

3.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section evaluates the potential population and housing impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the proposed Project. This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions; identifies criteria used to determine impact significance; provides an analysis of the potential population and housing impacts; and identifies proposed General Plan 2045 goals and policies that would minimize potentially significant impacts.

As summarized in Chapter 3, *Environmental Analysis*, concerns related to the need for new housing were provided during the EIR scoping period.

3.14.1 Regulatory Framework

STATE

California Housing Element Law

California Housing Element Law (Government Code Sections 65580-65589.8) includes provisions related to the requirements for Housing Elements of local government General Plans. These requirements include an assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to the meeting of these needs. Additionally, to ensure that counties and cities contribute to the attainment of the State housing goals, this section of the Government Code calls for local jurisdictions to plan for and allow the construction of a share of the region's projected housing needs, known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is responsible for reviewing Housing Elements and ongoing progress towards implementation to ensure they comply with the law. The City's Housing Element was adopted by the City Council on March 13, 2023, and certified by HCD on March 24, 2023.

Senate Bill 166

Senate Bill 166 mandates that jurisdictions must maintain adequate sites to always accommodate remaining unmet RHNA by each income category throughout the entire planning period. This can be maintained through a buffer in the Housing Element inventory of at least 15 to 30 percent more capacity than required, especially for capacity to accommodate the lower-income RHNA (HCD 2019).

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REGIONAL

Plan Bay Area

The Association of Bay Area Government (ABAG) and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) adopted Plan Bay Area 2050 on October 21, 2021 (ABAG and MTC 2021a). Plan Bay Area provides transportation and environmental strategies to continue to meet the regional transportation-related greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals of the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (Senate Bill 375). The current Plan Bay Area projects growth and development patterns through 2050.

Plan Bay Area designates Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Transit Priority Areas (TPAs) throughout the region. PDAs are areas along transportation corridors that are served by public transit that allow opportunities for development of transit-oriented, infill development within existing communities that are expected to host the majority of future development. TPAs are similar in that they are formed within 0.5 miles around a major transit stop such as a transit center or rail line. The three PDAs in Livermore are discussed in Section 3.14.2, *Existing Conditions*.

Plan Bay Area distributes future growth across the San Francisco Bay Area region to meet its GHG emissions reduction, housing, and other performance targets, but it is not intended to override local land use control. Cities and counties, not ABAG/MTC, are ultimately responsible for the manner in which their local communities continue to be built out in the future. For this reason, cities and counties are not required to revise their land use policies and regulations, including General Plans, to be consistent with the regional transportation plan or an alternative planning strategy. Rather than increase regional land use control, Plan Bay Area facilitates implementation by expanding incentives and opportunities available to local jurisdictions to support growth in PDAs. In addition to funding transportation and planning projects in PDAs, Plan Bay Area sets the stage for cities and counties to increase the efficiency of the development process, if they choose, for projects consistent with Plan Bay Area and other State legislation.

Plan Bay Area 2050 is currently undergoing an update, which is called Plan Bay Area 2050+. The Plan Bay Area 2050+ contains 35 strategies representing public policies and investments that can be implemented in the Bay Area by 2050 to help the region build more homes, reduce commute times, and create vibrant downtowns and natural areas for everyone to enjoy. The strategies in Plan Bay Area 2050+ also aim to keep people safe from natural hazards, support a strong economy and provide stable housing for those who need it most. Unique to the Plan Bay Area 2050+ cycle is the parallel Transit 2050+ planning effort, which culminated in the first-of-its-kind plan to re-envision the future of Bay Area public transit, in partnership with transit operators across the region. While not in effect at the time of this Draft EIR, it is anticipated that the Plan Bay Area 2050+ will be in effect over the course of the General Plan 2045 horizon.

