

## IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

### J. POPULATION AND HOUSING

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Population and housing data and forecasts are compiled by a number of agencies, including the U.S. Census Bureau, the Southern California Association of Government (SCAG), and the City of Los Angeles.

#### 2. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

##### a. Physical Setting

The Project Site is located within the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan Area within the City of Los Angeles. The Community Plan Area is comprised of five community subareas, each with its own identity. Within the Community Plan Area, the Project Site is within the Studio City subarea. Specifically, the community of Studio City is located approximately 11 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles, and bound by the communities of North Hollywood, Van Nuys, and Valley Village on the north; Toluca Lake, Universal City, and a portion of the City of Burbank on the east; Sherman Oaks, Encino, and Tarzana on the west; and Bel-Air, Hollywood, and West Hollywood to the south. Studio City is characterized as a collection of production and post-production businesses, containing the majority of industrially zoned properties found within the Community Plan Area. Properties located along Ventura Boulevard are developed with a mix of pedestrian-oriented storefronts and office structures.

The Citywide General Plan Framework, the umbrella concept and overall guiding vision for Los Angeles, is based on a directed growth strategy that targets residential and commercial growth along boulevards and corridors, as well as clustered development around community focal points and high activity centers. The General Plan Framework incorporates forecasts for population, employment, and housing number estimates that are derived from regional data, which in turn were disaggregated to the City and then the community level. Overall, for the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan Area, the General Plan Framework forecasts the following population, housing and employment levels for the year 2010:<sup>1</sup>

<i>Population (2010) Projection</i>	90,582
<i>Employment (2010) Projection</i>	55,810
<i>Housing (2010) Projection</i>	45,401

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<sup>1</sup> City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan, May 13, 1998, p. II-4. It can be reasonably assumed that the population, employment and housing estimates for the current year are substantially similar to the projections for the year 2010 in the Framework.

According to the 2010 Census, the Studio City area (as defined by the 91604 postal ZIP code boundary) has a population of approximately 29,034 residents.<sup>2</sup> This is an increase of approximately 2,897 residents, or 11 percent, over the 2000 Census population of 26,137. According to the 2010 Census, this area currently supports approximately 14,292 households, which is a five percent increase from the 13,620 households reported under the 2000 Census.<sup>3</sup> Population in the area is assumed to include only the permanent population, residing within housing units.

The median age in the City of Los Angeles has been increasing steadily over time. In 1990, the City's median age was 30.6 years. In 2000, it was 31.6 years, and by 2005, it was 33.3 years.<sup>4</sup> The Studio City area follows this trend, but is represented by an overall higher local median age relative to the citywide observations. According to the 2010 Census, the median age within the Studio City area was 40.2 years compared to 39.2 years in 2000.<sup>5</sup>

More specifically, the Project Site is located within U.S. Census Bureau Tract 1435, which is generally bound on the north by Moorpark Street, on the east by Laurel Canyon Boulevard, on the south by the Los Angeles River, and on the west by Fulton Avenue. According to 2010 Census data, the total population within Census Tract 1435 was 4,708 persons within 2,388 total households, resulting in an average household size of 1.97 persons per household.

The U.S. Census only provides population and housing estimates for 2010 and does not project anticipated levels for the years following 2010. The U.S. Census does retain historical data (i.e., for 2000, 1990, etc.) and therefore, it is possible to evaluate historical trends in order to predict future growth levels, if needed.

The City of Los Angeles also utilizes regional growth projections provided by SCAG to help guide the City with its land use and housing goals and policies. SCAG projects future population and housing growth in Southern California through the year 2035 as part of its *Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) 2012-2035, Sustainable Communities Strategy, Towards a Sustainable Future*.

The Project Site is currently zoned A1-1XL with an Open Space land use designation, and developed with open space and recreational uses, including a golf course, driving range, clubhouse, tennis courts, and related facilities. As such, the Project Site does not currently support any housing units or residential population. Population at the Project Site is limited to a temporary "daytime" population of employees and visitors utilizing facilities at the Weddington Golf and Tennis Club.

