
3.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

This section discusses the effects of the proposed Project on current and future population, housing, and employment. It also contains information regarding the Project's relationship to adopted programs and plans related to population projections for the City.

3.1 EXISTING SETTING

Prior to incorporation in 2000, the City was an unincorporated community in Sacramento County. The City was not recognized as a governmental entity in terms of census data, and it did not have legally prescribed boundaries, powers, or functions. Because data for the 2000 US Census was collected on April 1, 2000, and City incorporation occurred on July 1, 2000, the Elk Grove data for the 2000 Census was for the Elk Grove Census Designated Place (CDP), not the City's subsequent incorporated boundaries. Therefore, the current 2003 Elk Grove General Plan (current General Plan) was based on tabulating the Census data that best represented the City's boundaries. Thus, in cases where Census data are presented for 2000 and before, it may be based on the Elk Grove CDP.

The 2010 Census was completed based on the City's current boundaries. Data from the 2010 Census and from the annual American Community Survey (ACS) more accurately reflect the City's boundaries.

POPULATION AND POPULATION TRENDS

The City's population in the year 2000 was 72,665 persons, compared to Sacramento County's population of 1,223,499 (US Census Bureau 2000). Between 1990 and 2000, prior to incorporation, the City's population increased at an average rate of 7 percent annually (City of Elk Grove 2003a). Sacramento County experienced a much slower rate of growth during that period, with a population increase of 17.5 percent from 1,041,219 in 1990 to 1,223,499 in 2000 (US Census Bureau 1990, 2000). Growth in Sacramento County declined slightly to approximately 16 percent between 2000 and 2010.

The City experienced continued population growth after its incorporation in 2000, with an average annual growth rate of over 7 percent between 2000 and 2010. This growth was in part due to the annexation of Laguna West in 2003, which had a population of approximately 13,000. This growth rate declined, however, when new housing development stalled throughout the Sacramento region between 2008 and 2013 due to economic conditions.

Table 3.0-1 lists past and projected population growth in the City through the year 2036. Population growth in the City accounted for nearly 20 percent of Sacramento County's total growth between the years 2005 and 2010. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) (2016) projects that the population of Sacramento County will increase to approximately 1,986,543 by the year 2036. It should be noted that this population projection does not account for the Land Use Plan proposed by the Project.

3.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

**TABLE 3.0-1
CITY OF ELK GROVE POPULATION TRENDS**

Year	Population	Change	Average Annual Percentage Change
1990 ¹	42,626	N/A	N/A
2000 ²	72,665	30,039	7.0
2005 ³	110,843	38,178	10.5
2010 ⁴	153,015	42,172	7.6
2015 ⁴	164,997	11,982	1.6
2016 ⁴	168,118	3,121	1.9
2017 ⁴	171,059	2,941	1.8
2036 ⁵	201,197	30,138	0.9

Sources:

1. US Census Bureau 1990
2. US Census Bureau 2000
3. DOF 2012
4. DOF 2017
5. SACOG 2016

HOUSEHOLDS

The US Census Bureau defines a household as all people who occupy a housing unit, which is defined as a house, an apartment, a mobile home, or a group of rooms or a single room that is occupied as separate living quarters. The total number of households in Elk Grove was 53,829 in 2017, with an average household size (the average number of people occupying a single housing unit) of 3.29 persons (DOF 2017), which is an increase in household size from 2003.

HOLDING CAPACITY

Holding capacity is expressed as the total number of people that would be accommodated in a planning area if the land within that area were developed to the maximum potential allowed by the land use designations in a general plan.

According to the Draft EIR for the current (2003) General Plan, the City had a buildout capacity of 63,340 housing units and an estimated holding capacity of approximately 194,453 persons (based upon a household size of 3.07 persons per household as defined in 2003, multiplied by 63,340 housing units) (City of Elk Grove 2003b). However, the City annexed Laguna West in 2003, adding housing units and acreage available for residential development. As disclosed in the Draft EIR for the current General Plan, the current General Plan land uses with Laguna West, the City has a buildout capacity of 77,737 housing units and an estimated holding capacity of 252,628 persons within the existing City limits. It should be noted that these estimates do not constitute a population cap for the City.