LOCAL

Livermore Municipal Code

The Livermore Municipal Code (LMC) includes various directives to minimize adverse impacts to population and housing. The LMC is organized by title, chapter, section, and, in some cases, articles. Most provisions related to population and housing are in Title 3, *Revenue and Finance*. Chapter 3.26, *Affordable Housing Fee*, establishes a means by which developers assist in increasing the supply of affordable housing. The affordable housing fees proposed under this chapter aim to provide affordable housing in the city by assisting in the private and nonprofit development and preservation of affordable owner and rental housing and related programs that help residents to enter or remain in affordable housing. These include, but are not limited to, mortgage subsidies and down-payment assistance, site acquisition, banking of land for use in the development of affordable housing, rental subsidies, construction financing, issuance of bonds, providing predevelopment funds, providing rehabilitation funds to preserve existing affordable housing stock, providing loan security, and any other assistance that will serve to increase or maintain the supply of affordable housing in the city.

3.14.2 Existing Conditions

As shown in Table 2-3, *Proposed 2045 Buildout Projections in the EIR Study Area*, in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the EIR Study Area has a population of approximately 87,930, with 33,030 housing units and 57,220 jobs as of 2023.

REGIONAL GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Plan Bay Area 2050 includes growth projections for the year 2050 for counties within the region. Interim years between 2015 and 2050 are not provided. As shown in Table 3.14-1, *Alameda County Regional Growth Projections, 2015 to 2050*, projections anticipate the number of households in Alameda County to increase by 54 percent, with jobs projected to increase by 36 percent.

Table 3.14-1 Alameda County Regional Growth Projections, 2015 to 2050

	2015	2050	Total Change	Percent Change
Households	552,000	847,000	295,000	54%
Jobs	867,000	1,182,000	315,000	36%

Source: ABAG and MTC 2021b.

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Priority Development Areas

As discussed in Chapter 3, *Environmental Analysis*, and shown on Figure 3-1, *Priority Development Areas and Transit Priority Areas*, the EIR Study Area has three PDAs that are also TPAs, including the Downtown PDA and TPA surrounding the Downtown Livermore Station area in central Livermore, the Isabel Avenue/BART Station Planning Area PDA and TPA surrounding the proposed Isabel BART station in northwest Livermore, and the McGrath Southfront PDA and TPA in east Livermore. Because Plan Bay Area anticipates most growth in the Bay Area will occur in PDAs, these three PDAs are anticipated to experience growth through 2050.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation

As the San Francisco Bay Area’s regional agency, ABAG/MTC calculates the RHNA for jurisdictions in Alameda County, including Livermore. Table 3.14-2, *Regional Housing Needs Allocation, 2023 to 2031*, shows the 6th RHNA Housing Cycle for the current planning period, which is the number of housing units the City would need to accommodate by 2031.

Table 3.14-2 Regional Housing Needs Allocation, 2023 to 2031

	Very Low Income	Low Income	Moderate Income	Above Moderate Income	Total
City of Livermore	1,317	758	696	1,799	4,570
Alameda County	114,442	65,892	72,712	188,130	441,176

Source: ABAG 2025.

As shown in Table 3.14-2, the housing unit allocations are categorized by household size and income. The household income categories are as follows:

- Very Low Income: Households making less than 50 percent of the area median income.
- Low Income: Households making between 50 and 80 percent of the area median income.
- Moderate Income: Households making between 80 and 120 percent of the area median income.
- Above Moderate Income: Households making more than 120 percent of the area median income.

Household median income is calculated based on household size. In 2020, the median income in Alameda County for a single-person household was \$83,450. The median income in Alameda County for a family of three in 2020 was \$107,300, and \$138,250 for a family of six (HCD 2020).