The Project Site is located amidst an established residential community with single-family residential neighborhoods to the north and west and multiple-family residential complexes to the

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<sup>2</sup> Population information reported for postal zip code area 91604. This area general includes the areas between U.S. Highway 101 and Mullholland Drive, and Fulton Street and Tujunga Avenue. Source: <http://www.zip-codes.com/zip-code/91604/zip-code-91604.asp>

<sup>3</sup> United States Census Bureau, ZIP-Codes.com, <http://www.zip-codes.com/zip-code/91604/zip-code-91604.asp>

<sup>4</sup> Los Angeles Department of City Planning, *Housing Element of the General Plan 2006-2014*. [http://cityplanning.lacity.org/HousingInitiatives/HousingElement/Final/HE\\_Final.pdf](http://cityplanning.lacity.org/HousingInitiatives/HousingElement/Final/HE_Final.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> United States Census Bureau, ZIP-Codes.com, <http://www.zip-codes.com/zip-code/91604/zip-code-91604.asp>

east, along Whitsett Avenue. The area south of the Project Site is comprised primarily of commercial land uses and the Los Angeles River.

**b. Regulatory and Policy Setting**

The regulatory and policy setting for population and housing are discussed in the context of land use under *Section IV.H: Environmental Impact Analysis – Land Use and Planning* of this Draft EIR. Relevant policy information for population and housing forecasts are identified above in the context of physical setting.

**3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

**a. Methodology**

The following housing and population analysis relies on the characterization of onsite and surrounding land uses based on field observations and review of aerial photos. Characterization of community population and housing characteristics is based on publicly available U.S. Census data or similar data and forecasts derived from census data. Review of City and regional agency planning documents was completed to identify the housing and growth policy and regulatory setting for the Property.

**b. Thresholds of Significance**

In accordance with Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, the Project would have a significant impact on population and housing if it would cause any of the following conditions to occur:<sup>6</sup>

- a) 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).
- b) Displace a substantial number of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- c) Displace a substantial number of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Furthermore, as set forth in the City of Los Angeles L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide, the determination of significance shall be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the following:

Population

- The degree to which the project would cause growth (i.e., new housing or employment generators) or accelerate development in an undeveloped area that exceeds projected/planned levels for the year of project occupancy/buildout, and that would result in an adverse physical change in the environment;

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<sup>6</sup> State of California, *California Environmental Quality Act: Guidelines*, [http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env\\_law/ceqa/guidelines](http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa/guidelines) (May 2008).

- Whether the project would introduce unplanned infrastructure that was not previously evaluated in the adopted Community Plan or General Plan; and
- The extent to which growth would occur without implementation of the project.

### Housing

- The total number of residential units to be demolished, converted to market rate, or removed through other means as a result of the proposed project, in terms of net loss of market-rate and affordable units;
- The current and anticipated housing demand and supply of market rate and affordable housing units in the project area;
- The land use and demographic characteristics of the project area and the appropriateness of housing in the area; and
- Whether the project is consistent with adopted City and regional housing policies such as the Framework and Housing Elements, HUD Consolidated Plan and CHAS policies redevelopment plan, Rent Stabilization Ordinance, and the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCP & G).

#### **c. Project Impacts**

The thresholds of significance regarding the demolition, conversion, or removal of housing do not apply to the proposed Project because there are no existing residential units on the Project Site. Further analysis of this issue is not required. For the same reason, development of the proposed Project would not have the potential to displace (either temporarily or permanently) housing or people and no impacts in this regard would occur. Further analysis of this issue is also not required.

Due to the need for housing within the City of Los Angeles, the addition of housing units, especially those serving special needs such as for the elderly, could be considered a beneficial effect of the proposed Project.

Potential impacts related to growth, both direct and indirect, and consistency with policies addressing housing and population, are discussed below.

