

4.11 POPULATION AND HOUSING

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**SECTION 4.0**

## 4.11 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) section considers the potential for the North Canyon Ranch residential project and the Required Island Annexations (together forming the whole project for purposes of this Draft EIR) to result in impacts associated with population and housing and identifies opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant population and housing impacts where warranted.

This analysis consists of a description of the existing conditions at the proposed project site and surrounding area, a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and residual impacts (i.e., level of significance after mitigation). The significance of project impacts has been determined in accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and additional regulatory agency requirements, where they apply. Sources used in the analysis are cited herein where relevant to the analysis; a comprehensive list of references is provided Section 7.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted and References, of this EIR.

### 4.11.1 Existing Conditions

The environmental setting and regulatory setting, below, establish existing conditions relevant to the project. The analysis of project impacts is based on these baseline conditions.

#### Environmental Setting

Ventura County is part of the larger Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), on the western end of the Counties that make up SCAG. The City of Simi Valley (City) is located in the eastern portion of Ventura County, bordering the City of Los Angeles to the east and Ventura County's Conejo Valley to the southwest. The City is surrounded by the Santa Susana Mountain range to the north and the Simi Hills to the south/southeast. Moorpark is the next city to the west. The Housing Element of the General Plan characterizes the City as a commuter bedroom community feeding the larger cities in Ventura County to the west and the Los Angeles area to the east.

Simi Valley was originally inhabited by Chumash Indians and then became one of the earliest Spanish colonial Ranchos in the Ventura and Santa Barbara County region, referred to as Rancho Simi. Until the late 19th century, Rancho Simi had a Spanish-speaking majority and was then settled by Anglo-Americans. The new settlers established farms, orchards, and groves, which dominated the landscape until the 1970s. The City incorporated in 1969 with approximately 10,000 residents, presently covers 42.42 square miles, offers a variety of residential types and job opportunities. According to the 2021 Census, the City is home to 125,975 residents as of July 1, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

#### North Canyon Ranch

The proposed North Canyon Ranch residential development project site is located within an approximately 160-acre undeveloped property in unincorporated Ventura County, adjacent to the City boundary of the northwestern portion of the City. There are currently no housing units or permanent population on the project site. The project site property is located within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) area and within the City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB) identified in the Simi Valley General Plan, also known as the Simi Valley 2030 General Plan Update.<sup>2</sup> Development of SOI areas were not included in the City's

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Community Facts, Simi Valley, Accessed on August 29, 2022, at: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/simivalleycitycalifornia>.

<sup>2</sup> City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan Land Use Map, June 2012.

population and housing projections during the 2030 General Plan update. The project applicant is requesting that the project site be annexed to the City. Existing land uses adjacent to the proposed development area consist of multi-family residences and “big box” stores associated with the Simi Valley Town Center Mall to the south, single-family residences to the east, and open space to the north and west. The southwestern corner of the development area is located at the northern terminus of First Street, and the eastern side of the development area is located at the western terminus of Falcon Street, which the project would extend westerly through the project site to connect with First Street.

## **Required Island Annexations**

The project would include the annexation of nine Required Island Annexation Areas from the County of Ventura to the City. The Island Annexation Areas are located within the City limits boundary, although currently they are excluded from the City’s jurisdiction, and consist of parcels that are mostly developed for residential use (consisting of single-family homes and several duplexes). A total of five undeveloped lots within these unincorporated areas, which are located adjacent to existing development, could potentially be developed with five dwelling units, but no development plans are proposed. For the purposes of CEQA, the only action for this part of the project is for the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to approve annexation of the Island properties to the City, and no physical changes in land use or infrastructure within these properties is proposed as part of this project.

## **Regulatory Setting**

### ***Federal***

#### **United States Bureau of the Census**

The United States Bureau of the Census is an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce responsible for serving as the leading source of quality data about the nation’s people and economy. The 2010 Census provided the basis for population characteristics in the Housing Element of the City General Plan, re-adopted February 27, 2023, using 2010 Census data. The Bureau of the Census also provides updated survey data for communities with populations over 65,000 through the American Community Survey (ACS) process used to supplement Census Bureau data whenever possible.

### ***State***

#### **California Government Code**

The Government Code Section 65580 identifies the California Legislature’s statement that “attainment of decent housing and a suitable living environment for every Californian” as a “priority of the highest order.” The Government Code requires local jurisdictions to prepare General Plans, including a Housing Element to identify the City’s housing conditions and establish the goals, objectives, and policies that are the foundation of the City’s housing and growth strategy. Government Code Section 65583 identifies the requirements for housing elements of general plans.

