

4.9 POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING

4.9.1 Introduction

This section discusses existing population, employment and housing characteristics in the City of Ontario based on socioeconomic data provided by the City of Ontario, the Southern California Associated Governments (SCAG), the U.S. Census, and the California Department of Finance (DOF). Direct and indirect impacts associated with the proposed project are evaluated based on the City's goals for providing employment and housing for its citizens and SCAG's goals for balanced growth in the region. The City of Ontario's Housing Element has been used to develop this section.

4.9.2 Environmental Setting

The City of Ontario is located in the San Bernardino County, approximately 40 miles east of downtown Los Angeles, 20 miles west of downtown San Bernardino, and approximately 30 miles north of Orange County.

Ontario is located within the planning area of SCAG, the lead planning agency for the Southern California region. SCAG consists of local governments from Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial Counties. To facilitate regional planning efforts, the planning area of SCAG is further divided into thirteen subregions. Ontario is located in the San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) Subregion. One of the SCAG's primary functions is to forecast population, housing, and employment growth for each region, subregion, and city. The latest forecast was completed in 2004 as part of the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan Update; the following population and housing analysis addresses this forecast. The following discussion also includes development trends within the City of Ontario from 1980 to 2000. Population, housing and employment trends are included in order to define the demographic characteristics of the City and to provide a basis for growth trends and analysis. The City of Ontario is eager to attract non-residential projects to balance the City's economy and provide jobs for local residents.

Population

The City of Ontario is one of the twenty-four cities in the County of San Bernardino. The County has experienced rapid growth since the early 1970s and is among the fastest growing counties in the State. Until the 1970s, San Bernardino County was primarily a rural area, with a population of 684,072. According to the U.S. Census, the population more than doubled from 684,072 in 1970 to 1.4 million in 1990, an increase of 107 percent. Between 1970 and 1980, the County's population increased 30.8 percent and between 1980 and 1990 the population increased by 58.5 percent. As shown in Table 4.9-1, the population growth slowed from 1990 to 2000, with an annual percentage growth of 2.1 percent as compared to 5.8 percent between 1980 and 1990.

The growth trends in the City of Ontario are historically similar to those of the County. From 1980 to 1990, the City's population increased from 88,820 to 133,179 (approximately 50%). In 1990, over 9 percent of the County's population lived in Ontario. Since 1990, both the County

and City populations have increased at a similar, but a much smaller rate. The annual percentage growth for the City decreased from 5.0 percent between 1980 and 1990 to 1.9 percent between 1990 and 2000 (Table 4.9-1).

Table 4.9-1
Change in Population Between 1980 and 2000
City of Ontario and County of San Bernardino

Year	Population ¹	Change	Percent Change	Annual Percent Change
City of Ontario				
1980	88,820			
1990	133,179	44,359	49.9	5.0
2000	158,007	24,828	18.6	1.9
County of San Bernardino				
1980	895,016			
1990	1,418,380	523,364	58.5	5.8
2000	1,709,434	291,054	20.5	2.1

Source: U.S. Census

Household Size

According to the City of Ontario Housing Element 2000-2005, the average size of Ontario's households has increased from 3.27 in 1990 to 3.45 in 2000. Ontario's average household size is currently larger than the County's average of 3.165 persons per household.

Housing

As for future housing growth, SCAG forecasts the number of households projected for the City and the County of San Bernardino. Households are a good indicator of projected housing units because, by definition, one household occupies one housing unit. As shown in Table 4.9-2 (SCAG Household Growth Projections, 2005–2020), the addition of 24,099 households is projected in Ontario between 2005 and 2020, representing an annual average growth rate of 3.5 percent, or approximately 1,607 households per year. In comparison, for the County, the projected incremental growth over this 15-year period is 189,468 household units, representing an annual average growth rate of 2.2 percent or about 12,631 households per year.

