

3.12 Population and Housing

This section describes the applicable regulatory and environmental setting for population and housing within and around the Larkspur Ferry Service Expansion and Parking Project (Project) area. In addition, it discusses the potential for the Project's Build Alternatives to induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly, or to displace substantial numbers of people or existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Chapter 5 discusses impacts related to the No-Project Alternative.

3.12.1 Existing Conditions

3.12.1.1 Regulatory Setting

The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District, as the owner of the Larkspur Ferry Terminal (LFT), is the California Environmental Quality Act Lead Agency for the Project and has prepared this Draft Environmental Impact Report to evaluate potential impacts and identify required mitigation to avoid or reduce potentially significant impacts. The federal, state, and regional and local regulations applicable to the Project are provided in this section.

Federal

There are no federal regulations for population and housing that are relevant to the Project.

State

Regional Housing Needs Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area: 2015 to 2023

The ABAG administers the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), which enables regions to address housing issues and meet housing needs based on future growth projections for the area.

The RHNA process addresses the need for housing in communities throughout the state. To ensure adequate housing is available for all income groups, the California Department of Housing and Community Development is responsible for determining the regional need in coordination with the ABAG, which is required to distribute and assign the region's share of statewide housing burden among the cities and counties within its jurisdiction. The objectives of the RHNA include increasing the supply, diversity, and affordability of housing; promoting infill development and a more efficient land use pattern; promoting an improved intraregional relationship between jobs and housing; protecting environmental resources; and promoting socioeconomic equity. The purpose of the RHNA is to allocate a "fair share" of the Bay Area's projected housing need to the cities and counties by household income groups, which are categorized as very low, low, moderate, and above moderate.

The combined RHNA target for additional housing in Marin and Sonoma Counties for the current 2023-2031 cycle is nearly 29,000 units (14,210 housing units for Marin County, and 14,562 housing units for Sonoma County).

Regional

Plan Bay Area 2050+

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) acts as a regional transportation planning agency and the region's metropolitan planning organization. Because of its designation, MTC is responsible for the Regional Transportation Plan, a compilation of plans for mass transit, highway, freight, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. MTC also reviews applications from local agencies for state and federal grants for transportation projects to determine their compatibility with the Regional Transportation Plan. MTC and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) adopted the *Plan Bay Area 2050+* in 2026 (MTC and ABAG 2026).

Plan Bay Area 2050+ (MTC and ABAG 2026) is the integrated land use/transportation plan and demographic/economic forecast for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area region. This plan coordinates housing plans, open space conservation efforts, economic development strategies, and transportation investments. Specifically, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, *Plan Bay Area 2050+* (MTC and ABAG 2026) promotes extensive transportation strategies for all modes, including new post-pandemic transit vision. The plan wants to operate and maintain existing transportation systems while also expanding new systems (MTC and ABAG 2026).

Local

City of Larkspur 2040 General Plan

The *City of Larkspur 2040 General Plan* (City of Larkspur 2024a) provides a comprehensive plan of the City of Larkspur's development policies. The Community Character chapter in the plan (City of Larkspur 2024a) intends to provide goals and policies to preserve, enhance, and strengthen Larkspur's livable and attractive environment, its community identity, and its special "sense of place," while promoting a greater awareness of and sensitivity toward Larkspur's historic and archaeological heritage. The following policy is applicable to the proposed Project:

- **Action Program CHAR-1.2a.** Require all major new development or redevelopment to provide connectivity to and from the site for bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Circulation chapter in the plan (City of Larkspur 2024a) intends to provide safe and efficient transportation facilities for all system users; assure adequate transit service in Larkspur (bus, ferry, airport shuttle) as alternatives to the auto; improve all forms of connections (that is, pedestrian, bicycle, and auto) within Larkspur and with neighboring communities, as well as access from Larkspur to the freeway; and improve traffic safety for bicyclists and pedestrians. The circulation goals and policies that are applicable to the proposed Project are as follows:

