

4.10 POPULATION AND HOUSING

4.10.1 Issues

The DSP will provide for increased commercial and residential development in Cotati's downtown. While additional housing opportunities will be increased, some existing housing may be displaced.

4.10.2 Setting

Table 4.10-1 presents recent population counts and growth rates for the City of Cotati since 1990. The table also presents projections for City population through 2025. The City experienced an annual average rate of growth of 1.7% during the 1990-2005 period. The annual rate of growth is projected to decrease over time. See the Project Description for more details.

The existing population in the Downtown area is a small percentage of the overall City population. There are approximately 119 existing residences in the Downtown. Using the household occupancy rate of 2.5 as reported for Cotati in the 2000 Census, the existing resident population of the Downtown is estimated to be approximately 304, less than 5% of the City total. Although the Downtown includes the historic core of the community, much of the residential growth in the latter part of the 20th century was in areas outside the DSP area.

Table 4.10-1: City of Cotati – Population and Growth (1990-2025)		
Description	Total Population	Annual Average Growth Rate
1990 (Census)	5,700	
1996	6,501	2.3%
2000 (Census)	7,033	2.0%
2006 (Department of Finance)	7,535	1.5%
2010 (Cotati 1998 GP)	8,035	1.2%
2017 (Cotati 35 units/yr.)	8,268	0.4%
2022	8,689	1.0%
2027	9,132	1.0%
Average Annual Rate (Historic) 1990-2007 26 units/yr		1.7%
<i>Source: City of Cotati, 2007.</i>		

4.10.3 Regulatory Setting

Housing Element of the Cotati General Plan

The Housing Element is a part of the City's general plan, and provides a vision regarding existing and future housing needs. The Element contains policies and detailed descriptions of the existing housing stock and the potential for housing in the City. The Element also details the City's approach to meeting its regional housing needs and providing affordable housing at all income levels. Relevant policies from the Housing Element to the DSP are analyzed in Section 4.8 Land Use and Planning.

City of Cotati Growth Management Policy

The Growth Management Policy allocates 75 residential units to be constructed each calendar year. An additional 25 units may be allocated exclusively for housing affordable by low and moderate income households. The City Council may exempt projects are part of a specific plan.

Draft DSP Policies Related to Housing

The DSP addresses housing in a number of locations in the Plan, including the following:

Plan-wide Policies

SP3 – Ensure that vertical mixed-use is the primary of development within the downtown: Live above stores.

SP-5 – Ensure a mix of housing types to serve all economic segments of the community: Create a variety of housing choices.

Northern Gateway

NG-4 – Provide a variety of housing.

La Plaza Park

LP-6 – Reactivate the hub with housing and office over commercial.

Transit Objectives

T-1 – Promote transit-oriented housing: ...The popularity of people wanting to live near transit will be on the rise for the foreseeable future. One of the best ways to maximize transit and its numerous benefits is to provide housing that caters to those wanting the type of lifestyle of living in a Downtown with viable transit service and the option of not having to own an automobile for daily needs. For Downtown Cotati, this is tempered by the absence of immediately accessible rail transit. Providing a population in direct proximity to the existing and planned bus stops works in much the same way and provides real benefit to the resident.

4.10.4 Methodology

The amount of potential development in the in the DSP area was identified by analyzing existing development and identifying where new development or redevelopment would likely occur. Appendix 3.0-B, introduced in Chapter 3 Project Description, details the methodology used to determine buildout of the area.

Table 4.10-2 sets forth the results of the analysis of development potential in the planning area. As shown, the DSP would accommodate an additional 331 dwelling units, providing a total of 450 dwelling units.

Table 4.10-2: DSP Buildout					
District	Acres	Development Type	Existing	Net New	DSP Buildout
Commerce Avenue	6.5	Residential: Commercial/Retail: Open Space:	27 dwellings 30,000 sq. ft. 0 acres	34 dwellings 12,000 sq. ft. 0 acres	61 dwellings 42,000 sq. ft. 0 acres
Northern Gateway	36.2	Residential: Commercial/Retail: Open Space:	22 dwellings 58,000 sq. ft. 0 acres	207 dwellings 159,000 sq. ft. 0.86 acres	229 dwellings 217,000 sq. ft. 0.86 acres
La Plaza	11.3	Residential: Commercial/Retail: Open Space (La Plaza):	15 dwellings 59,000 sq. ft. 2.84 acres	74 dwellings 59,900 sq. ft. 0.91 acres (road)	89 dwellings 118,900 sq. ft. 3.75 acres
Historic Core	5.5	Residential: Commercial/Retail: Open Space:	55 dwellings 35,000 sq. ft. 0 acres	16 dwellings 6,150 sq. ft. 0 acres	71 dwellings 41,150 sq. ft. 0 acres
Total	59.5	Residential: Commercial/Retail: Open Space:	119 dwellings 182,000 sq. ft. 1.58 acres	331 dwellings 237,050 sq. ft. 3.03 acres	450 dwellings 419,050 sq. ft. 4.61acres