HOUSING

The Demographic Research Unit of the Department of Finance (DOF) is the official source of demographic data for State planning and budgeting and provides population and housing estimates for the State, as well as for counties and cities. In May 2017, DOF released housing unit estimates for the years 2011 through 2017. As shown in **Table 3.0-2**, the total number of housing

units in Elk Grove increased by approximately 5.8 percent during that period. However, it should be noted that the number of housing units increased by an average of 11.2 percent each year between 2001 and 2007. After 2007, the housing market slowed significantly due to economic conditions, and new housing development in Elk Grove dropped to well below the levels experienced between 2001 and 2007. As shown in the table, the period between 2012 and 2013 saw the largest increase in new housing in years, with a 1.5 percent increase. Since 2013, there have been continuing indicators of housing market recovery. Several new home builders have recently begun new home development, and many new housing projects that became dormant after 2007 have shown new activity. SACOG (2016) projects that the City will have 65,367 housing units by 2036. It should be noted that this housing unit projection does not account for the Land Use Plan proposed by the Project.

**TABLE 3.0-2
CITY OF ELK GROVE HOUSING UNITS ESTIMATES 2010–2017**

Year	Total Housing Units	Single-Family		Multi-Family		Mobile Homes
		Detached	Attached	2–4 Units	5+ Units	
2011	50,869	44,275	1,535	962	3,820	277
2012	51,207	44,498	1,535	962	3,935	277
2013	51,973	44,876	1,537	962	4,319	279
2014	52,383	45,285	1,537	962	4,319	280
2015	52,723	45,623	1,537	962	4,319	282
2016	53,269	46,168	1,537	962	4,319	283
2017	53,829	46,728	1,537	962	4,319	283

Source: DOF 2017

With the economic decline of the late 2000s, housing prices throughout the country dropped significantly, and Elk Grove was no exception. Housing prices in Elk Grove peaked in late 2005, and over the next few years, home prices dropped considerably each year, reaching a minimum median price of \$203,000 in February 2012, after which prices began to recover (Zillow 2017). As of August 2017, the average home value in Elk Grove was \$397,500, an 8.9 percent increase from the previous year (Zillow 2017).

EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

In 2015, 80,216 residents of Elk Grove were available for the labor force. As shown in **Table 3.0-3**, 72,268 of those were employed in the civilian labor force and 154 were in the armed forces (US Census Bureau 2016a). Approximately 7,794 or 9.7 percent of the labor force living in Elk Grove was unemployed in 2015. This was a decrease in the unemployment rate from 10.6 percent in 2014 and 10.8 in 2013. Thus, concurrent with the housing market recovery, the unemployment rate has declined in recent years.

3.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

**TABLE 3.0-3
ELK GROVE EMPLOYMENT STATUS 2015**

Employment Status	Estimates
Population 16 years and over	121,509
In labor force	80,216
Civilian labor force	80,062
Employed	72,268
Unemployed	7,794
Armed Forces	154
Not in labor force	41,293

Source: US Census Bureau 2015

Between 2000 and 2013, the City experienced an 8.7 percent average annual growth per year, with 29,601 jobs added in the City, and in 2013, the City had 44,806 jobs at 8,710 businesses (EPS 2016). SACOG (2016) projects the City will have 50,865 jobs by 2036, an increase of 5,402 jobs compared to SACOG's estimated 2015 jobs numbers. Major employers in the City include the Elk Grove Unified School District, Apple Computer, and Kaiser Permanente. It should be noted that these employment projections do not account for the Land Use Plan proposed by the Project.

The median household income between 2011 and 2015 was \$55,987 in Sacramento County (US Census Bureau 2016b). The median family income in Elk Grove for that same period was nearly 42 percent higher at \$79,487 (US Census Bureau 2016a), with 40.4 percent of households earning more than \$100,000 annual gross income.

