in the development of housing wherever possible.* (Housing Policy 6, page 8-28)

(b) Draft Housing Element Update. The City's Draft Housing Element contains the following related policies. Since the City has not yet adopted the Draft Housing Element, the policies below cannot be considered adopted City policy. They are listed here to indicate the City's possible future housing policy direction.

- *The City shall provide opportunities for Redwood City's share of regional housing needs for all income groups and encourage a variety of housing types.* (Policy A, chapter 8, page 2)

(NOTE: Program A.1 states that "in the planning period 1999-2007, 2,544 sites suitable to accommodate residential development should be made available for the development of at least 534 very-low-income units, 256 low-income units, 660 moderate-income units, and 1,094 above-moderate income units." Program A.1 further notes that "there continues to exist in the city more than adequate sites zoned to meet housing needs through 2007 as outlined in the Housing Element section on housing opportunities and Appendices E-1 and E-2." Opportunity

sites identified in Appendix E-2 of the *Draft Housing Element* and discussed in Program A.2 [regarding the "Downtown Area Plan"] included eight areas in the downtown that would provide an estimated 3,410 housing units, 15 percent of which would be required to be affordable under redevelopment law. The Downtown Area Plan has not been adopted by the City and encompassed a larger area than the currently proposed Downtown Precise Plan. Program A.3 notes that three downtown commercial districts are already zoned to allow new housing opportunities near the city's Caltrain station.)

- *The City will provide housing opportunity for Redwood City's share of the regional housing need for all income groups, with priority given to very low- and low-income households. (Policy B, chapter 8, page 7)*

(NOTE: Program B.2 provides that this policy be implemented in part through funding and assistance programs offered by the City and Redevelopment Agency in the downtown redevelopment area.)

- *The City will provide opportunity for, and encourage, the development of adequate housing for the city's special needs groups, including large families, single-parent-headed households, the elderly, the disabled, and those in need of emergency shelter and transitional housing. (Policy C, chapter 8, pages 10-11)*
- *Redwood City will continue to evaluate whether the city's, county's, regional agencies', and state's site improvement standards, development review procedures, and development fees form a constraint to the development, conservation, and rehabilitation of housing and will seek opportunities to reduce or eliminate governmental and non-governmental constraints. (Policy D, chapter 8, page 15)*
- *The City shall ensure the availability of adequate public facilities, water supply, parks and open space for the expected housing and residents in the city. (Policy E, chapter 8, page 17)*
- *The City will continue rehabilitation programs to upgrade housing units throughout the city and will continue to preserve units at risk. (Policy F, chapter 8, page 18)*
- *The City will support efforts to prevent housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, marital status, children, or disability. (Policy G, chapter 8, page 22)*
- *The City will promote energy efficiency in existing and new housing in Redwood City. (Policy H, chapter 8, page 23)*

6.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

6.3.1 Significance Criteria

Based on the CEQA Guidelines, the project would be considered in this EIR to have a significant impact on population or housing conditions if it would:¹

- (1) 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); or
- (2) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing or people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

6.3.2 Precise Plan-Proposed Housing and Population Goals, Policies, and Actions

As described in chapter 3 (Project Description) of this EIR, the Draft Precise Plan is intended to achieve the following goals that relate to downtown housing and population (see chapter 3 for a complete list of goals):

- Restore Downtown Redwood City as the indispensable hub for a mix of diverse services, conveniences, experiences, and lifestyle choices provided in a way that honors Downtown's rich history while remaining appropriate to social and economic conditions of life in the 21st Century; and
- Provide a choice of "convenience living" – a balanced and synergistic mix of employment and a range of well-designed rental and for-sale housing types in close proximity to entertainment, restaurants, special events, shopping and public services, and to public transportation that provides car-less access to other communities and to San Francisco International Airport.

