

4.8 PUBLIC SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

This section describes potential project impacts on public services (fire protection services, police services, and schools).

Unlike utility services, public services are provided to the community as a whole, usually from a central location or from a defined set of facilities. The resource base for delivery of services, including the physical service delivery mechanism, is financed on a community-wide basis, usually from a unified or integrated financial system. The service delivery can be provided by a city, county, service district, or other special district. In this case, the City of Sunnyvale fully funds the Department of Public Safety, which provides fire protection and police services within city limits. Local school districts fund and operate public schools in Sunnyvale.

Usually new development will create an incremental increase in the demand for public services. The amount of the demand will vary widely, depending on both the nature of the development (residential vs. industrial, for instance) and the type of services, as well as on the specific characteristics of the development (such as senior housing vs. family housing).

The impact of a particular project on public services and facilities is generally a fiscal impact. By increasing the demand for a type of service, a project could cause an eventual increase in the cost of providing the service (more personnel hours to patrol an area, additional fire equipment needed to service a tall building, etc.). These impacts are real but are economic and fiscal, not environmental.

CEQA does not require an analysis of fiscal impacts unless the increased demand triggers the need for a new facility (such as a new fire station or school), since the new facility would have a physical impact on the environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

FIRE PROTECTION AND POLICE SERVICES

The City of Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety (DPS) provides fire protection and police services. The DPS maintains a staff of 197 officers, all of whom train and work in both police and fire (City of Sunnyvale, 2013b). The officer total is at a historic low level; the previous high level was 232 officers (Plecque, 2013).

The City of Sunnyvale participates in a mutual aid program with neighboring cities, including Mountain View, Santa Clara, and San Jose. Through this program, should Sunnyvale need additional assistance, one or more mutual aid cities would provide assistance in whatever capacity was needed (City of Sunnyvale, 2008).

Existing Fire Stations and Response

The DPS Fire Services Bureau has six fire stations. Their apparatus includes two aerial ladder trucks, nine fire engines, and one specialty rescue-hazardous materials vehicle (City of Sunnyvale, 2013b).

Fire Station No. 6, located at 1282 North Lawrence Station Road approximately 1.5 miles northeast of the project sites, would be the first to respond to calls from the Raintree site. Fire Station No. 2, located at 795 Arques Avenue approximately 1.4 miles southeast, would be the first to respond to calls from the Sares Regis site. Both project sites are located at the far edge of their respective response districts, so extended response times to the project sites could be anticipated (City of Sunnyvale, 2013b).

Existing Police Facilities and Response

The DPS Police Services Bureau has its headquarters at 700 All America Way in Sunnyvale. The city is divided into six beats, and the project sites are located within Beat 2.

It is anticipated that the response time to the project sites would be within the current DPS response time goals (City of Sunnyvale, 2013b). However, the Police Services Bureau has raised concerns about increasing traffic congestion in the area interfering with police response (Plecque, 2013). (See further discussion in Section 4.10, Transportation, of this EIR.)

Existing Emergency Access to Project Sites

Access to the Sares Regis site is provided at the terminus of East Weddell Drive. In addition, as discussed in Chapter 3, Project Description, of this EIR, in 1979 the City of Sunnyvale abandoned a portion of a public street (Lakehaven Drive) that ran from east to west and ended at the eastern boundary of the Sares Regis site. At the time of abandonment, the City reserved rights to use the former street area for emergency vehicle access (EVA) as well as bicycle and pedestrian access. This easement area extends through an adjacent residential development. An existing gate located in the project site's eastern perimeter wall provides pedestrian access to this easement area.

The Raintree site currently has access via driveways on East Weddell Drive.

SCHOOLS

The project sites are located within the Sunnyvale School District and the Fremont Union High School District. Students from the neighborhood surrounding the project sites typically attend the following schools:

- Lakewood Elementary School, located at 750 Lakechime Drive approximately 2 miles northeast of the project sites (via East Weddell Drive, North Fair Oaks Avenue, Tasman Drive, North Lawrence Expressway, Lakebird Drive, and Silverlake Drive). This school is operated by the Sunnyvale School District.

