

### 3.1.2 Growth

This discussion is based primarily on the CIA prepared for the proposed project.

#### **Regulatory Setting**

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, which established the steps necessary to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, requires evaluation of the potential environmental consequences of all proposed federal activities and programs. This provision includes a requirement to examine indirect consequences, which may occur in areas beyond the immediate influence of a proposed action and at some time in the future. The CEQ regulations, 40 CFR 1508.8, refer to these consequences as secondary impacts. Secondary impacts may include changes in land use, economic vitality, and population density, which are all elements of growth.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) also requires the analysis of a project’s potential to induce growth. CEQA guidelines, Section 15126.2(d), require that environmental documents “...discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment...”

#### **Affected Environment**

For the purposes of this analysis, the study area was defined by available statistical data describing Solano County, the cities of Fairfield and Suisun City, and eleven 2000 Census Tract Block Group areas that encompass the project area and its environs.

#### **Population and Housing Trends in the Study Area**

The nine-county Bay Area region, or San Francisco–San Jose–Oakland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), is the twelfth largest metropolitan area in the United States, with a population of 7,039,362 as of the 2000 U.S. Census. The 1990 U.S. Census reported the region’s population as 6,253,311; this change constitutes a 13% increase. Solano County has grown the fastest of the nine counties, with an increase of 68% between 1980 and 2000. Fairfield alone grew by 66% between 1980 and 2000. This trend is expected to continue well into the twenty-first century. Table 3.1.2-1 shows the projected increase in population for the Bay Area, Solano County, Fairfield, and Suisun City from 2000 to 2035.

**Table 3.1.2-1. Regional and Local Population—2000 through 2035**

Jurisdiction	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Bay Area Region	6,783,762	7,096,100	7,412,500	7,730,000	8,069,700	8,389,600	8,712,800	9,031,500
Solano County	392,542	421,600	455,200	488,400	514,900	539,900	562,900	585,800
City of Fairfield	96,178	106,000	115,500	123,700	129,700	135,000	139,600	144,500
Suisun City	26,118	27,600	29,700	31,600	32,900	34,400	35,900	37,400

Sources: ABAG Projections 2007; U.S. Census Bureau 2000.

The Association of Bay Area Governments’ (ABAG’s) Projections 2007 places the 2000 Bay Area regional population at 6,783,762. By 2035, the region is expected to have a population of

9,031,500, a 25% increase. The population of Solano County is expected to increase by 49%, Fairfield by 50%, and Suisun City by 43% in that same period.

As would be expected with the increase in population described above, housing has grown rapidly in the study area, both in total number and in average household size.

Approximately 63% of housing units in the county and 61% of housing units in Fairfield–Suisun City are owner occupied. Average household size is larger in Fairfield–Suisun City than in Solano County as a whole. Table 3.1.2-2 shows housing characteristics for Solano County (including the incorporated cities of Benicia, Dixon, Vacaville, Vallejo, and Fairfield–Suisun City) and Fairfield–Suisun City as a discrete unit.

**Table 3.1.2-2. Housing Characteristics in 2000**

	<b>Solano County</b>	<b>Fairfield–Suisun City</b>
Total Housing Units	134,513	41,635
Average Household Size	2.9	3.02
Owner-Occupied Units	84,994	25,549
Renter-Occupied Units	45,409	14,920
Two-Person Household	33,062	10,347
Three-Person Household	22,778	7,340
Four-Person Household	21,946	7,375
Five-Person Household	11,331	3,890
Six-Person Household	4,777	1,634
Vacant Units	4,110	1,166

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000.

The number of households in the Bay Area region is anticipated to grow by 34% between 2000 and 2035. Solano County is expected to experience a 50% increase, Fairfield a 52% increase, and Suisun City a 43% increase during the same period. Table 3.1.2-3 shows the projected number of households for the Bay Area Region, Solano County, Fairfield, and Suisun City between 2000 and 2035.

**Table 3.1.2-3. Number of Regional and Local Households—2000 through 2035**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2035</b>
Bay Area Region	2,466,020	2,583,080	2,696,580	2,819,030	2,941,760	3,059,130	3,177,440	3,292,530
Solano County	130,403	142,040	152,400	162,620	172,050	180,360	188,290	196,220
City of Fairfield	30,870	34,690	37,530	40,050	42,060	43,780	45,400	47,030
Suisun City	7,987	8,590	9,130	9,580	10,020	10,500	10,960	11,420

Source: ABAG Projections 2007; U.S. Census Bureau 2000.

Persons per household in the Bay Area region overall has increased from 2.61 in 1990 to 2.73 in 2005. Again, there is substantial variation within the region. With fewer families and more young singles than the rest of the Bay Area, San Francisco has the smallest average household size, reported at 2.30 persons per household in 2000. Solano County, on the other hand, has the second-highest average household size, estimated at 2.90 persons per household in 2000. ABAG expects household sizes across the Bay Area to level off, projecting a ratio of 2.71 persons per household for the region in 2025.

### Environmental Consequences

The Department’s *Environmental Handbook Volume 4, Community Impact Assessment* states that “growth inducement is defined as the relationship between the proposed transportation project and growth within the project area.” The Department has developed a checklist for determining if a project is considered to be growth inducing. The proposed alternatives were evaluated in accordance with this checklist as shown in Table 3.1.2-4.