Based on these goals, the Draft Precise Plan recommends the following related "revitalization strategies" pertaining to housing and population (see chapter 3 for a complete list of strategies):

- Position Downtown as the most convenient place to be by simultaneously promoting: (1) dense market-rate housing options, (2) enhanced transit service and station amenities, (3) a wide range of entertainment and retail/restaurant offerings, and (4) a growing, contemporary workplace.
- Leverage the strong regional demand for housing as the primary engine of revitalization. Offer development intensities to Downtown properties sufficient to allow developers to construct homes, offices, and hotels without City subsidy.

City approvals required to carry out these aspects of the Draft Precise Plan include adoption of the Plan itself, adoption of possible amendments to the 1990 City of Redwood City Strategic General Plan, and approval of an associated rezoning to PD as a means of implementing the Precise Plan.

¹CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, items IX(b) and XII (a-c).

As suggested by the above goals and strategies, a particular objective of the Draft Precise Plan is to provide housing concentrated in the Downtown. The proposed Precise Plan, in concert with the City's Draft Housing Element, is intended to provide for the expansion of city housing choices by encouraging compact, transit-accessible, pedestrian-oriented housing and mixed use (commercial/housing) development in densities and heights greater than currently permitted.

6.3.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

(a) Maximum Intensity Project Scenario:

Housing and Population Growth Impacts--Maximum Intensity Project Alternative. Under the Maximum Intensity project alternative, development in accordance with the proposed Downtown Precise Plan would provide a net increase of up to 3,700 housing units. These housing units would accommodate a net increase of approximately 8,140 residents, assuming an average of 2.2 people per household. The project-related housing and population growth increment has the potential to cause a number of significant adverse environmental effects (e.g., traffic, infrastructure, noise, and air quality), which are described in other chapters of this EIR (see criterion 1 in subsection 6.3.1, "Significance Criteria," above).

The estimated net population increase of approximately 8,140 residents would represent approximately 1.0 percent of the ABAG-projected year 2020 San Mateo County population total of 806,500, and approximately 9.4 percent of the ABAG-projected year 2020 Redwood City population total of 87,100. The population increase (approximately 8,140 residents) would represent approximately 83.1 percent of the ABAG-projected 2005-to-2020 Redwood City population growth increment of 9,800 persons. These relative project-related population increases would not in themselves constitute a significant adverse environmental impact. However, the added population increments could in turn cause significant project-related impacts and contribute to significant cumulative impacts related to traffic, infrastructure, air quality, noise, and other environmental impacts that are described in corresponding chapters of this EIR.

Mitigation. Implementation of the mitigation measures identified in other chapters of this EIR related to project population-induced environmental impacts (e.g., traffic--chapter 9, infrastructure--chapter 10, noise--chapter 11, and air quality--chapter 12), would reduce identified environmental impacts associated with the project-related population increase to a ***less-than-significant level***, with the exception of project and project-plus-cumulative transportation impacts (see chapter 9) and the associated long-term regional air emissions impact (*Impact 12-2*), which after implementation of the associated mitigation measures identified in this EIR, would remain ***significant and unavoidable***.

Plan Housing Supply Benefit--Maximum Intensity Project Alternative. Under the Maximum Intensity alternative, the proposed Downtown Precise Plan would provide for a net increase of up to 3,700 housing units. This housing unit increase would result in a local housing supply benefit and would exceed the City's ABAG-identified fair share need for housing from 1999 to 2006 (2,544 units). The contribution to the ABAG-identified fair share need for each income category ("very low," "low," "moderate," and "above moderate") has not been established. Housing development enabled by the Downtown Precise Plan Maximum Intensity alternative would further Redwood City Strategic General Plan policies calling for residential development

near commercial uses, transit, and other services, as well as Draft Housing Element policies for provision of the city's fair share of regional housing needs. The Maximum Intensity alternative would therefore have a generally **beneficial impact** on the local housing supply.

Mitigation. The Maximum Intensity alternative would have an overall beneficial impact on local housing needs. No Precise Plan-related conflict with an applicable housing goal or regulation of the City has been identified. No mitigation is necessary.