### ***Regional and Local***

#### **Southern California Association of Governments**

Founded in 1965, SCAG is a legal entity formed under California law by counties, cities, and tribal powers. Under federal law, SCAG is designated as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and under California law as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency and a Council of Governments.

On September 3, 2020, SCAG’s Regional Council adopted the Connect SoCal 2020–2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS meets federal and state requirements and is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. The RTP/SCS contains baseline socioeconomic projections that serve as the basis for SCAG’s transportation planning. It includes projections of population, households, and employment forecasted for the years 2020, 2030, 2035, and 2045 at the regional, county, and local jurisdictional levels.<sup>3</sup> The Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report to the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS details growth in employment, population, and households at the regional, county, jurisdictional and sub-jurisdictional levels between 2016 and 2045.<sup>4</sup>

### **Simi Valley General Plan – Housing Element**

The Housing Element of the Simi Valley General Plan (adopted February 27, 2023 by the City and certified May 18, 2023, by the California Department of Housing and Community Development) is the City's primary planning tool with respect to population and housing. Policies within the Housing Element are relevant to the proposed project because of the proposed housing units and resulting population increase. Section 4.9, Land Use Planning, of this Draft EIR provides an analysis of project consistency with relevant General Plan policies including those of the Housing Element. Although the project site is located outside the incorporated City limits, the site is located within the City SOI, a City Planning Area within which the most recent General Plan update included population projections. As noted in the General Plan, the City Planning Area comprises all properties located within the existing SOI for Simi Valley, including all properties within the current City limits.<sup>5</sup>

#### **4.11.2 Thresholds of Significance**

The potential for the proposed project to result in impacts related to population and housing is analyzed in relation to the thresholds below, which are based upon the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist. Impacts to population that are social or economic are not generally considered a significant effect on the environment under CEQA unless a social or economic change can be directly linked to a physical change in the environment. Impacts related to the project’s potential to induce growth are discussed in Section 6.5, Growth Inducing Impact, of this Draft EIR. The proposed project would be considered to have a significant population and housing impact when the proposed project has potential to (short title for impact headings shown in parentheses):

- Induce substantial unplanned 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). (Unplanned Population Growth)
- Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. (Displacement of People or Housing)

#### **4.11.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Development of the project would establish Tentative Tract Map No. 5658-A, a residential subdivision of 157 single-family and 50 multi-family units, with roadways, utilities, and open space on 160.32 acres. The project development would be accessed by the project-proposed westerly extension of Falcon Street, west of Erringer Road, in the northwest portion of the City, consistent with the City’s General Plan. The project

<sup>3</sup> SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Adopted September 3, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Adopted September 3, 2020.

<sup>5</sup> City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Chapter 3, Community Development, pg. 3-2.

would also include the annexation of nine County Islands to the City, with no new development being proposed within the Islands. However, conservatively, our analysis assumes that five single-family homes could be constructed on residential lots that are currently without homes. The following analysis considers the impact of the project with respect to population and housing.

#### **4.11.3.1 Unplanned Population Growth**

A project could result in a potentially significant impact if it would result in substantial unplanned growth either directly (such as by proposing unplanned development) or indirectly (such as by extending roads or other infrastructure into areas not previously planned for development).

#### **North Canyon Ranch**

Buildout of the proposed project would add a total of 207 new residential units consisting of 157 single-family units and 50 multi-family units and associated roads and infrastructure to serve the proposed residences. The project site development is consistent with the General Plan in the sense that it is within the City SOI and CURB boundaries, but it will require a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change to realize the proposed project. An estimate of the population growth resulting from the new housing is provided in **Table 4.11-1, Proposed Housing and Estimated Population**.

**Table 4.11-1  
Proposed Housing and Estimated Population**

<b>Housing</b>	<b>Units Proposed</b>	<b>Average Household Size</b>	<b>Estimated Population</b>
Single-family residential	157	2.98	468
Multi-family units	50	2.98	149
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>	--	<b>617</b>
Source for Household Size: City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General Plan, Housing Element, Table H-9, Household Characteristics, May 2023.			

As shown in Table 4.11-1, the proposed 157 single-family units and 50 multi-family units would result in an increase of 209 additional residential units and an estimated population increase of 617 people based on the City's average owner-occupied household size, as shown in the General Plan. Although the average household size for renter-occupied units is lower, the average household size for owner-occupied units of 2.98 people was used for all project unities as a conservative projection.