- **Goal CIR-1.** A multimodal transportation system that is safe, efficient, and incorporates the needs of all circulation system users.
- **Goal CIR-3.** Reduced impact of traffic congestion on Larkspur's quality of life.
- **Goal CIR-7.** Safe and convenient connections between Larkspur, neighboring communities, and the region for all modes of transportation.
- **Policy CIR-6.4.** Encourage increased transit service and ridership, and other innovative programs and alternative transportation solutions to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use.
- **Policy CIR-6.7.** Encourage continuation of the LFT at its present site.

- **Action Program CIR-6.7a.** Support improvement of bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between the planned Larkspur Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) station and the ferry terminal.
- **Policy CIR-12.1.** Avoid when feasible or mitigate adverse impacts of circulation system improvements on the natural environment (such as Corte Madera Creek, the Bay and its shoreline, open space lands, and recreational facilities).

City of Larkspur Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The *City of Larkspur Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* (City of Larkspur 2017) was developed to identify Larkspur's existing network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and multi-use paths, lay the framework for future facilities, and develop policies that will work toward making bicycling and walking an integral part of transportation and daily life in Larkspur. The following goals and policies are relevant to the Project:

- **Goal 1:** Develop a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly community.
- **Goal 2:** Improve safety and accessibility.
- **Goal 4:** Identify regional and multi-jurisdictional gaps in connectivity.
- **Goal 5:** Improve transit access.

City of Larkspur 2023 to 2031 Housing Element

The City of Larkspur 2023 to 2031 Housing Element represents the City's intent to plan for the housing needs of the Larkspur community while meeting the state's housing goals (City of Larkspur 2024b). Relevant policies include the following:

- **Policy H4.4.** Transit-Oriented Community Policy. Adopt and implement policies and programs that align with MTC's Transit-Oriented Community Policy for efficient use of land, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and maintenance of transportation funding.

3.12.1.2 Environmental Setting

This section provides a discussion of the existing conditions related to population and housing in the Project area, within the jurisdictional boundary of the City of Larkspur, and within the jurisdictional boundary of Marin County.

Project Area

The LFT is in the eastern part of Larkspur and is surrounded by a mix of land uses consisting of commercial, office, retail, open space, and residential. The ferry terminal is on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and is bordered on the west by United States Highway 101 (US 101), which runs north-south through the City of Larkspur. US 101 is a regional transportation corridor that serves local traffic, goods movement, commuters, and tourism within Marin County and to destinations in Northern California.

The LFT Main Lot is at the mouth of the Corte Madera Channel and the Bay. The terminal is bordered to the west by Wood Island, a hillside professional office complex, and to the north, across from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, by the Larkspur Landing shopping center, which consists of retail, restaurants, offices, administrative and public services, a theater, and hotel. The Larkspur SMART train station is also on the northern edge (off Victoria Way) of this shopping complex. Immediately behind the shopping complex is the Larkspur Landing Circle neighborhood of multi-family residential units, open space, and park land, and more east is Drake's Cove, a single-family low-density residential neighborhood. Farther east, Sir Francis Drake Boulevard leads to the entrance of the Richmond/San Rafael Bridge (Interstate 580) and to the San

Quentin State Prison on the peninsula. To the north and on the west side of US 101 is the Greenbrae neighborhood. Immediately south of the terminal is a marsh/wetland conservation area, and across the Corte Madera Channel is the Greenbrae Boardwalk neighborhood and the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve.

The proposed North Lot is northwest of the existing LFT and southeast of US 101. It is bordered between Larkspur Landing Circle and Victoria Way. It is also next to a cinema (called the CinemaWest Larkspur Landing) and the Larkspur Station for Sonoma-Marin SMART Area Rail Transit. There are commercial buildings to the south of the proposed lot.

The three neighborhoods in the vicinity of the LFT are built out, and future land uses in these areas are expected to remain stable.