3.14.3 Standards for Analysis

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G, *Environmental Checklist Form*, of the CEQA Guidelines states that the proposed Project would result in a significant impact related to population and housing if it would:

- a) 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).
- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

3.14.4 Project Impact Analysis

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- a) **Would the project 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)?**
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Less than Significant. The proposed General Plan 2045 is a high-level policy document that will replace the current General Plan as the overarching policy document that defines a vision for future change and sets the land use and policy framework for growth. The proposed Project considers growth over an approximately 20-year horizon but does not include specific development proposals. The General Plan is the policy document that plans ahead to accommodate the amount of reasonably foreseeable growth for population, housing, and jobs given past growth trends and the ability of existing services and infrastructure to support future growth. Therefore, the proposed Project would not directly induce growth but rather plans for the anticipated growth that is likely to occur whether the proposed Project is adopted or not. Because the proposed General Plan 2045 also includes recommendations for future roadways and infrastructure extensions, as it is required to do by State law, it has the potential to indirectly induce growth. However, the proposed General Plan 2045 itself is the City's effort to adequately plan for this anticipated growth.

As shown in Table 2-3, *Proposed 2045 Buildout Projections in the EIR Study Area*, in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the EIR Study Area has a population of approximately 87,930, with 33,030 housing units and 57,220 jobs as of 2023. The proposed Project estimates an overall increase of 43,820 residents, 16,610 housing units, and 6,110 jobs in the EIR Study Area by 2040. As shown in Table 3.14-3, *Proposed General Plan 2025 Growth Projections*, this equates to a 50 percent increase in total population, 50 percent increase in housing units, and 10 percent increase of jobs over the 20-year horizon of the proposed Project.

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Table 3.14-3 Proposed General Plan 2045 Growth Projections

	Existing Conditions (2023)	Buildout Estimates (2045)	Projected Growth 2025-2045 (Proposed Project)	Total Percentage Change
Population	87,930	131,750	43,820	50%
Housing Units	33,030	49,640	16,610	50%
Jobs	57,220	63,330	6,110	10%

Source: Esri 2024.

Note: Numbers are rounded from original sources.

The proposed Project is consistent with the Plan Bay Area goals including ensuring that residents and workers in the EIR Study Area have sufficient access to affordable housing. The proposed General Plan 2045 allows for housing and jobs in the Downtown PDA and TPA, the Isabel Avenue/BART Station Planning Area PDA and TPA, and the McGrath Southfront PDA and TPA, which are areas designated for growth under Plan Bay Area. Accordingly, the proposed General Plan 2045 is consistent with focusing on infill development, consistent with Plan Bay Area.

Approximately 28 percent of the projected housing units’ growth for the proposed Project comes from the City’s 2023–2031 RHNA allocation of 4,570 units, which is dictated by the California Housing Law and not by the City, and is derived from Plan Bay Area’s regional forecasts (City of Livermore 2023). The 4,570 units required for the 2023-2031 Housing Element represent a 67 percent increase over the 2015-2022 RHNA, which was 2,729 units (City of Livermore 2015). Although the RHNA allocation is not a requirement to build units, the State legislature has enacted increasingly stringent requirements on cities to ensure they are doing everything possible to remove common barriers to housing construction. Furthermore, pursuant to Senate Bill 166, Housing Elements are required to include a “buffer” of additional sites to ensure that if the sites listed in the housing opportunity sites inventory are developed without housing, or are developed with less than the full amount of housing claimed in the inventory, there is remaining capacity to ensure an ongoing supply of sites for the full RHNA during the eight years of the Housing Element cycle. The proposed General Plan 2045 land use map includes enough land designated for housing to fulfill the City’s 2023-2031 RHNA as well as future buffer sites identified through the 2023-2031 Housing Element.

The proposed Project’s planning period also extends beyond the end of the 6th RHNA Cycle of the recently adopted Housing Element. Assuming continued eight-year RHNA cycles, and that the proposed General Plan horizon year is 2045, the proposed General Plan 2045 should designate sufficient residential land to accommodate the future 7th RHNA Cycle (2031–2039), and most of the 8th RHNA Cycle (2039–2047). The scale of future housing allocations is unknown and difficult to predict. If the 7th and 8th RHNA Cycles use the same percentage change as the 5th to 6th RHNA Cycle, it would call for approximately 7,642 new units by 2039

and 12,762 new units by 2047, for a total of 20,404 new units covering the years 2031 to 2047. This does not include any additional buffer density for the two future RHNA cycles. As such, the proposed Project is designed to proactively accommodate the current and future RHNA cycles and expected growth throughout the buildout horizon.