Employment

Table 4.9-3 indicates that the unemployment rate for the City of Ontario decreased steadily between 1996 and 1999, rose in 2000 through 2003, and resumed its downward trend in 2004 to the present (2006). The unemployment rates for the County of San Bernardino and the State of California also decreased. The unemployment rate for both the County and the State was 5.1 percent in 2006. With a total labor force of 83,508 within the City of Ontario in 2006 and an unemployment rate of 5.4 percent, the number of unemployed was approximately 4,509 persons.

Table 4.9-2
SCAG Household Growth Projections, 2005–2020

Area	2005	2010	2015	2020
City of Ontario	45,374	48,749	58,981	69,473
San Bernardino County	567,172	618,782	686,584	756,640
Housing Growth Increments	2005–2010	2010–2015	2015–2020	2005–2020
City of Ontario	3,375	10,232	10,492	24,099
San Bernardino County	51,610	67,802	70,056	189,468
Average Annual Growth Rates	2005–2010	2010–2015	2015–2020	2005–2020
City of Ontario	1.5%	4.2%	3.6%	3.5%
San Bernardino County	1.8%	2.2%	2.0%	2.2%

Source: SCAG 2004 Growth Forecast

Table 4.9-3
Labor Force and Unemployment Rate for City of Ontario,
County of San Bernardino, and State of California

	City of Ontario		County of San Bernardino		State of California	
Year	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
1996	70,104	7.1	685,105	7.4	15,435,896	7.3
1997	72,083	6.2	704,159	6.5	15,792,536	6.4
1998	73,821	5.4	720,876	5.7	16,166,912	6.0
1999	76,731	4.7	749,046	4.9	16,430,580	5.3
2000	70,080	5.1	739,650	4.8	16,869,744	5.0
2001	72,410	5.4	762,700	5.1	17,150,101	5.4
2002	74,929	6.4	788,556	6.0	17,326,895	6.7
2003	76,612	6.6	806,511	6.2	17,413,920	6.8
2004	79,187	6.1	837,260	5.6	17,552,240	6.2
2005	81,865	5.4	858,503	5.0	17,946,076	5.4
2006 ¹	83,508	5.4	880,691	5.1	1,792,1275	5.1

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

1. Note: All labor data are annual except for 2006, which are data for the month of July 2006.

Table 4.9-4 (SCAG Population Growth Projections, 2005–2020) contains the latest SCAG employment projections for the City and the County. An employment increase of 36,668 jobs is projected between 2005 and 2020 for the City, representing an annual average growth rate of 2.9 percent or approximately 2,445 jobs per year. In comparison, the County is projected to have an increase of 303,215 jobs over this 15-year period, representing an annual average growth rate of 3.0 percent or about 20,214 jobs per year.

Table 4.9-4
SCAG Employment Projections

	2005	2010	2015	2020
City of Ontario	85,536	97,366	109,637	122,204
San Bernardino County	669,028	770,877	2870,491	972,243

Source: Regional Transportation Plan Growth Forecast, Southern California Association of Governments, Adopted April 1, 2004.

According to the City of Ontario Housing element 2000-2005, in 1980, over 35 percent of Ontario's work force commuted to Los Angeles or Orange counties, while 23 percent worked in Ontario. The 1990s have seen the expansion of the employment base in San Bernardino and Riverside counties as employers take advantage of availability of labor, access to transportation facilities, and relatively inexpensive land costs. According to the 1990 Census (Census Report C90STF3A), 34 percent of Ontario residents worked within the City limits.

Since 1990, the City has made considerable progress in capturing industrial and transportation related industries. The majority of Ontario's undeveloped land is slated for commercial and industrial uses and is more affordable than many other southern California areas. The City's attractiveness as a supportive business environment is reinforced by access to major transportation modes and continued expansion of Ontario International Airport.