Larkspur Landing Circle Neighborhood

Larkspur Landing Circle is an area of multiple-family developments (Lincoln Village I and II, Larkspur Court, and Serenity Court) that lie between other (commercial) land uses, including office buildings, a hotel, and a regional-specialty shopping center, north and east of Larkspur Landing Circle. US 101 isolates the neighborhood from the rest of the community. To the east is the hillside residential neighborhood of Drake's Cove. The residential area consists of large, multi-story single-family homes and is very secluded and remote from the rest of the city.

Greenbrae Boardwalk Neighborhood

The Greenbrae Boardwalk neighborhood, directly south of the ferry terminal, is bordered on the north by Corte Madera Creek, on the west by the Northern Pacific Railroad Network right-of-way, and on the south by the Corte Madera Marsh Ecological Reserve. Its only access point from land is from Larkspur, and the homes along it can only be reached by foot from a common parking area. South of the Greenbrae Boardwalk are two mobile home parks. These homes are surrounded by industrial uses, are not on the Corte Madera Creek shoreline, and are remote (physically and visually) from the ferry terminal.

Greenbrae Neighborhood

The Greenbrae neighborhood is off Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, west of US 101, and stretches north to the San Rafael city limits (the top of the Southern Heights Ridge). The southwestern half of this area is unincorporated, and the northeastern half lies within Larkspur. This neighborhood consists of single-family houses.

Population and Housing Data

The population of Marin County was 262,321 in 2020 and 258,769 in 2021, decreasing to 255,222 in 2022 and 253,223 in 2023. In 2024 and 2025, the population was 253,632 and 253,171, respectively, and 250,823 in 2026, representing a decrease of approximately 4.4% over the period. The population of the City of Larkspur was 13,080 in 2020 and 13,017 in 2021, followed by 12,804 in 2022 and 12,691 in 2023. In 2024 and 2025, the population was 12,804 and 12,772, respectively, and 12,650 in 2026, representing a decrease of approximately 3.3% over the period. Table 3.12-1 presents annual population data for Marin County and the City of Larkspur for the years 2020 through 2026.

Table 3.12-1. Marin County and City of Larkspur Annual Population Trend Data

Location	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Marin County	262,321	258,769	255,222	253,223	253,632	253,171	250,823
City of Larkspur	13,080	13,017	12,804	12,691	12,804	12,772	12,650

Source: Department of Finance 2026a

The number of housing units in Marin County was 111,564 in 2020 and 111,668 in 2021, increasing to 111,879 in 2022 and 112,183 in 2023. In 2024 and 2025, total housing units were 112,507 and 112,901, respectively, and reached 113,305 in 2026, representing an increase of approximately 1.6% over the period. Occupied housing units in Marin County were 104,167 in 2020 and 103,819 in 2021, followed by 103,920 in 2022 and 104,045 in 2023. In 2024 and 2025, occupied units were 104,022 and 104,386, respectively, and reached 104,744 in 2026. The vacancy rate in Marin County was 6.6% in 2020, 7.0% in 2021, 7.1% in 2022, 7.3% in 2023, 7.5% in both 2024 and 2025, and 7.6% in 2026.

The number of housing units in the City of Larkspur was 6,459 in 2020 and 6,460 in 2021 and 2022, increasing to 6,469 in 2023. In 2024 and 2025, total housing units were 6,519 and 6,523, respectively, and they reached 6,533 in 2026, representing an increase of approximately 1.1% over the period. Occupied housing units in Larkspur were 6,102 in 2020 and 6,103 in 2021 and 2022, followed by 6,111 in 2023. In 2024 and 2025, occupied units were 6,158 and 6,162, respectively, and they reached 6,171 in 2026. The vacancy rate in Larkspur was 5.5% in all years from 2020 through 2026. Table 3.12-2 presents annual housing data for Marin County and the City of Larkspur for the years 2020 through 2026.