The Land Use (LU) Element of the proposed General Plan 2045 contains the following goals and policies that designed to minimize unplanned population growth:

- **Goal LU-1:** Create a well-integrated, sustainable, and livable community by locating new development in areas that can maximize the use of existing public services and facilities.
 - **Policy LU-1.3: General Plan Environmental Impact Report.** Use the General Plan Environmental Impact Report as a foundation for future discretionary actions. When development exceeds planned thresholds of 49,640 residential units, 131,750 population, and 63,330 jobs, conduct additional environmental reviews to evaluate the impacts of continued growth.
 - **Policy LU-1.5: Annexation Prior to Urban Development.** Annex land within the Urban Growth Boundary before urban development occurs to align with City standards and service delivery systems.
 - **Policy LU-1.9: Infill and Reinvestment.** Prioritize development for locations in or in close proximity to transit, nodes for active transportation, or major commercial sites or other activity centers. Update the Development Code and Specific and Neighborhood Plans accordingly.
- **Goal LU-2:** Establish a coherent and logical pattern of urban uses that protects and enhances open space and agricultural uses by providing a clear and permanent boundary for urban uses within the City's Planning Area. The provisions of the North Livermore Urban Growth Boundary Initiative, and as readopted by the South Livermore Urban Growth Boundary Initiative, shall be amended only by a vote of the people.
 - **Policy LU-2.1: Urban Growth Boundary.** Urban development and uses inconsistent with the city's General Plan land use designations shall not be permitted beyond the Urban Growth Boundary as described in Appendix A. Limit residential development to areas within the Urban Growth Boundary. Non-urban uses, such as agriculture, parks, and open space, and other uses consistent with the city's general plan land use designations may be permitted within and beyond the Urban Growth Boundary.
 - **Policy LU-2.2: Limit Urban Uses Outside the Urban Growth Boundary.** Beyond the City limits, discourage and oppose any urban uses and other uses that are inconsistent with the city's general plan land use designations.
 - **Policy LU-2.3: Urban Services and the Urban Growth Boundary.** Extend urban services only to areas within the Urban Growth Boundary, except as provided for in the South Livermore Urban Growth Boundary Initiative and North Livermore Urban Growth Boundary Initiative.

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- **Policy LU-2.6: Compatible Development Along the City's Urban Edge.** Facilitate compatible urban development on the city's edges consistent with the City's General Plan and Livermore's unique qualities such as vineyards, ranches, natural habitats, and open space.
- **Goal LU-19:** Collaborate with other public agencies on regional and local land use issues.
 - **Policy LU-19.3: Regional Long-Range Plans.** Remain engaged in current and future long-range plans prepared by Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)/Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and other regional organizations to influence and be aware of projected growth assumptions for Livermore and regional priorities for transportation, infrastructure, and the economy that could affect the city.
 - **Policy LU-19.6: Planning Area Applications.** Provide input to Alameda County and the Cities of Dublin and Pleasanton on land use planning, policy development, and applications in the Planning Area for discretionary land use approvals, both through the environmental review process and by commenting on referrals from the County or other cities. Ensure projects in the Planning Area align with City values, vision, and policy.

Specifically, proposed Policy LU-19.3 requires the City to remain engaged in current and future long-range plans, such as those prepared by ABAG/MTC, to influence and be aware of projected growth assumptions. Proposed Policy LU-1.3 requires the City to use this General Plan EIR as a foundation for future discretionary action and to require additional environmental reviews to evaluate the impacts of continued growth if development exceeds the projected buildout of the proposed Project. Proposed Action LU-A-1.1 would further support these policies by preparing development monitoring reports to track growth in the EIR Study Area.