JOBS-TO-HOUSING RATIO

Elk Grove is the second largest city in Sacramento County and in the Sacramento-Roseville-Arden-Arcade Metropolitan Statistical Area. Within the metro regional context, the City can be considered a "bedroom community," with a large number of residents who live in the community but work elsewhere. More than 90 percent of residents work outside the City limits, with the majority commuting into Sacramento, according to 2013 Census data. This is at least partially a result of somewhat lower housing prices in the City than Sacramento and other communities in the metro area, and to the desirability of the park and school systems in the community.

A jobs-to-housing ratio is a tool used to gauge the relative balance of jobs and housing units within a community. One way to determine a jobs-to-housing ratio is to divide the number of jobs by the number of occupied housing units in a specific area to estimate the number of jobs per housing unit. It is generally considered ideal to have one job per employed resident or 1.5 jobs per housing unit (APA 2003). As discussed in Section 2.0, Project Description, based on 2017 population and dwelling information and based on 2013 jobs data, there are 45,463 jobs in the City compared to 53,829 housing units for a jobs-to-housing ratio of 0.84.

While a jobs-to-housing ratio of 1:1 may balance jobs and housing in a defined geographical area, the jobs could be in one side of the community and the housing in the other. In addition, while the number of jobs and housing units in the community may be balanced, that does not dictate actual commute patterns. Other factors influencing the ratio may include the types of employment available. Residents may still commute out of the community for employment,

while residents from outside the area may commute into the community for employment. Consequently, SACOG looks at the jobs/housing balance within a regional context, focusing on locating Major Employment Centers throughout the region, and providing for housing in areas surrounding them. SACOG has identified 13 such employment centers of varying size and employment density in the region. The two smallest employment centers are located in or near Elk Grove: the Elk Grove/Laguna Springs Employment Center in the City, and the South Sacramento Medical Employment Center directly to the north. Larger and higher-density employment centers are located in eastern and downtown Sacramento, Rancho Cordova, and West Sacramento.

An alternative approach to analyzing the jobs-to-housing ratio, advanced by SACOG, deemphasizes the need for jobs and housing within a City boundary and instead focuses on regional accessibility of jobs within a reasonable commute from one's home. Consequently, SACOG emphasizes the development of robust job centers within reasonable distances of cities, even if they are not within City limits, and effective transportation options to both, including high-quality roads and transit. The SACOG MTP/SCS forecast is based on a jobs-to-housing ratio of 1.4 for the region. This approach balances out jobs within reasonable commuting distance if regional assumptions are met. Considering the location of jobs relative to housing is important because regional accessibility to jobs, or the number of jobs within a reasonable drive time from a residence, affects vehicle miles traveled, which in turn affects traffic congestion, air quality, and access to goods and services (City of Elk Grove 2016).

3.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

REGIONAL

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

Sacramento Region Blueprint

The Sacramento Region Blueprint is intended to guide land use and transportation choices through 2050 in the Sacramento region, which includes the counties of El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba and their 22 constituent cities. The Sacramento Region Blueprint includes detailed land use and travel data, as well as technical and community outreach. The Blueprint is intended to be used as a framework to guide local government in growth and transportation planning. It is also used by the SACOG Board of Directors to make choices about transportation projects that will best serve the region as it changes. Another important component of the Blueprint effort is a Community Design Incentive Program that will provide \$500 million between 2005 and 2030 to fund projects that incorporate principles of "smart growth" identified by the Blueprint. The Preferred Blueprint Scenario was adopted and became part of SACOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), a formal document that serves as a long-range transportation plan for the six-county region. The 2016 MTP/SCS was adopted in February 2016.

Regional Housing Needs Plan and Regional Housing Needs Allocation

The Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP) allocates to SACOG cities and counties their "fair share" of the region's projected housing needs as determined by the State. California's housing element law (Government Code Section 65584) mandates that councils of governments develop the RHNP for their service area. SACOG is the lead agency in developing the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and approving the RHNP for the 22 cities and 6 counties that it serves. Each city and county in the RHNP received an RHNA of the total number of housing units that it must plan for within a 7.5-year time period through their general plan housing elements.

3.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

Within the total number of units, allocations were made for the number of units in four economic categories: very low, low, moderate, and above moderate incomes.

The City of Elk Grove's 2013–2021 RHNA allocation is 7,402 housing units, with 2,035 of those units in the very low-income category, 1,427 units in the low-income category, 1,377 units in the moderate-income category, and 2,563 in the above moderate-income category (City of Elk Grove 2014).