Loss of Existing Planning Area Housing--Maximum Intensity Project Alternative. Potential demolition in the Precise Plan area under the Maximum Intensity alternative could result in the loss of up to approximately 84 housing units over a 15-year period. Housing demolition would be voluntary (i.e., at the discretion of individual property owners), however, and the proposed Precise Plan would allow for an overall increase in housing. Any demolished housing units would thus be effectively replaced by new housing development in the Precise Plan area. The potential for housing loss would therefore represent a **less-than-significant impact** (see criterion 2 in subsection 6.3.1, "Significance Criteria") above.

Mitigation. No significant environmental impact associated with housing loss has been identified; no mitigation is required.

(b) Moderate Intensity Project Scenario:

Housing and Population Growth Impacts--Moderate Intensity Project Alternative. Under the Moderate Intensity project alternative, development in accordance with the proposed Downtown Precise Plan would provide a net increase of up to 2,500 housing units. These housing units would accommodate a net increase of approximately 5,500 residents, assuming an average of 2.2 people per household. The project-related housing and population growth increment has the potential to cause a number of significant adverse environmental effects (e.g., traffic, infrastructure, noise, and air quality), which are described in other chapters of this EIR (see criterion 1 in subsection 6.3.1, "Significance Criteria," above).

The estimated net population increase of approximately 5,500 residents under the Maximum Intensity alternative would represent approximately 0.7 percent of the ABAG-projected year 2020 San Mateo County population total of 806,500, and approximately 6.3 percent of the ABAG-projected year 2020 Redwood City population total of 87,100. The population increase (approximately 5,500 residents) would represent approximately 56.1 percent of the ABAG-projected 2005-to-2020 Redwood City population growth increment of 9,800 persons. These relative project-related population increases would not in themselves constitute a significant adverse environmental impact. However, the added population increments could in turn cause significant project-related impacts and contribute to significant cumulative impacts related to traffic, infrastructure, air quality, noise, and other environmental impacts that are described in corresponding chapters of this EIR.

Mitigation. Implementation of the mitigation measures identified in other chapters of this EIR related to project population-induced environmental impacts (e.g., traffic--chapter 9, infrastructure--chapter 10, noise--chapter 11, and air quality--chapter 12), would reduce identified environmental impacts associated with the project-related population increase to a **less-than-significant level**, with the exception of project and project-plus-cumulative

cumulative transportation impacts (see chapter 9) and the associated long-term regional air emissions impact (*Impact 12-2*), which after implementation of the associated mitigation measures identified in this EIR, would remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Plan Housing Supply Benefit--Moderate Intensity Project Alternative. Under the Moderate Intensity alternative, the proposed Downtown Precise Plan would provide for a net increase of up to 2,500 housing units. This housing unit increase would result in a local housing supply benefit and would roughly equal the City's ABAG-identified fair share need for housing from 1999 to 2006 (2,544 units). The contribution to the ABAG-identified fair share need for each income category ("very low," "low," "moderate," and "above moderate") has not been established. Housing development enabled by the Downtown Precise Plan Moderate Intensity alternative would further Redwood City Strategic General Plan policies calling for residential development near commercial uses, transit, and other services, as well as Draft Housing Element policies for provision of the city's fair share of regional housing needs. The project would therefore have a generally **beneficial impact** on the local housing supply.

Mitigation. The Moderate Intensity alternative would have an overall beneficial impact on local housing needs. No plan-related conflict with an applicable housing goal or regulation of the City has been identified. No mitigation is necessary.

Loss of Existing Planning Area Housing--Moderate Intensity Project Alternative. Potential demolition in the Precise Plan area under the Moderate Intensity scenario could result in the loss of up to approximately 84 housing units over a 15-year period. Housing demolition would be voluntary (i.e., at the discretion of individual property owners), however, and the proposed Precise Plan would allow for an overall increase in housing. Any demolished housing units would thus be effectively replaced by new housing development in the Plan area. The potential for housing loss would therefore represent a **less-than-significant impact** (see criterion 2 in subsection 6.3.1, "Significance Criteria," above).

Mitigation. No significant environmental impact associated with housing loss has been identified; no mitigation is required.

