

Population, Housing, Employment, and Environmental Justice

Introduction

This section identifies and evaluates issues related to population and housing on Mare Island and in the region.

The “Affected Environment” discussion below describes the current setting of the action area. The purpose of this information is to establish the existing environmental context, or background, against which the reader can then understand the environmental changes caused by the action. The environmental setting information is intended to be directly or indirectly relevant to the subsequent discussion of impacts. For example, current and projected population on Mare Island is discussed in the setting so that the reader may assess the action’s contribution to overall population and growth rates.

The environmental changes associated with the action are discussed under “Environmental Consequences.” This section identifies impacts, describes how they would occur, and prescribes mitigation measures to reduce significant impacts.

Affected Environment

Environmental Setting

Population

As part of the evaluation of the Mare Island Reuse Plan, a fiscal impact analysis was conducted to estimate new population and employment on Mare Island. The analysis employed demographic assumptions based on typical cities in the San Francisco Bay Area and on information from the City of Vallejo (City). The analysis focused on three years: 1996 (the first year of base closure), 2006 (or midway into the reuse development of Mare Island), and 2026 (buildout of the Reuse Plan).

Developer Lennar Mare Island is currently constructing residential subdivisions on Mare Island. Lennar may develop as many as 1,400 homes on Mare Island. As of late October 2005, tentative maps for 824 units have been approved by the City (Hightower pers. comm. 2005c). As many as 60 single-family detached housing units could be habitable by September 2005. None of the planned residential development on Mare Island includes low income ~~or~~, designated affordable housing, or rental units. To date, the lowest house price among the units sold on Mare Island is \$687,000 (Hollingsworth pers. comm.).

According to the U.S. Census, the City of Vallejo had an estimated population of 116,760 in 2000. The City's population rose by approximately 7 percent since 1990, when the population was 109,199. According to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Vallejo's population in 2000 was 118,700 and is projected to reach approximately 126,800 in 2005, an increase of approximately 6 percent (ABAG 2001).

The fiscal impact model estimated that 1,437 residents were living on Mare Island in 1996. By 2006, 996 residential units will likely be inhabited. At buildout in 2026, an estimated 5,175 residents will be living on Mare Island in 1,400 units (Hollingsworth pers. comm.).

Housing

The action area contains no existing housing. Older housing associated with the former naval shipyard at Mare Island's Coral Sea Village and Farragut Village was adjacent to the action area (six contiguous disposal ponds), but it has been demolished. Construction of new single-family homes is currently underway in these areas.

New residential development in these areas will include stacked flats, lofts, townhomes, apartments, condominiums, and single-family residential homes. The City has approved phases of developer Lennar Communities' Farragut Village and Coral Sea Village. Some residential units will be available by mid-2005. Build-out of these developments, specifically west of Flagship Drive, will comprise a total of approximately 520 units, including 390 single-family units and 130 multi-family units comprised of condominiums and townhomes.

A wide variety of housing is currently available in the City of Vallejo. According to ABAG, the number of households increased from 41,150 in 1995 to 44,770 in 2000. This number is projected to increase to 46,390 by 2010. New and resale housing prices in Vallejo are competitively priced in comparison with other Bay Area communities. Vallejo is located in Solano County, which has the most affordable single-family residence median price in the San Francisco Bay Area (Dataquick Information Systems 1997). Vallejo is currently experiencing a large increase in gross sales and average prices of homes.

Employment

The level of employment and personal income in a region is key to the health of the regional economy and typically affects other socioeconomic indicators, such as population and housing. Several new businesses have been established on Mare Island, comprising heavy industrial, light industrial, educational, regional parks, recreational, and mixed-use office/light industry uses. According to the fiscal impact model prepared for the Mare Island Reuse Plan (City of Vallejo 1994b), there were an estimated 1,700 jobs on Mare Island in 1996. By December 2006, the number of jobs is expected to increase to 2,630. At buildout in 2026, the Reuse Plan forecasts a total of approximately 9,600 jobs, which includes jobs associated with private development and the parks and recreation facilities.

The City has experienced a large and steady increase in employment since 1994, when the unemployment rate was 8.5 percent. In 1995, the three main employment sectors were government, services, and retail trade. The three fastest-growing sectors were wholesale trade, retail trade, and construction. Government employment declined by more than 15 percent between 1980 and 1995, largely because of the closure of the shipyard.

Between 1995 and 2000, employment in the City increased 19 percent, from 32,432 to 38,450, and included approximately 1,275 permanent Mare Island employees. By 2010, employment is projected to increase from 38,450 to 48,690. Although services, retail trade, and government are the traditionally strong sectors for the area, the wholesale trade sector is projected to grow at an annual rate of 8.4 percent between 2000 and 2020, faster than any other sector in the region. According to the California Employment Development Department, the labor force for the City in December 2000 was 64,160, 61,890 were employed, and the unemployment rate was 3.5 percent (compared to the state's unemployment rate of 4.3 percent for the same period) (EDD 2005). In November 2000, the ratio of jobs to employed residents in the city was 0.55.