**Table 3.1.2-4. Growth-Inducement Checklist**

Question	Answer
1. Would the project attract more residential development or new population into the community or planning area?	No. Though the project would increase highway capacity and allow some growth, it would do so in accordance with local planning documents. The project would increase the capacity of the I-80/I-680/SR 12 interchange complex to accommodate existing and planned increases in traffic. These improvements would allow, to some extent, future population growth both locally and regionally to occur. However, the project would not result in the direct development of residential land uses nor would it provide access to areas that currently do not have access. Furthermore, increases in population and residential development have been planned for by the City of Fairfield and Suisun City.
2. Would the project encourage the development of more acreage of employment-generating land uses in the area (such as commercial, industrial, or office)?	No. The project would not encourage the acreage of employment-generating land uses in the area beyond what is accounted for in local planning documents. By increasing the capacity of the interchange, the project could result in population growth both regionally and locally. Locally, several locations within the study area could be developed with employment-generating land uses. However, these areas have been planned for such development by the City of Fairfield or Suisun City.
3. Would the project lead to the increase of roadway, intersection, sewer, water supply, or drainage capacity?	Yes. The project would lead to an increase of freeway capacity by improving the interchange complex. The project would involve the reconstruction of several local interchanges and one new interchange on SR 12W. However, beyond the interchanges there would not be substantial improvement to local streets that would increase their capacity. The project would not result in increased sewer, water, or drainage capacity.
4. Would the project encourage the rezoning or reclassification of lands in the community General Plan from agriculture, open space, or low-density residential to a more intensive land use?	No. Rezoning and intensification of land uses is most likely to occur in areas where interchanges are reconstructed or new interchanges provided. While the project (both build alternatives) would result in the reconstruction of several interchanges and the construction of new interchanges at I-680/Red Top Road and SR12W, most areas around these interchanges are either already fully developed and intensification of land uses is highly unlikely, or current zoning is for continued agricultural use. Interchanges that would be reconstructed such as the I-80/Green Valley Road and I-80/Suisun Valley Road interchanges are already surrounded by commercial development making rezoning of existing land uses unlikely. The new interchange at I-680/Red Top Road is located in an area where Land uses to the west of the new interchanges at I-680/Red Top Road include residential areas and a high school to the west, and agricultural lands and the Suisun Marsh, which cannot be reclassified or rezoned, to the east. The new interchange at SR 12W is located in an area of the County zoned for continued agricultural use and due to the county’s strong agricultural preservation policies, is unlikely to see reclassification or rezoning.
5. Is the project not in conformance with the growth-related policies, goals, or objectives of the local General Plan or the area growth management plan?	No. While the project would increase the capacity of the freeway system to accommodate existing and future increases in traffic, the growth generating this increase in traffic has been planned for both locally and regionally in the general plans of the county, City of Fairfield and Suisun City, and regional transportation plans.

Question	Answer
6. Would the project lead to the intensification of development densities or accelerate the schedule for development or would it facilitate actions by private interests to redevelop properties within four miles of a limited access highway interchange?	No. The project would not lead to intensification of development beyond that planned for by the cities. As stated above, the project could influence growth and intensification in the surrounding communities in some indirect way. However, the areas in which this intensification would occur have been planned for such development by the City of Fairfield or Suisun City.
7. Would the project measurably and significantly decrease home to work commuter travel times to and from or within the project area (more than 10% overall reduction or five minutes or more in commute time savings?)	Yes. Because the project would increase the capacity of the I-80/I-680/SR 12 interchange complex, it would result in decreasing commute times by more than 10% overall and five minutes or more in commute time savings.
8. Is the project directly related to the generation of cumulative effects as defined by the CEQA guidelines?	No. The project is not directly related to cumulative growth in Solano County and surrounding communities.

### Potential to Induce Growth

The proposed alternatives would add capacity to the I-80/I-680/SR 12 interchange complex to accommodate existing and future projected increases in traffic. By doing so, the proposed project would result, to some extent, in accommodating growth both locally and regionally. This growth in traffic is the result of local and regional land use plans, which, in turn, have been considered in regional transportation plans. However, this development would most likely occur in areas already planned for such development by the County, City of Fairfield, and Suisun City. Therefore, the proposed alternatives would not foster local development or growth beyond that which is already planned.

In November 2008 the people of Solano County approved Measure T which confirmed approval of a new County General Plan including an amendment to Solano County’s 1994 Orderly Growth Initiative that updates certain provisions of the Solano County General Plan relating to agricultural and open space policies and land use designations, and extends the initiative until December 2028. A cornerstone principal of the new General Plan and Orderly Growth Initiative is the direction of new urban growth and development toward municipal areas. Adoption of the new County General Plan and extension of the Orderly Growth Initiative further supports the conclusion that the project alternatives would accommodate growth in areas already planned for such growth and that those areas are located within municipal areas. Under the No-Build Alternative, no new effects associated with growth would occur.

### **Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are necessary because the project alternatives would not induce growth beyond areas that have been planned for such growth by the City of Fairfield and Suisun City.