##### **(1) Direct Growth**

The proposed Project involves construction of 200 multiple-family dwelling units for senior citizens on Project Site that is currently developed with a golf course, driving range, clubhouse, tennis courts, and related amenities, but no residential uses. The Project proposal also includes retention of 11.6 acres for continued community recreational uses, for which future development (and therefore growth) would be discouraged. The 200 senior housing units will replace the existing 16 tennis courts and appurtenant uses (Lot 2) on the Project Site. The entitlement application for the Project is requesting a Zone Change on proposed Lot 2 from A1-1XL to R3-1 and a General Plan Amendment from Open Space to Medium Density Residential to accommodate the new dwelling units. The Community Plan anticipated that the average household size for Medium Density Residential uses within the Plan area was approximately

1.70 persons per dwelling unit in 2010. It can be reasonably assumed that the project average household size in the current year is substantially similar to the projection for 2010. Based on the 2010 projection, approximately 340 persons are anticipated to reside on Lot 2 of the Project Site at full occupancy of the Project.<sup>7</sup> As the Project Site is currently without any residential density, this increase in residential population would represent all of the population (permanent) and housing on the Project Site.

The population increase of 340 persons is not considered to be substantial relative to the current built-out conditions of the Studio City community and the immediate neighborhood around the Project Site. Based on the 2010 Census population of 29,034 residents within the Studio City area, the increase of 340 residents due to the 200-unit SCSLC would result in a population increase of approximately 1.2 percent within the community.

The Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework EIR projected a resident population in the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan Area of 90,582 residents by 2010. In the worst case scenario that the proposed increase of 340 residents was not planned for in the Community Plan projections, the population increase represents less than one percent of the 90,582 residents in the Community Plan Area, and thus will result in a less-than-significant impact to the existing population or public services in the area as a result of the population increase. The proposed population associated with the Project would be consistent with area-wide population (and housing) forecasts, because it would be consistent with the City General Plan, Community Plan, and SCAG RCP/RTP.

The proposed Project and the requested General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation of the 4.5-acre proposed Lot 2 from Open Space (A1-1XL zone) to Medium Density Residential (R3-1 zone) would be consistent with the projected housing goals in the Community Plan. The Community Plan estimated a density of approximately 55 to 109 Medium Density Residential units per net acre within the Medium Density Residential land in the Community Plan Area projected through year 2010. As an urbanized, highly built out Plan Area, it can be reasonably assumed that the density projection would be substantially similar in the year of Project build-out, 2016. The housing projections in the Community Plan are based on the midpoint (Community Plan-wide average) of the anticipated density projection, which is approximately 82 Medium Density Residential units per net acre. Based on the midpoint density and an assumed 2.71 net acres (development estimated at 60 percent of the overall gross 4.5 acres on Lot 2), a total of 222 units could be reasonably expected on Lot 2 using the projections of the Community Plan. The proposed Project, which proposes 200 units, would represent a

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<sup>7</sup> The SCSLC Project population is based on an anticipated household size of 1.70 persons per unit and a total Project size of 200 residential dwelling units. The 1.70 persons per unit household size is from the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan projections for the year 2010 Plan population and dwelling unit capacity for low to medium density residential land uses. [Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan (1998), page III-2]. It is anticipated that the household size for senior living units may actually be closer to 1.5 persons per unit (for a total Project population of 300 persons) based on other demographic studies, and also supported by the 2010 Census statistics that indicate that almost 25 percent of all single-occupant households within the Studio City area (ZIP Code 91604) are occupied by residents aged 65 years and older. However, for worst case scenario, an anticipated household size of 1.70 persons per unit (for a total Project population of 340 persons) is being used for the analysis.

density that would be below the midpoint density, and therefore is consistent with density and growth expectations.

The City of Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework EIR projected approximately 45,401 housing units in the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan Area by 2010, which would be substantially similar in the current year and the Project build out year 2016. An increase of 200 units in the Community Plan Area would increase the total to approximately 45,601 housing units as a result of the proposed Project, representing an increase of less than one percent of projected housing units. The negligible projected increase in housing units does not exceed the number of housing units that would be permitted on Lot 2 by the Los Angeles Municipal Code and does not adversely impact the character of the area, the ratio of single-family uses to multi-family uses in the Plan Area, or the stock of housing in the neighborhood as projected by the Community Plan. Therefore, the proposed Project will result in a less-than-significant impact to housing at the Project Site.

The proposed population associated with the Project would be consistent with area-wide housing (and population) forecasts, because it would be consistent with the City General Plan, Community Plan and SCAG RCP/RTP. As a result, development of the proposed Project would not directly induce substantial population growth, and impacts related to population and housing would be less-than-significant.