- Columbia Middle School, located at 739 Morse Avenue approximately 1 mile southwest of the project sites (via East Weddell Drive, North Fair Oaks Avenue, and East Ahwanee Avenue). This school is operated by the Sunnyvale School District.
- Fremont High School, located at 1279 Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road approximately 4.5 miles south of the project sites (via East Weddell Drive, Ross Drive, and North Mathilda Avenue). This school is operated by the Fremont Union High School District.

Lakewood Elementary School has an existing (2011) enrollment of 500 students (Enrollment Projection Consultants, 2011), and the school's existing capacity is 572 students (Williams, 2013). The school therefore has capacity to accept an additional 72 students. Enrollment at the school is expected to increase by 54 students by 2016 (Enrollment Projection Consultants, 2011).

Columbia Middle School has an existing (2011) enrollment of 817 students (Enrollment Projection Consultants, 2011), and the school's existing capacity is 852 students (Williams, 2013). The school therefore has capacity to accept an additional 35 students. Enrollment at the school is expected to increase by 42 students by 2016 (Enrollment Projection Consultants, 2011).

Fremont High School has capacity for 1,931 students. For the 2013-2014 school year, the projected maximum enrollment is 2,040 students. The high school will therefore operate 109 students overcapacity. Enrollment at the high school is projected to increase steadily and reach 2,752 students by 2020 (FUHSD, 2013). The Fremont Union High School District is working to build new classrooms at several of its schools, including 15 new classrooms at Fremont High School that are scheduled to open by the fall of 2015. Current expansion plans are not expected to keep up with district-wide enrollment, however (Crutchfield, 2013).

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

SUNNYVALE GENERAL PLAN

The Sunnyvale General Plan contains the following relevant goals and policies (City of Sunnyvale, 2011):

GOAL HE-6 – Sustainable Neighborhoods: Maintain sustainable neighborhoods with quality housing, infrastructure and open space that fosters neighborhood character and the health of residents.

Policy HE-6.2: Promote neighborhood vitality by providing adequate community facilities, infrastructure, landscaping and open space, parking, and public health and safety within new and existing neighborhoods.

GOAL SN-3 – Safe and Secure City: Ensure a safe and secure environment for people and property in the community by providing effective public safety response and prevention and education services.

Policy SN-3.1: Provide rapid and timely response to all emergencies.

Policy SN-3.5: Facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

GOAL SN-5 – Effective Fire Service Response System: Provide a fire service response system that will control the spread of fire in buildings and other properties and maintain minimal casualties and property loss from fire and other related emergencies.

Policy SN-5.1: Assure that equipment and facilities are provided and maintained to meet reasonable standards of safety, dependability and compatibility with fire service operations.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

As a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, state, tribal, and local governments are required to develop a hazard mitigation plan. The City of Sunnyvale has participated with Santa Clara County in updating the County's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), which is an annex to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Santa Clara County LHMP sets forth mitigation strategies for flooding, earthquakes, wildfires, droughts, and other hazards (City of Sunnyvale, 2013a).

School Impact Fees

Pursuant to California Education Code Section 17620(a)(1), the governing board at any school district is authorized to levy a fee, charge, dedication, or other requirement against any construction within the boundaries of the district, for the purpose of funding the construction or reconstruction of school facilities. The standard fees are currently set at \$3.20 per square foot of residential development and \$0.51 per square foot of commercial or industrial development. The Sunnyvale School District currently levies fees of \$1.98 per square foot of residential development and \$0.32 per square foot of commercial or industrial development (Williams, 2013). The Fremont Union High School District (FUHSD) currently levies fees of \$1.13 per square foot of residential development and \$0.18 per square foot of commercial development for projects in the Sunnyvale School District (FUHSD, 2012).

As provided in California Government Code Section 65996, the payment of school impact fees is deemed to fully mitigate the impacts of new development on school services.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines provides that a project would have a significant impact on public services if it 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 any of the public services:

- Fire protection;
- Police protection; or
- Schools.