As the federally designated MPO for a six-County region, SCAG prepared the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, which contains population and housing growth forecasts for SCAG's component counties and cities. **Table 4.11-2, Housing and Population Growth Projections**, provides growth projections including the projected 2022 baseline, 2028 project buildout year (extrapolated), and SCAG horizon year 2045 estimates for population and housing within the City and County.

**Table 4.11-2**  
**Housing and Population Growth Projections**

Growth and Geographic Area	2022 Baseline	Project Buildout Year (2028)			SCAG Horizon Year (2045)		
		Projection	Growth from 2022	Percent Increase from 2022	Projection	Growth from 2022	Percent Increase from 2022
<b>Population</b>							
City of Simi Valley	129,148	131,197	2,048	1.6%	137,000	7,852	6.1%
County of Ventura	870,069	890,138	20,069	2.3%	947,000	76,931	8.8%
<b>Housing</b>							
City of Simi Valley	42,531	43,462	931	2.2%	46,100	3,569	8.4%
County of Ventura	278,241	285,483	7,241	2.6%	306,000	27,759	10%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.							
Note: Population and housing rate data for years 2022 (the baseline year) and 2028 (the anticipated buildout year of the Project) within the City and County are calculated based on a linear interpolation of the 2016 to 2045 projections in SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS.							
Note: Estimates are rounded.							

The contributions of the project to the local (City) and regional (County) population and housing growth projections are provided in **Table 4.11-3, Project Contributions to Local and Regional Population Growth**, and **Table 4.11-4, Project Contributions to Local and Regional Housing Growth**.

**Table 4.11-3**  
**Project Contributions to Local and Regional Population Growth**

Geographic Area	Increase in Population Generated by the Project	Population Growth from 2022-2045	Project's Percentage of Population Growth from 2022-2045
City of Simi Valley	617	7,852	7.68%
County of Ventura	617	76,931	0.80%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.			

**Table 4.11-4**  
**Project Contributions to Local and Regional Housing Growth**

Geographic Area	Increase in Housing Generated by the Project	Housing Growth from 2022-2045	Project's Percentage of Housing Growth from 2022-2045
City of Simi Valley	207	3,569	5.80%
County of Ventura	207	27,759	0.75%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.			

As shown in Table 4.11-3, the project's population is compared to the City and County projections for population from the project baseline year in 2022 to the SCAG horizon year in 2045. The Citywide population is anticipated to increase by 7,852 people from 2022 to 2045, and the proposed project would

account for only eight percent of the forecasted City population growth through 2045. The Countywide population is anticipated to increase by 76,931 people from 2022 to 2045, and the proposed project would represent a negligible amount (approximately 0.80 percent) of the projected regional population growth.

As shown in Table 4.11-4, the project's housing is compared to the City and County projections for housing from the project baseline year in 2022 to the SCAG horizon year in 2045. City housing is anticipated to increase by 3,569 households from 2022 to 2045, and the project would represent a negligible amount (six percent) of the housing growth forecast through 2045. In addition, the County housing is projected to increase by 27,759 households from 2022 to 2045, and the project would only represent 0.75 percent of the projected regional housing growth.

The proposed project increase in population and housing would thus be within current City projections. The project would require a General Plan Amendment (see Chapter 2.0, Project Description for approvals) to specify the project density and map the extent of the project development. However, the project is within the SOI and CURB boundaries and is consistent with existing General Plan policy (see Section 4.9, Land Use and Planning for a General Plan policy consistency analysis). Project-related growth would be included in the future City General Plan update, providing updated, adequate projections for the entire City. Based on the above, the project development would not result in unplanned growth, and the proposed project does not create an adverse direct population impact.

The proposed extension of Falcon Street within the project site was included in the 2030 General Plan roadway infrastructure plan as a planned but as-yet unbuilt Secondary Arterial, as shown Mobility and Infrastructure Element.<sup>6</sup> The Falcon Street extension would serve the proposed project and improve the local roadway system by providing a desired connection between Erringer Road on the east and First Street on the west, and providing improved circulation system in the northwestern portion of Simi Valley. Considering the Falcon Street extension is in the General Plan and provides a connection between two existing streets in a way that would not open up additional lands for unplanned development following development of the North Canyon Ranch project, project approval would not result in an adverse indirect population growth impact. Based on the foregoing analysis, the project would not result in direct or indirect substantial unplanned population growth and the project would have a less than significant impact.