Applicable Policies and Regulations

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG)

SCAG, which is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for six Southern California counties (Ventura, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Imperial, and Los Angeles), is federally mandated to develop plans for transportation, growth management, hazardous waste management, and air quality. SCAG prepared the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) in conjunction with its constituent members and other regional planning agencies. The RCPG is intended to serve as a framework to guide decision-making with respect to the growth and changes that can be anticipated in the region through the year 2015. The Plan consists of five core chapters that contain goals, policies, implementation strategies, and technical data that support three overarching objectives for the region, including (1) improving the standard of living for all, (2) improving the quality of life for all, and (3) enhancing equity and access to government. Local governments are required to use the RCPG as the basis for their own plans and are required to discuss the consistency of projects of "regional significance" with the RCPG.

The regional housing goals provide a planning framework for cities, counties, and subregions so that they can develop housing strategies that are responsive to regional market needs related to growth and change during the next two decades. It is intended to be flexible, broad in scope, and a tool in relating housing concerns to a host of other issues identified in the RCPG. The goals of the Housing chapter promote the goals of the RCPG - a rising standard of living, a healthy and environmentally sound quality of life, and achievement of equity.

City of Ontario General Plan

The City of Ontario General Plan's Community Development Element contains the following goals and policies related to this section:

Goal 7.0 Utilize Ontario's proximity to the airport and its inventory of vacant industrial and commercial land to develop uses which maximize employment opportunities.

Policy 7.1: Encourage a pattern of land uses to establish an economic base which provides sufficient jobs for those who choose to both live and work in Ontario.

4.9.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Thresholds of Significance

Implementation of the Specific Plan would have a significant effect on population, employment and housing if it would:

- Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of road or other infrastructure)?
- Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?
- Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Impacts Determined to Have No Impact

Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The existing land use on the project site does not include residential development. No housing or people would be displaced. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Impacts Determined to be Potentially Significant

Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of road or other infrastructure)?

Impact PH-1

The development of new businesses as a result of the proposed project could potentially attract people to relocate to the City. This is a potentially significant.

The proposed Ontario Gateway Specific Plan will not include any housing. Based on one employee per 550 square feet of office and medical development, one employee per 500 square feet of commercial development, and 31 employees per one acre of auto related development, the proposed development would create approximately 1,500 new jobs. These 1,500 jobs represent approximately 1.5 and 1.2 percent of the total employment projected in the City in 2010 and 2020, respectively. Additional construction workers will be employed during the construction phases. It is anticipated that much of the short-term construction employment would likely be filled by local residents from the City and surrounding areas. The extent to which the new jobs created by a project are filled by existing residents is a factor which tends to reduce the growth inducing effect of a project. Because the project site is located within an urbanized area from which to draw contractors and tradespersons, the short-term construction jobs created as a result of the proposed project are anticipated to be filled by workers who, for the most part, would reside in the local area. Therefore, construction of the proposed project is not anticipated to generate a permanent increase in population within the proposed Specific Plan.

The jobs-to-housing ratio measures the extent to which job opportunities in a given geographic area are sufficient to meet the employment needs of area residents. This ratio identifies the number of jobs available in a given region compared to the number of housing units in the same region. For example, a region with a jobs-to-housing factor of 1.5 would indicate that 1.5 jobs exist for every housing unit within that region. A city or sub-region with a jobs-to-housing ratio lower than the overall standard would be considered a “jobs poor” area, indicating that many of the residents must commute to places of employment outside the sub-area. The most current (2005) jobs-to-housing ratios for the City and County are 1.89 and 1.18, respectively. This ratio indicates that in the City, there are 1.89 jobs for every household. The future (2020) jobs-to-housing ratios for the City and County are 1.76 and 1.28, respectively. Under current and future conditions, the City provides employment for a greater percentage of its local residents, than the County-wide average current and projected ratios. The new employment opportunities created by the operation of the proposed Specific Plan commercial uses would contribute to maintenance of the City’s current and future jobs-to-housing balance. This is consistent with the SCAG forecasts.

Because of the short-term nature of construction-related jobs, the incremental increase in employment, and in light of the City’s current jobs-to-housing balance, no significant impact to population growth would result from development associated with the proposed Specific Plan.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.