Regulatory Setting

Federal Regulations

Executive Order 12898: Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations" provides that each federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Provisions in the executive order apply to programs involving Native Americans.

State Regulations

California Planning and Zoning Law (Government Code Section 65000 et seq.) requires each city and county to adopt a general plan for the physical development of the land within its planning area. The general plan must contain land use, housing, circulation, open space, conservation, noise, and safety elements; as well as any other elements that the city or county may wish to adopt.

Local Regulations

The objective of the Mare Island Reuse Plan and relevant portions of the Vallejo General Plan and Mare Island Specific Plan is to facilitate redevelopment and reuse of Mare Island, including the development of employment, business, housing, and recreational opportunities. The overall redevelopment of Mare Island is expected to draw residents to the area and have a positive socioeconomic effect on the region. The revitalization of Vallejo and Mare Island is a critical component of the proposed action and other planned uses.

Environmental Consequences

Standards for Determining Significance under NEPA

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) criteria for determining significance are listed in Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 1508.27, but are considered more broad and less stringent than California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) criteria, set forth below. Also, the CEQA criteria below incorporate NEPA standards. For these reasons, identification of impacts as significant under CEQA is treated herein as sufficient for identifying impacts considered significant under NEPA. Mitigation measures set forth to minimize CEQA significant impacts are presumed also to mitigate NEPA significant impacts. These assumptions are made only for the purpose of identifying the magnitude of particular impacts; this document complies with NEPA requirements and uses the CEQA analysis only as a source of supporting information.

In compliance with Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," the proposed action was considered to have a significant effect under NEPA if the action would result in disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Provisions in the executive order apply to programs involving Native Americans.

Implementation of all the action alternatives would not disproportionately affect minority and low-income populations. At build-out, Mare Island is anticipated to

house 5,175 residents in the 1,400 units proposed by Lennar Mare Island. As discussed above, none of these units qualify as low-income, designated affordable housing. All units will be sold; none will be available for rent directly from Lennar Mare Island.

Criteria for Determining Significance under CEQA

According to the State CEQA Guidelines and professional judgment, a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure); or
- displace a substantial number of people or existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The project alternatives were also evaluated for consistency with relevant local plans and policies, but inconsistency with plans and policies would not be considered a significant impact under CEQA based on the criteria presented above.

Methods and Assumptions for the Effect Analysis

The study area for the analysis of population, housing, and employment effects includes Mare Island and the City of Vallejo.

Socioeconomic effects of projects are not considered environmental effects by themselves. However, any adverse effects on the surrounding physical environment that are attributable to the changes in population, housing, or employment could be considered significant environmental effects. Physical resources that may be affected by changes in housing or employment, such as biological resources or air quality, are evaluated in their respective sections of this report.

Effects

The project alternatives would not result in direct or indirect increases in population or housing, not displace people or housing, nor would it disproportionately affect minority or low-income population.

Effect 3.12-1: Increase in Employment

No Action

The No Action scenario would not generate any disposal activities, and the ponds likely would revert to seasonal wetlands. There would be no effect on employment, housing, and population in Mare Island and Vallejo. No mitigation is required.

Alternatives 1, 2, and 3

Implementation of all the action alternatives would result in the creation of approximately 10 jobs to maintain and monitor operation of the Dredged Material Disposal Facility (DMDF). This is not considered a substantial increase for Mare Island or Vallejo. It is expected that personnel would already live in Vallejo or in the vicinity. There would be approximately 10 employees associated with the individual dredged material disposal projects (i.e., scow and off-loader operators, truck drivers). These employees would likely be either imported from another community or temporary hires for the duration of the disposal event. Either way it is not considered a substantial increase that would effect population, housing, or environmental resources. The proposed action would not cause a notable movement of population or demand for housing. This effect is considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Environmental Commitments and Mitigation Measures

No population, housing, or employment impacts would occur under any of the alternatives. The project proponent has not made any previous environmental commitments relating to these topics, and no mitigation is required.

Summary of Effects and Mitigation Measures by Alternative

Table 3.12-1. Summary of Population, Housing, and Employment Effects and Mitigation Measures

| | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 | Alternative 3 | No Action |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Population, Housing, and Employment</i> | | | | |
| Effect 3.12-1: Increase in Employment | | | | |
| Quantitative Comparison | Little effect on population | Little effect on population | Little effect on population | No effect on population |
| Significance before Mitigation | LS | LS | LS | NE |
| Significance after Mitigation | LS | LS | LS | NE |
| Mitigation Measures | | | | |
| None required | X | X | X | X |
| None available | | | | |
| Notes: SU = Significant and unavoidable. S = Significant. PS = Potentially significant (same as significant for CEQA and NEPA purposes). LS = Less than significant. NE = No effect. | | | | |