For fire protection and police services, Appendix G further provides that a project would have a significant impact if it would:

- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

PROJECT IMPACTS

Fire Protection and Police Services

Impact SERVICES-1: The projects would increase the demand for fire protection and police services, but not to the extent that new or physically altered fire stations or police facilities would be needed. (LTS)

The new resident population created by the East Weddell Residential Projects would generate demand for fire protection and police services that would exceed the demand from existing office and R&D uses on the project sites. This new demand would not be large enough to require new or physically altered fire stations or police facilities, however. Increased demand on police service would likely be due to increases in traffic collisions and crime rates (Plecque, 2013).

The combined dwelling unit total and resident population for the two projects could range from 670 units housing approximately 1,669 residents (under the two Applicant Proposed Scenarios) to 938 units housing approximately 2,336 residents (under the two Full Buildout Scenarios). The City of Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety (DPS) would expect this population increase to generate roughly 1,500 to 1,600 calls for police and fire service per year (Plecque, 2013).

The following discussion reviews the number of dwelling units and projected resident population for each project under each scenario. (The population estimates assume 2.49 persons per household; see Chapter 3, Project Description.)

Sares Regis Applicant Proposed Scenario. The proposed 205 dwelling units would house an estimated 511 residents.

Sares Regis Full Buildout Scenario. The anticipated 259 dwelling units would house an estimated 645 residents.

Raintree Applicant Proposed Scenario. The proposed 465 dwelling units would house an estimated 1,158 residents.

Raintree Full Buildout Scenario. The anticipated 679 dwelling units would house an estimated 1,691 residents.

Mitigation Measure SERVICES-1: The environmental impact would be less than significant, and no mitigation is necessary. (LTS)

- Applies to Sares Regis Applicant Proposed Scenario:
- Applies to Sares Regis Full Buildout Scenario:
- Applies to Raintree Applicant Proposed Scenario:
- Applies to Raintree Full Buildout Scenario:

Impact SERVICES-2: The projects would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. (LTS)

The projects would not interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The following discussion reviews emergency access provisions under each scenario. Emergency access is reviewed in more detail in Section 4.10, Transportation, of this EIR.

Sares Regis Applicant Proposed Scenario. Under the proposed Sares Regis project, the northern and eastern edges of the site would be designed to provide emergency vehicle access to the perimeter of the buildings. The City's existing Lakehaven Avenue emergency access easement would be expanded to provide emergency fire truck access across the easement and into the site (see Figure 3-7, Sares Regis Circulation Plan, in Chapter 3, Project Description, of this EIR). Pedestrians and bicycles could also use this easement for access to the John W. Christian Greenbelt, Lakehaven Drive, and a bicycle and pedestrian bridge over Highway 101 that begins approximately 300 feet to the east of the project site.

Sares Regis Full Buildout Scenario. Emergency access under the Full Buildout Scenario is assumed to be generally the same as that described for the Applicant Proposed Scenario.

Raintree Applicant Proposed Scenario. Under the proposed Raintree project, emergency vehicle access would be provided off East Weddell Drive and around the perimeter of the site. Emergency vehicles would have access to the northern portion of the site (Parcel A) via courtyard areas between buildings (see Figure 3-4, Raintree Site Plan, in Chapter 3, Project Description, of this EIR).

Raintree Full Buildout Scenario. Emergency access under the Full Buildout Scenario is assumed to be generally the same as that described for the Applicant Proposed Scenario.

Mitigation Measure 2: The environmental impact would be less than significant, and no mitigation is necessary. (LTS)

- Applies to Sares Regis Applicant Proposed Scenario:
- Applies to Sares Regis Full Buildout Scenario:
- Applies to Raintree Applicant Proposed Scenario:
- Applies to Raintree Full Buildout Scenario:

Schools

Impact SERVICES-3: Students from the projects would increase enrollment at Sunnyvale School District and Fremont Union High School District schools, but not to the extent that new or physically altered school facilities would be needed. (LTS)

The new resident population created by the East Weddell Residential Projects would include students who would attend schools operated by the Sunnyvale School District and Fremont Union High School District. This new enrollment would not be large enough to require new or physically altered school facilities, however.

