

4.11 Population and Housing

This section describes the environmental and regulatory setting and discusses impacts associated with construction and operation of the Mesa 500-kV Substation Project (proposed project) proposed by Southern California Edison Company (SCE, or the applicant) with respect to population and housing. No comments were received during the scoping period related to population and housing.

4.11.1 Environmental Setting

The proposed project’s main components would be constructed within, or cross, several incorporated and unincorporated areas within Los Angeles County, as discussed in Chapter 2.0, “Project Description” and shown in Figure 2-1, “Project Overview.” In addition, minor work would occur within the perimeter fence lines of 27 existing satellite substations throughout the Western Los Angeles Basin Electrical Needs Area in southern Los Angeles County and northern Orange County, as shown in Figure 2-2, “Existing Transmission and Subtransmission System and Proposed Modifications to Substations.”

The average commute time in Los Angeles County is nearly 30 minutes, indicating that residents in Los Angeles County commonly work in cities other than where they live (U.S. Census Bureau 2013). Given the number of jurisdictions throughout which the proposed project would be located and the fact that workers may commute from various locations during construction or operation of the proposed project, the analysis for population and housing assumes that project employees could live in various locations throughout Los Angeles County.

Proposed project operations for all project components would be similar to existing activities. Existing SCE employees would likely provide staffing for operation of the proposed project; therefore, the proposed project is not expected to require new employees to relocate to the project area. In addition, as discussed further in Section 4.11.3.3, “Environmental Analysis,” the proposed project would not induce population growth within the project area. Therefore, the environmental setting focuses on population and housing projections during the anticipated construction period.

4.11.1.1 Population

Table 4.11-1 presents 2015 population counts and population growth projections for Los Angeles County. As shown in the table, population within the county is anticipated to grow between 2015 and 2020 by more than 5 percent.

Table 4.11-1 Current and Future Population Estimates for Los Angeles County

Year	Population	Difference from Previous	% Change from Previous
2015	10,147,070	-	-
2020	10,435,991	288,921	2.8
2025	10,701,051	265,060	2.5
-	Total 2015-2025	553,981	5.3

Source: State of California Department of Finance 2014

1 **4.11.1.2 Housing**

2 Table 4.11-2 presents housing unit counts for 2015, estimates of future housing needs for Los
3 Angeles County, and the vacancy rate in 2015. The California Department of Finance’s E-5
4 Population and Housing Estimate dataset identified a countywide vacancy rate of 5.8 percent in
5 2015, which is approximately 167,729 vacant housing units (California Department of Finance
6 2015a).

Table 4.11-2 Current and Future Permanent Housing Unit Estimates for the Los Angeles County

Year	Housing Units	Difference from Previous	% Change from Previous
2015	3,354,581	-	-
2020	3,452,289	97,708	2.9
2025	3,533,800	81,511	2.4
-	Total 2015-2025	179,219	5.3

Source: California Department of Finance 2015b

7 In addition, hundreds of hotels, motels, and other temporary lodging establishments are located
8 throughout Los Angeles County. In 2014, the Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board reported
9 a vacancy rate of 21.1 percent for the 97,895 rooms at 993 properties within Los Angeles County
10 (Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board 2015).

11
12 **4.11.1.3 Employment**

13 According to the State of California Employee Development Department labor market information,
14 as of September 2015 there were a total 308,500 people unemployed in Los Angeles County, a rate
15 of 6.2 percent unemployment (California EDD 2015).

16
17 **4.11.2 Regulatory Setting**

18
19 This subsection summarizes federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and standards that govern
20 population and housing in the project area.

21
22 **4.11.2.1 Federal and State**

23
24 There are no federal or state regulations applicable to the proposed project with respect to
25 population and housing.

26
27 **4.11.2.2 Regional and Local**

28
29 **Government Code Sections 65580 and 65589.8**

30 The Housing Element is one of the seven General Plan elements mandated by the State of California,
31 as articulated in Section 65580 and 65589.8 of the Government Code. Each city and county is
32 required to discuss how it will meet its fair share of the housing need in the state. The purpose of
33 the Housing Element is to ensure that local governments adequately plan to meet the housing
34 needs of all people within the community.
35

1 **General Plan Housing Elements**

2 Housing Elements from general plans listed below were reviewed for the proposed project; no
3 specific housing policies or programs were identified that were applicable to the proposed project.
4

- 5 • Los Angeles County General Plan (2014)
- 6 • City of Monterey Park General Plan (2013)
- 7 • City of Montebello General Plan (2015)
- 8 • City of Rosemead General Plan (2013)
- 9 • City of South El Monte General Plan (2010)
- 10 • City of Commerce General Plan (2013)
- 11 • City of Bell Gardens General Plan (2013)
- 12 • City of Pasadena General Plan (2014)
- 13 • City of Industry General Plan (2014)