### **(2) Indirect Growth**

The proposed Project would extend roadways and other infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, and energy services) to and within the Project Site as needed to ensure adequate access and support for the Project. However, these services and infrastructure are already in place within the established Studio City community. Further, the Project Site is already connected to the existing infrastructure for the existing golf course, driving range, clubhouse, and tennis court uses. The extension and minor configuration adjustments necessary for the proposed Project to effectively connect to the available infrastructure within Whitsett Avenue would not induce growth because they would serve only the Project within proposed Lot 2. The access road to serve the Project along Valleyheart Drive would utilize an existing easement for a roadway that was previously planned, but never built. Hence, Project-related roads would not induce growth because they would serve only the Project and would not open up access to new areas not previously contemplated for connection to the City's roadway and circulation system. Existing services and infrastructure are already adequate to serve the projected growth contemplated by the proposed Project (see *Section IV.M: Environmental Impact Analysis – Transportation and Circulation*, and *Section IV.N: Environmental Impact Analysis – Utilities*). As a result, development of the proposed Project would not indirectly induce substantial population growth and impacts related to population and housing would be less-than-significant.

### **(3) Consistency with Adopted Plans and Policies**

The City's Community Plan and General Plan Housing Element address housing goals for the Project area. *Section IV.H: Environmental Impact Analysis – Land Use and Planning* of this

Draft EIR discusses in detail the proposed Project's consistency with community and regional plans and policies, including those specific to housing and population.

In summary, the proposed Project would be consistent with applicable housing related goals, objectives, and policies because the Project would preserve existing housing and add new housing types that target diverse populations. Also, the Project would preserve the existing community character through the retention of the existing golf course/driving range uses and by incorporating architecture and landscape design features that are sensitive and non-intrusive to the surrounding residential community, thus protecting the longevity of the existing residential neighborhoods. Further, the introduction of 200 new residential units for senior residents would contribute to the diversification of housing opportunities in the Project vicinity as it would target the needs for a select and underserved segment of the population. The Project would result in the establishment of a senior residential community that would fulfill a senior housing void currently present in the community.

The Project Applicant requests a change from A1-1XL to R3-1 zoning on proposed Lot 2 of the Project Site, which would be consistent with the underlying zoning and the Community Plan designations (e.g., R-3 and Medium Density Residential, respectively) for other residential properties in the immediate vicinity (i.e., across the street toward the east and to the north), especially along Whitsett Avenue. The Community Plan reflects previous land use patterns considered appropriate for the Project area. For example, the Community Plan Map identifies lands where only single-family residential development is permitted and it protects these areas from encroachment by designating, where appropriate, transitional residential densities which serve as buffers. The proposed Project, although consistent with the residential patterns already established in the area, would not physically encroach on surrounding residential areas as it would remain buffered from single-family residential to the north and west by the existing golf course, driving range, and clubhouse, which would remain on the Project Site largely unaffected. As a result, the Project represents an effective application of housing policy at the Project Site and within the Project vicinity.

Further, the Project can be characterized as infill development on a large underutilized parcel in the Studio City area, in which development would be located within an established urban area that offers a mix of uses. The Project would be conveniently located near residential neighborhoods, commercial retail and services, recreation facilities, and public transit corridors (i.e., Ventura Boulevard), thus allowing for reduced commuting distances and facilitating opportunity for walkability. The Project would be located within close proximity (less than ½ mile) from other key community services, thereby adding to efficient development densities and community connectivity within Studio City. As such, the proposed Project would implement the City's vision for compact growth within community core areas.

**d. Cumulative Impacts**

Of the ten Related Projects in the area, six include housing components that might affect the resident population in the Project area.

Based on City records, and as consistent with the traffic analysis conducted for the proposed Project in *Section IV.M: Environmental Impact Analysis – Transportation and Circulation* of this Draft EIR, it is assumed that approximately 907 dwelling units have been filed for entitlement, are undergoing issuance of a building permit, or are under construction. All of these units would be multiple-family units, the majority of which would be located along major corridors including Ventura Boulevard, Laurel Canyon Boulevard, and Riverside Drive. Additionally, up to 76 existing multiple-family dwelling units, including 54 units for senior citizens, would be demolished to accommodate construction of the Campbell Hall School on Laurel Canyon Boulevard. As such, a total of 831 net new dwelling units could potentially be added to the Community Plan Area as a result of Related Projects.