Table 3.12-2. Marin County and City of Larkspur Annual Housing Trend Data

Location	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Marin County (Total Housing Units)	111,564	111,668	111,879	112,183	112,507	112,901	113,305
Marin County (Occupied Housing Units)	104,167	103,819	103,920	104,045	104,022	104,386	104,744
Marin County (Vacancy Rate)	6.6%	7.0%	7.1%	7.3%	7.5%	7.5%	7.6%
City of Larkspur (Total Housing Units)	6,459	6,460	6,460	6,469	6,519	6,523	6,533
City of Larkspur (Occupied Housing Units)	6,102	6,103	6,103	6,111	6,158	6,162	6,171
City of Larkspur (Vacancy Rate)	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%

Source: Department of Finance 2026b

3.12.2 Environmental Impacts

3.12.2.1 Methodology

Identifying a project's impact on population and housing involves a review of the California Department of Finance Data and all state, regional, and local policies relevant to the Project, such as the *City of Larkspur 2040 General Plan* (City of Larkspur 2024a). The study area for the impact analysis is the City of Larkspur and Marin County.

3.12.2.2 Thresholds of Significance

The following California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Appendix G thresholds identify significance criteria to be considered for determining whether a project could have significant impacts related to existing population and housing.

Would the proposed Project do the following:

- Induce substantial unplanned 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)?
- Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

3.12.2.3 Impacts

Project population and housing impacts are substantively the same for both Build Alternatives. Within this section, impacts for Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 are discussed together as the Build Alternatives.

Induce Substantial Unplanned 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)

Construction

Build Alternatives

Construction of the Build Alternatives would include temporary increase in employment resulting in up to 70 workers associated with daily construction activities for the proposed Project. Construction would occur in phases, with the North Lot constructed over approximately 18 months and the Main Lot constructed over approximately 36 months. It is anticipated that the workers would be drawn from the local/regional labor pool and that the proposed Project does not include and would not result in construction or development of residential uses or other land uses that would accommodate or facilitate substantial unplanned population growth. Construction also would not include extension of roads or other infrastructure beyond the Project site that could accommodate or facilitate additional development that would result in substantial unplanned population growth.

Therefore, the construction of the Build Alternatives would have ***no impacts*** that would result in or induce substantial unplanned population growth during construction.

Operations

Build Alternatives

Operation of the Build Alternatives would include increase ferry service; improve the pickup/drop-off area to provide designated areas for fixed-route transit loading and unloading, TNCs, and drop off; upgrade bicycle storage facilities; improve pedestrian connections; and use a phased approach to construct new parking garages on the Main and North Lots. The incremental increase in ferry service from 42 revenue trips up to a maximum of 76 revenue trips in 2050, as well as, associated landside improvements were designed to accommodate forecast ferry ridership growth based on Transportation Authority of Marin forecasts using their travel demand model, which accounts for regional population and employment forecasts, travel patterns, and transportation network conditions on regional growth projections. The forecast growth and development occur with or without the proposed Project. The Build Alternatives do not include residential development, changes to land use designations, or extension of other roads or infrastructure that would accommodate or facilitate substantial unplanned population growth

Therefore, the operation of the Build Alternatives would have ***no impacts*** that would result in or induce substantial unplanned population growth during operations.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation required.

Displace Substantial Numbers of Existing People or Housing, Necessitating the Construction of Replacement Housing Elsewhere

Construction and Operation

Build Alternatives

Construction and operation of the Build Alternatives would occur within the existing LFT Main Lot and the North Lot. The Project site consists of existing surface parking lots and other ferry and transportation facilities. Construction and operation of the Build Alternatives would not include removal of residential structures or displacement of existing residents. Construction and operation of the Build Alternatives would not require relocation of individuals or removal of occupied buildings.

Therefore, construction and operation of the Build Alternatives would not displace any existing people or housing and would not require construction of any replacement housing elsewhere and would result in ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation required.