14
15 **4.11.3 Impact Analysis**

16
17 **4.11.3.1 Methodology and Significance Criteria**

18
19 Impacts on existing and projected population and housing levels were determined for construction
20 and operation of the proposed project using the most recently published demographic data
21 available, information from relevant housing elements, and Appendix G of the California
22 Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Population and housing data came from the
23 California Department of Finance's *Population and Housing Estimates*. Information regarding hotels
24 and hotel vacancy rates came from the Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board's *2014 Quick Facts*
25 (Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board 2015).
26

27 Significance criteria were defined based on the checklist items in Appendix G of the CEQA
28 Guidelines. The proposed project would cause significant impact on population and housing if it
29 would:
30

- 31 a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., proposing new homes
32 and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., the extension of roads or other infrastructure); and/or
- 33 b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of
34 replacement housing elsewhere.
- 35 c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement
36 housing elsewhere.

37
38 Criterion (c) does not apply to the proposed project. The proposed project would not displace any
39 people during construction or operations; therefore, replacement housing would not be required.
40 Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact under this criterion, and impacts associated
41 with the displacement of people are not discussed further herein.
42

1 **4.11.3.2 Applicant Proposed Measures**
2

3 There are no Applicant Proposed Measures associated with population and housing for this project.
4

5 **4.11.3.3 Environmental Impacts**
6

7 **Impact POP-1: Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly.**
8 *LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT*
9

10 **Construction**

11 During peak construction periods, SCE estimates that the peak number of employees that may be
12 working simultaneously on various components throughout the project area is 435 people, with an
13 average of 126 people. The applicant anticipates that many of these workers would be local
14 residents and would commute from the surrounding area. Outside contractors would only be
15 required if local contractors were not available. Because the proposed project would be located
16 primarily within the Los Angeles metropolitan area—one of the most densely populated regions in
17 the country—and because the area currently experiences relatively high rates of unemployment,
18 workers would not relocate to the project region in numbers that would result in an impact to
19 population and housing. In the event that some workers did relocate to the area, the total number
20 would be small in comparison to the area’s total existing population of approximately 10 million,
21 and temporary lodging such as hotels and motels would be available to accommodate these
22 temporary workers. As discussed in Section 4.11.1, “Environmental Setting,” Los Angeles County
23 has a 5.8 percent vacancy rate for housing, which could also be used to accommodate workers. The
24 proposed project would have a less than significant impact on population growth.
25

26 **Operation and Maintenance**

27 The total number of employees anticipated during operations would be similar to ongoing
28 operations of the existing infrastructure. Existing local staff would perform all routine operation
29 and maintenance tasks. Therefore, the proposed project would not directly induce population
30 growth during operation.
31

32 The proposed project would address reliability concerns that could occur under abnormal system
33 conditions following the shutdown of 4,000 megawatts of existing once-through-cooling (OTC)
34 generation facilities by 2021. As discussed further in Section 1.0, “Introduction,” the project is not
35 proposed to address future growth in the Western Los Angeles Basin Electrical Needs Area.
36 Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not induce electrical consumption or create
37 a surplus of electricity that would have the potential to indirectly induce substantial population
38 growth. Growth-inducing impacts are further discussed in Section 6.0, “Cumulative Impacts and
39 Other CEQA Considerations.”
40

41 **Impact POP-2: Displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the**
42 **construction of replacement housing elsewhere.**
43 *LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT*
44

45 **Construction**

46 Construction of the proposed project would occur primarily on property owned by SCE or within
47 existing utility rights-of-way on which no housing units are located, with two exceptions.
48 Construction at the Goodrich Substation would occur on property owned by the City of Pasadena.

1 Work at the Goodrich Substation would not displace any existing housing units. Two parcels in the
2 city of Monterey Park adjacent to the current Mesa Substation site would be acquired as part of the
3 proposed project. One of these parcels has two existing structures that would be demolished as
4 part of the proposed project prior to construction of the new substation. These structures are
5 vacant and uninhabitable homes. As described in Section 4.11.1.1, above, Los Angeles County has a
6 current vacancy rate of 5.8 percent, and the removal of two uninhabitable single-family homes
7 would not necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, construction
8 of the new Mesa Substation would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing units and
9 would have a no impact under this criterion. Construction of the remaining components of the
10 proposed project and operation of the proposed project would also not displace existing housing
11 units and would have no direct impact under this criterion.
12

13 **Operation and Maintenance**

14 Operation of the proposed project would not result in displacement of housing. Existing local staff
15 would perform all routine operation and maintenance tasks. Therefore, operation of the proposed
16 project would have no impact on housing.
17

18 **4.11.4 Mitigation Measures**

19
20 No mitigation measures are required.

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