The Related Projects would introduce approximately 1,455 residents into the Community Plan Area.<sup>8</sup> Assuming the worst-case scenario that the Community Plan did not consider or plan for development of these Related Projects or the proposed Project, the Related Projects would increase the population in the Community Plan Area to approximately 92,037 residents, based on the Framework EIR projection for the Community Plan Area of approximately 90,582 residents by 2010. With the proposed Project added, the Community Plan Area population would increase to 92,377 residents, representing a total 1.94 percent increase from the 2010 projection of the Framework EIR as a result of the Project and Related Projects. This approximately 1.98 percent increase would not be a substantial enough growth beyond normal population growth to trigger a significant impact and thus would result in a less-than-significant impact on population in the area. Additionally, due to the urbanized nature of the community and the infill of the Related Projects and proposed Project, the population increase would not result in unplanned infrastructure not previously adopted by the Community Plan and would therefore result in a less-than-significant impact to population in the area.

The Related Projects would add approximately 831 new multiple-family housing units to the Community Plan Area. Assuming the worst-case scenario that the Community Plan did not consider or plan for development of these Related Projects or the proposed Project, the Related Projects would increase the housing stock in the Community Plan Area to approximately 46,232 housing units, based on the Framework EIR projection for the Community Plan Area of approximately 45,401 housing units by 2010. With the proposed Project added, the Community Plan Area housing stock would increase to 46,432 housing units, representing a total 2.27 percent increase from the 2010 projection of the Framework EIR as a result of the Project and Related Projects. This approximately 2.27 percent increase would not be a substantial enough growth beyond normal housing stock growth to trigger a significant impact and thus would result in a less-than-significant impact on housing stock in the area. Additionally, due to the urbanized nature of the community and the infill of the Related Projects and proposed Project, the housing stock increase would not result in unplanned infrastructure not previously adopted by the Community Plan and would therefore result in a less -than -significant impact to housing in the area.

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<sup>8</sup> Based on 1.70 persons per unit from the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan projections for the year 2010 Plan population and dwelling unit capacity for low to medium density residential land uses. [Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan (1998), page III-2]

#### **4. COMPLIANCE MEASURES, PDFS, AND MITIGATION PROGRAM**

##### **a. Compliance Measures**

The Project will not be required to comply with Compliance Measures related to population and housing. Any Compliance Measures related to land use impacts are presented in *Section IV.H: Environmental Impact Analysis – Land Use and Planning* of this Draft EIR.

##### **b. Project Design Features**

The following PDFs are specific design and/or operational characteristics included to avoid or reduce potential population and housing impacts. These PDFs relate to maintaining the Project for a specific, underserved segment of the community:

PDF POP-1: The Project shall be age-restricted for seniors aged 55 and older and shall target support for a resident population with an average age of approximately 75 years (upon move-in).

PDF POP-2: The Project shall provide for resident ownership of individual dwelling units and an undivided interest in the residential common areas. Individual resident-occupant ownership (rather than rental arrangement) shall be arranged through purchase agreements coordinated by the Project Applicant/Manager. Resale of units shall be facilitated and/or monitored through the Project Applicant/Manager to ensure that ownership is reserved for senior residents 55 years and older. For example, when an owner of a dwelling unit passes away or needs to relinquish ownership, the unit shall be transferred back (at market value to the owner or beneficiaries) to the Project Applicant/Manager and resold to another senior resident.

##### **c. Mitigation Measures**

The Project will result in less-than-significant population and housing impacts. Therefore, no Mitigation Measures are required.

#### **5. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION**

Impacts related to population and housing would be less-than-significant as a result of development of the Project at the Project Site. There are no existing housing units located on the Project Site that would be demolished for the Project. Due to the need for housing within the City of Los Angeles, the addition of housing units, especially those serving special needs, such as for the elderly, could be considered a beneficial effect of the proposed Project.