LOCAL

City of Elk Grove Housing Element

The General Plan Housing Element identifies and analyzes the City's housing needs in order to maintain, improve, and create housing for the SACOG-defined economic segments of the population. In addition to establishing specific goals and strategies to guide the development of housing in the City, the element requires the City to ensure an adequate supply of land for the development of affordable housing. The City updated its Housing Element for the 2013–2021 period in February 2014.

3.3 CHANGES IN POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOUSING

Changes in population and employment are not, in and of themselves, environmental impacts. However, they may result in the need for the construction of new housing, businesses, infrastructure, and services to accommodate increases in population and employment.

The proposed Project would, over a considerable period of time (30+ years), result in the development of up to 48,102 housing units that would provide housing for 158,179 new residents, and nonresidential development that would provide approximately 77,339 new jobs in the Planning Area. This development would result in impacts on the physical environment, which are evaluated in Sections 5.1 through 5.13 of this EIR. This section identifies the projected increases in population, employment, and housing that would result from adoption and implementation of the proposed Project.

PROPOSED PROJECT POPULATION AND HOUSING SUPPLY

The proposed Project would result in the construction of up to approximately 48,102 new homes in the Planning Area. This includes several different housing types, including rural residential, estate residential, lower density residential, medium density residential, high density residential, and mixed uses that include residential units. Each housing type could accommodate different sizes of households. For example, low-density housing is more likely to house families with children, whereas high-density housing is more likely to accommodate single-person households. The City calculated the population potential for each type of housing and determined that the proposed Project would increase the population of the Planning Area by 158,179 residents to a total of 329,238 at buildout. This would represent an approximately 92 percent increase over the City's 2017 population of 171,059 (DOF 2016). This projected population growth would occur gradually as both infill and construction in new areas occurs as part of the Project. As shown in **Table 3.0-1**, SACOG estimates that the City's population will reach 201,197 by 2036, which represents an increase of 30,138 or 17.6 percent over the City's 2017 population. The proposed Project does not assume full buildout by 2036. However, if full buildout were to occur by 2036, it would exceed SACOG's population, housing and employment projections for Elk Grove.

PROPOSED PROJECT EMPLOYMENT

One of the Supporting Principles of the proposed Project is to develop job-supporting land uses that bring more jobs to the City and aid in balancing the City's existing jobs-to-housing ratio. The City currently has 0.84 jobs for each housing unit. This ratio indicates that most residents must travel to other areas for work, which results in traffic congestion, longer commute times, and increases in air pollution.

The proposed Project would allow for up to 77,339 new jobs in the Planning Area compared to existing conditions, for a total of 122,802 jobs. This would occur through the future development of a wide range of commercial, office, industrial/flex space, mixed-use, and public uses and would represent a 41 percent increase from the City's 2013 job pool of approximately 45,463. SACOG (2016) projects that there will be 50,865 jobs in Elk Grove in 2036. The proposed Project does not assume full buildout by 2036. However, if full buildout were to occur by 2036, the proposed Project would also exceed SACOG's 2036 projection for jobs in the City.

PROPOSED PROJECT JOBS-TO-HOUSING RATIO

The proposed Project would allow for the future development of up to 48,102 new housing units of varying densities and nonresidential land uses that would generate 77,339 new jobs. Based on these data, buildout of the proposed Project's land uses would give the City a jobs-to-housing ratio of 1.21 jobs for every home. While this does not attain the 1.5 jobs per home ratio that is considered by urban planners to represent a balance, it represents a substantial increase from the current jobs-to-housing ratio of 0.84.

While there is no buildout date anticipated for the proposed General Plan, the contribution of the jobs and housing that would be generated by the proposed Project would help the City improve its jobs-to-housing ratio. While SACOG data assumes a modest increase of jobs in the City, jobs generated in excess of SACOG projections would only further improve the City's jobs-to-housing ratio. Therefore, the proposed Project would have a positive effect on the City's jobs-to-housing ratio and could reduce future increases in traffic congestion and air emissions.

3.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

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