### ***Required Island Annexations***

The Islands are existing developed areas, where development is not proposed to be changed. For these areas, the existing housing and number of residents are assumed to remain the same as under current conditions. No physical changes are currently proposed. The existing development within the Annexation Islands is included in the current County population and housing projections, as they currently fall within County jurisdiction. With the annexation, these population and housing numbers would shift from the County to the City, which would be accounted for in the next City and County General updates. However, as the development is an existing condition and not new development, this change would be jurisdictional only and would not have a significant environmental impact in terms of real population and housing growth. Thus, for the developed portions of the islands, impacts with regard to a substantial unplanned growth in population growth would be less than significant impact.

The Island Annexation Areas also include five vacant/undeveloped lots that could potentially be developed with five single-family dwelling units. Assuming an average of 2.98 people per single-family household and rounding up, these five lots would potentially add 15 people to the population of Simi Valley, which would not result in a significant increase of the projected City and County household and population

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<sup>6</sup> City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley General, Chapter 5.0, Mobility and Infrastructure, Figure M-2, Functional Street Classification, June 2012.

projections. As such, the Required Island Annexations would not result in direct or indirect substantial unplanned population growth, and the project would have a less than significant impact.

## North Canyon Ranch and Required Annexation Islands (Combined Growth)

The development of North Canyon Ranch project would incrementally contribute to cumulative projected growth within the local and regional setting by adding 209 new residential units and an estimated population increase of 617 people. Potential development of vacant/undeveloped lots within the required Annexation Islands would potentially add an estimated five residential units and 15 people, for a total combined project increase (project plus annexations) of 214 residential units and 632 people.

**Table 4.11-5, Combined Project Contribution to Local and Regional Population Growth**, provides an analysis of the combined project's incremental impact on City and County projections.

**Table 4.11-5  
Combined Project Contribution to Local and Regional Population Growth**

Geographic Area	Increase in Population Generated by the Combined Project	Population Growth from 2022-2045	Combined Project's Percentage of Population Growth from 2022-2045
City of Simi Valley	632	7,852	8.05%
County of Ventura	632	76,931	0.82%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.			

**Table 4.11-6  
Combined Project Contribution to Local and Regional Housing Growth**

Geographic Area	Increase in Housing Generated by the Combined Project	Housing Growth from 2022-2045	Combined Project's Percentage of Housing Growth from 2022-2045
City of Simi Valley	212	3,569	5.94%
County of Ventura	212	27,759	0.76%
Source: SCAG, Connect SoCal 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, Table 13 and Table 14, Adopted September 3, 2020.			

As shown, the combined project components-related increase in population would represent approximately 8.06 percent of the City's planned population growth and 5.9 percent of the City's planned housing growth from 2022 to 2045. The combined project components increase in population would also represent approximately 0.82 percent of the County's planned population growth and approximately 0.76 percent of the County's housing growth from 2022 to 2045.

Therefore, combined project buildout would not result in a significant contribution to City or County impacts relating to housing or population growth in excess of projections envisioned in the RTP/SCS and would not result in a significant impact.

### ***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required.



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### ***Residual Impacts***

Impacts would be less than significant, without the need for mitigation measures.

#### **4.11.3.2 Displacement of People or Housing**

A significant impact could occur if the project would displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing.

### **North Canyon Ranch**

There are no existing houses or people on the project site; therefore, the project would have no impact regarding the displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing. As such, the project would not necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, and the project would have no impact with regard to this issue.

### **Required Island Annexations**

The existing development in the Island areas is not proposed to be changed. Thus, no housing or population would be removed. Potential new development on the approximately five vacant lots would not displace existing housing or population. The Island Annexations would therefore not displace existing people or housing or necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, and no impact would occur with regard to this issue.

### ***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required.

### ***Residual Impacts***

Impacts would be less than significant, without the need for mitigation measures.

#### **4.11.4 Cumulative Impacts**

A project's impact under CEQA is acumulatively considerable when the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In considering the effects of probable future projects, Chapter 3.0, Cumulative Projects, considers buildout of the General Plan to be the overall cumulative project set, with specific known projects in the vicinity listed as a part of that related project set (Table 3-1). As the proposed project (the combined effects of North Canyon Ranch and the Required Island Annexations) would not result in a significant population or housing impact with regard to unplanned population growth or displacement. The project would not contribute significantly to a cumulative impact. Each project evaluated by the City will be reviewed for General Plan compliance and environmental compliance. Where warranted additional environmental analysis would be required for future projects. No cumulatively significant impact would occur.