Furthermore, the proposed Project would accommodate future growth by providing for infrastructure and associated public services to accommodate projected growth (see also Section 3.15, *Public Services, Parks, and Recreation*; Section 3.16, *Transportation*; and Section 3.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*). Future development would be required to comply with any required site-specific infrastructure improvements and to pay any project-specific impact fees.

As discussed, the proposed General Plan 2045 is the policy document that plans ahead to accommodate the amount of reasonably foreseeable growth given past growth trends and the ability of existing services and infrastructure to support future growth. Additionally, buildout of the proposed Project would be able to accommodate the potential 7th RHNA cycle and most of the potential 8th RHNA cycle, which extends beyond the buildout horizon of the proposed Project. Consequently, while buildout under with the proposed Project would serve to accommodate expected population, housing, and job growth in the EIR Study Area, this growth would not represent unplanned population growth for which inadequate planning has occurred. Therefore, this impact is **less than significant**.

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Less than Significant. Buildout under the proposed Project is expected to result in an increase of approximately 16,610 housing units in the EIR Study Area over an approximately 20-year horizon. One of the purposes of the proposed Project is to adequately plan for and accommodate future growth through the distribution, location, and balance, of land uses. Implementation of the proposed General Plan 2045 would accommodate population growth through land use designations, goals and policies that provide a vision and guide growth in the EIR Study Area. Land use changes consistent with the proposed General Plan 2045 land use map would increase opportunities for housing in the EIR Study Area. The proposed land use map would provide land use designations for a variety of housing types and provide additional residential opportunities.

Future development would be required to comply with LMC Chapter 3.26 and pay affordable housing fees to provide affordable housing in the EIR Study Area. The proposed General Plan 2045 goals and policies identified under impact discussion (a), in addition to the following goals and policies from the Land Use (LU) Element, are designed to minimize impacts related to displacement:

- **Goal LU-1:** Create a well-integrated, sustainable, and livable community by locating new development in areas that can maximize the use of existing public services and facilities.
 - **Policy LU-1.2: Housing Choices and Employment Opportunities.** Plan for a range of housing choices and employment space that meets the needs of all Livermore's residents and workforce. Promote a citywide balance between jobs and housing (1.25-1.75) to support economic vitality and reduce commute-related impacts.
- **Goal LU-4:** Create neighborhoods that include a mix of uses and a range of housing types to meet the needs of all residents.
 - **Policy LU-3.1: Range of Housing Types.** Provide a range of housing types, sizes, and affordability levels in all Livermore neighborhoods.
- **Goal LU-8:** Protect the City's investments in public property and preserve public lands for the use of the whole community.
 - **Policy LU-8.5: Public Uses.** Acquire property for public uses such as housing, open space, utilities and infrastructure, and cultural and civic facilities.
 - **Policy LU-8.6: Support for Housing.** Consider residential development on quasi-public sites such as schools, places of worship, philanthropic organizations, and other facilities, consistent with the mission of these organizations and considering compatibility with surrounding land uses.

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Specifically, proposed Policies LU-1.2 and LU-3.1 would require the City to provide for a range of housing types, sizes, and affordability levels and Policies LU-8.5 and LU-8.6 would encourage the City to acquire property for public uses, such as housing, and allow residential development on quasi-public sites.

The proposed Project is anticipated to result in a net increase in density and utilization of infill or underutilized sites in existing urban areas. Therefore, displacement of people or housing would be temporary as redevelopment occurs. While the proposed General Plan 2045 focuses on infill development which may occur as redevelopment, identified infill areas are predominantly non-residential, and the proposed Project does not call for any large-scale development that would result in substantial displacement of existing housing. The scale of temporary removal of housing would be typical for urban development projects. Further, redevelopment in the EIR Study Area would occur largely on sites that are underutilized and/or with older structures that are past their useful life, and small levels of displacement that may occur would be addressed through compliance with the LMC and the proposed General Plan goals and policies. Therefore, any potential displacement of persons in the EIR Study Area would not be substantial, and the impact would be **less than significant**.