4.10.5 Significance Thresholds

The CEQA Guidelines state that a project will normally have a significant impact on population and housing if it would:

- 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 substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

4.10.6 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Less Than Significant Impacts

With regard to the inducement of substantial population growth (threshold a), the Downtown area of Cotati currently has 119 dwelling units. The DSP would accommodate approximately 331 net new residential units, mostly attached multi-family or townhouse style developments. At buildout, approximately 450 dwelling units can reasonably be accommodated in the planning area. This net increase will directly induce population growth in the area and assist Cotati in meeting its regional fair share allotment of housing. The new housing will be subject to the City's growth management requirements, which are designed to provide for adequate infrastructure development by moderating the increase in new residential units. The management policy allows up to 75 dwelling units per year, with an additional 25 units if they meet affordability standards. Over the last 27 years the City has averaged only 26 units per year since 1990. New development will be subject to affordability requirements in the City, consistent with Policy H-2 of the Housing Element, which mandates that housing will be provided for "all economic segments of the community" and be available to accommodate Cotati's contribution to the Regional Housing Needs established by ABAG. In addition, because the development proposed by the DSP would be less than that allowed under the current General Plan, the project does not propose growth beyond that currently planned for in Cotati. Nevertheless, by its nature, the project will induce growth

generally consistent with the General Plan. The City's share of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) is as follows:

- 67 units for very low income
 - 36 units for low income
 - 45 units for medium income
 - 109 units for above medium income
- TOTAL = 257**

Based upon the historic average development in the City ($26 \times 7 = 182$) and the number of years that the City has to reach the RHNA numbers it will be difficult to reach these numbers, however, the DSP will provide progress in this direction and will not be a hindrance. In addition, Cotati's Inclusionary Housing Program requires all projects greater than 9 units in size to provide 20% affordable housing on site at the rate of 1/3 low, 1/3 VL and 1/3 moderate. This will assure that ample affordable housing is constructed within the DSP.

Infrastructure, especially water, wastewater and stormwater facilities, will be improved as part of the DSP. These improvements are designed to correct current deficiencies as well as provide for the new development under the DSP. Because Cotati is largely developed, the infrastructure improvements will not provide an inducement for growth other than that provided for in the DSP. Because the amount of development and infrastructure improvements proposed are designed for development consistent with the General Plan, impacts are considered less than significant and no mitigation related to population and housing is required.

New residential construction under the DSP may temporarily displace dwelling units and their residents as they are being redeveloped (thresholds b and c); however, the net effect of plan build-out will be an increased supply of housing including affordable housing in the planning area. It is anticipated that most of the residential development would occur in the following manner:

- As second and third story additions to existing or proposed commercial development.
- As new residential developments.
- As redevelopment of existing residential properties.

Development of the latter category could displace residents in existing buildings, and newer, replacement dwellings on these sites could be more expensive in terms of rents or selling price. Therefore, it is possible that some of the current residents may be forced to find housing elsewhere. Nevertheless, the net result of the DSP will be an increase in housing in the area. With the City's affordability and relocation assistance requirements, impacts are considered less than significant because programs are in place to assist with the provision of affordable housing in the area.

4.10.7 Cumulative Impacts

The existing cumulative impact is not significant. This conclusion is based in part on the conclusion in the EIR for the current Cotati General Plan. The General Plan EIR concluded that there would not be significant impacts to these resources.

The DSP's impacts are less than significant and it does not result in a significant cumulative impact. Specifically, the impact of the project will not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant cumulative impact. The Cotati General Plan EIR evaluated the impacts of population growth, including the DSP area. The DSP proposes less population growth than the General Plan.

The General Plan EIR identified no significant impacts of long-term population growth in the region. Therefore, the DSP would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact.

4.10.8 References

Association of Bay Area Governments. *Projections 2007*.

City of Cotati. *Housing Element of the General Plan*. Amended August 11, 2003.

City of Cotati. *General Plan and EIR*. 1998

