

4.11 PUBLIC SERVICES

This section characterizes existing and proposed public services, including police protection and fire protection, and evaluates changes to the physical environment that may result from the expansion of such services in response to increased demand from the proposed project. Impacts associated with the capacity of the domestic water system to provide adequate fire protection are evaluated in Section 4.13, Utilities.

Questionnaires were sent to public service providers requesting information on current service levels in the proposed project area. The analysis in this section is based on the responses to the questionnaires submitted to the providers. In some instances, formal correspondence also included telephone conversations, as noted.

4.11.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

4.11.1.1 POLICE PROTECTION

The El Cajon Police Department (PD) provides law enforcement services to the City of El Cajon. The PD is structured into a number of divisions including patrol, traffic enforcement, animal control, records, investigations, special enforcement, reserves and various volunteer groups. The patrol division provides the primary base for all law enforcement services for the City. The nearest police station is located at 100 Fletcher Parkway in El Cajon and is approximately 2.5 miles from the project site. The PD has approximately 119 sworn officers, 70 support staff, and 65 marked vehicles. The criteria for determining response time can vary between jurisdictions and there is no consistent industry standard for determining this figure. As of January 2008, the average response time for emergency calls was approximately nine minutes and 25 minutes for non-emergency calls.

The City is divided into five geographic areas (“beats”) and officers are assigned to a specific beat. The officers work throughout the City wherever they are needed; however, they are responsible for handling crimes within their beat.

The El Cajon PD has four sworn officers assigned to the high school as School Resource Officers. The PD also has two full-time sworn officers to the D.A.R.E. Program. The Bike Team also operates out of CPD and can address many community needs through their unique brand of transportation.

The El Cajon PD was the first in San Diego County to implement the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program in 1997, which is the leading community-oriented project for the department. There are currently nearly 100 communities among El Cajon's nearly 900 apartment buildings. CPD started the Crime Free Motel/Hotel Program in 2002, and are currently working on the Crime Free Mobile-Housing Program. Collectively, all these programs will be known as the “Crime Free Programs.”

The traffic division is responsible for the reduction of vehicle and pedestrian accidents, education of the public through enforcement, and the investigation of collisions. In addition the traffic division is responsible for DUI checkpoints, car seat inspections, and assisting with public events.

4.11.1.2 FIRE PROTECTION

Fire Protection and paramedic service for the proposed project site is provided by the El Cajon Fire Department (FD) in cooperation with six surrounding fire agencies which participate in the Heartland Automatic Aid Agreement. The City is currently served by four fire stations. Each of the fire stations is equipped with fire engines, ladder trucks, water trucks, ambulances, rescue response vehicles, fire

investigation equipment, and advanced life support vehicles. The nearest fire station to the project site is Station #9 located on North Marshall Street in El Cajon. The average response time for both emergency and non-emergency calls is eight minutes; however, due to the proximity of the project site to Station #9, the response time would be less than five minutes. The FD utilizes three people per fire engine, three to four people on the ladder trucks, two people on the ambulance, and two people for the response team. Currently, there are no plans to expand the facilities.

The FD has a mission to provide fire fighting services to the community of El Cajon. In addition, the FD has the following specific mission goals:

- To provide and manage resources that ensure effective and efficient caring of life, protection of property and quality public service;
- To partner with the community in the pursuit of raising the quality of life for the citizens of El Cajon;
- To assist and coordinate with other City departments for the purpose of meeting the needs of the community;
- To support members of the City Council and City Administration in providing for the community;
- To support outside agencies involved in the caring and preservation of life and property; and
- To support and adhere to the laws of the El Cajon Municipal Code.

4.11.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

4.11.2.1 STATE

State Fire Regulations

State fire regulations are set forth in Sections 13000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code, which include regulations concerning building standards (as also set forth in the California Building Code), fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms, high-rise building and childcare facility standards, and fire suppression training. The State Fire Marshal enforces these regulations and building standards in all state-owned buildings, state-occupied buildings, and state institutions throughout California.

4.11.3 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The following impact significant threshold is based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines:

- The proposed project would have a significant effect on the environment if the demand for police services and fire protection would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for police protection and fire protection.

4.11.4 ISSUE 1 – POLICE PROTECTION

Would the proposed project's demand for police capacity result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for police protection?

4.11.4.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Personal communication with the El Cajon Police Department (Holly Faulk, Senior Fiscal Analyst 7/7/08) indicated that current police capacity would be able to serve the project site adequately and no negative impact on service coverage is anticipated. Currently, construction is underway for a new five-story police headquarters, which will replace the police headquarters located on Fletcher Parkway. The new building will be located on Magnolia Avenue, approximately three miles from the project site and is scheduled to be completed in 2011. Therefore, no impact to police services would occur.

4.11.4.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACT

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur.

4.11.4.3 MITIGATION, MONITORING, AND REPORTING

Because the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to police services, no mitigation measures are provided.

4.11.5 ISSUE 2 – FIRE PROTECTION

Would the proposed project's demand for fire protection result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection?

4.11.5.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Personal communication with Monica Zech (Public Information Officer, 7/7/08) of the El Cajon FD indicated that the proposed project would not result in the need for new or physically altered FD facilities. The FD would be able to serve the project site adequately with fire and emergency services. In addition, the proposed project would not physically interfere with the implementation of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Therefore, no impact to fire and emergency services would occur.

4.11.5.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACT

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur.

4.11.5.3 MITIGATION, MONITORING, AND REPORTING

Because the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to fire and emergency services, no mitigation measures are provided.