3.14.5 Cumulative Impact Analysis

The following discussion considers the EIR Study Area's projected growth as it relates to the projected growth in ABAG/MTC's Plan Bay Area 2050 and the potential displacement of people or housing requiring the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, including outside of the EIR Study Area.

Would the project have a cumulative effect related to unplanned population growth or displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Less than significant. As shown in Table 3.14-1, Plan Bay Area 2050 forecasts a 54 percent increase in households and a 36 percent increase in jobs in Alameda County between 2015 and 2050. Under the proposed Project, the projected housing unit growth of 50 percent is slightly below the anticipated countywide increase of 54 percent, and the projected employment growth of 10 percent is substantially below the countywide forecast of 36 percent.¹ The RHNA allocation for each Bay Area city is consistent with the forecasted development pattern from Plan Bay Area 2050. Plan Bay Area 2050 aggregates forecast growth into a series of 34 "superdistricts"—Livermore is part of Superdistrict 15, East Alameda County, which also

¹ Although the forecast years differ from the proposed Project buildout horizon period (2023 existing conditions to 2045 buildout), the regional plan establishes the overall magnitude of growth anticipated within the County.

includes Pleasanton, Dublin, and the eastern portion of unincorporated Alameda County. This superdistrict is projected to grow by 60,000 households for a total of 132,000 households by 2050 (interim year forecasts are not provided). In addition, as detailed under impact discussion (a), the proposed Project provides sufficient residential land capacity to accommodate multiple projected RHNA cycles. A total of 31,005 units for the proposed Project and the surrounding jurisdictions' 2023-2031 RHNA would be around half of the forecasted total growth of 60,000 households, and future RHNA cycles within the buildout horizon would also be accommodated based on the RHNA for the 6th RHNA cycle.² In addition, proposed General Plan 2045 Policy LU-19.3, and similar policies for the other jurisdictions, would ensure coordination of regional planning efforts to plan for future growth.

While the proposed Project would accommodate projected population, housing, and job growth in the EIR Study Area, this growth would not represent unplanned population growth for which inadequate planning has occurred. The incremental contribution of the proposed Project to regional growth is consistent with the scale and distribution of growth anticipated in regional planning documents and local RHNA allocations. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to cumulative population and housing growth would not be cumulatively considerable.

The general plans and other planning documents prepared by cities in the region, including Pleasanton and Dublin, would include land use plans that comply with State law and that would accommodate the existing and forecasted population, similar to the long-range planning guidance included as part of the proposed General Plan 2045. Consistent with State law, these planning documents would be required to provide adequate housing to accommodate forecasted numbers of people within the jurisdiction, and displaced housing, if any, would be replaced primarily within the jurisdiction, as required by State law. As discussed under impact discussion (b), the proposed Project does not call for any large-scale development that would be considered to result in substantial displacement of housing. The proposed Project is anticipated to result in a net increase in density and utilization of infill or underutilized sites in existing urban areas, where the scale of temporary removal of housing would be typical for urban development projects. The increased housing capacity allowed under the proposed Project would improve housing supply and reduce regional housing pressure that can contribute to displacement.

Implementation of the proposed Project would not induce a substantial amount of unplanned population growth or growth for which inadequate planning has occurred, or displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The proposed General Plan 2045 goals and policies would provide adequate planning to accommodate the proposed new increase in growth in the EIR

² 16,610 units (growth under the proposed Project) + 5,965 units (Pleasanton RHNA) + 3,719 units (Dublin RHNA) + 4,711 units (unincorporated Alameda County, as a whole) = 31,005 units

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Study Area. As such, cumulative development would not induce substantial unplanned population growth, either directly or indirectly and cumulative or result in the displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, and cumulative impacts would be impacts would be **less than significant**.

3.14.6 References

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