The combined dwelling unit total for the two projects could range from 670 units (under the two Applicant Proposed Scenarios) to 938 units (under the two Full Buildout Scenarios). The projected student population¹ would range from 47 elementary school students, 13 middle school students, and 13 high school students (under the two Applicant Proposed Scenarios) to 66 elementary school students, 19 middle school students, and 19 high school students (under the two Full Buildout Scenarios).

Existing capacities at Lakewood Elementary School and Columbia Middle School would be adequate to serve this additional enrollment. Lakewood Elementary School has capacity to accept an additional 72 students and therefore could accept the 47 to 66 elementary school students expected from the projects. Columbia Middle School has capacity to accept an additional 35 students and therefore could accept the 13 to 19 middle school students expected from the projects.

At Fremont High School, which currently operates overcapacity, the enrollment increase of 13 to 19 students expected from the projects would require the addition of classes and teachers, but no new or physically altered school facilities (Crutchfield, 2013).

The following discussion reviews the number of dwelling units and projected student population for each project under each scenario.

Sares Regis Applicant Proposed Scenario. The proposed 205 dwelling units would house an estimated 14 elementary school students, 4 middle school students, and 4 high school students.

Sares Regis Full Buildout Scenario. The anticipated 259 dwelling units would house an estimated 18 elementary school students, 5 middle school students, and 5 high school students.

Raintree Applicant Proposed Scenario. The proposed 465 dwelling units would house an estimated 33 elementary school students, 9 middle school students, and 9 high school students.

¹ Student population estimates are based on the following student generation rates for multi-family residential development: 0.07 Kindergarten-Grade 5 student per dwelling unit, 0.02 Grade 5-8 student per dwelling unit, and 0.02 Grade 9-12 student per dwelling unit. The total Kindergarten-Grade 12 student generation rate would be 0.11 student per dwelling unit (City of Sunnyvale, 2008).

Raintree Full Buildout Scenario. The anticipated 679 dwelling units would house an estimated 48 elementary school students, 14 middle school students, and 14 high school students.

Mitigation Measure SERVICES-3: The environmental impact would be less than significant, and no mitigation is necessary. As a condition of project approval, the project applicants would be required to pay standard school impact fees. As provided by state law, the payment of these fees is deemed to fully mitigate the impacts of new development on school services. (LTS)

- Applies to Sares Regis Applicant Proposed Scenario:
- Applies to Sares Regis Full Buildout Scenario:
- Applies to Raintree Applicant Proposed Scenario:
- Applies to Raintree Full Buildout Scenario:

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Fire Protection and Police Services

For fire protection and police services, the geographic scope for assessing cumulative impacts is the area within the Sunnyvale city limits, which is served by the City of Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety (DPS).

The proposed East Weddell Residential Projects, in conjunction with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, could result in a cumulative increase in demand for fire protection and police services. As discussed in the above project-specific analysis, however, service demand from the proposed projects would not affect DPS services enough to create the need for new or expanded facilities. The projects would be subject to Fire Code requirements and other standard requirements for features such as emergency access, signage, lighting, and security. Other projects in the Sunnyvale city limits would also be subject to these requirements. The proposed projects therefore would not result in or contribute to any significant cumulative fire protection or police service impacts.

Schools

For schools, the geographic scope for assessing cumulative impacts is the area within the boundaries of the Sunnyvale School District and Fremont Union High School District, and specifically the areas served by Lakewood Elementary School, Columbia Middle School, and Fremont High School.

The proposed East Weddell Residential Projects, in conjunction with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, are likely to result in a cumulative increase in student population that would create the need for new and expanded school facilities. The cumulative increase in demand would result from the East Weddell Residential Projects along with existing and future residential development in the area. Currently, approximately 160 additional dwelling units are expected to be developed within a half-mile radius of the East Weddell Residential Projects.

As discussed in the above project-specific analysis, demand from the proposed East Weddell Residential Projects alone would not result in a significant impact on existing schools or create the need for new or expanded facilities. The project applicants would pay school impact fees in accordance with state requirements, as would other residential projects within the school district boundaries.

In the Sunnyvale School District, enrollment increases resulting from the projects, in combination with other past, present, and foreseeable projects, are likely to create the need for new or physically altered school facilities. Remaining capacity at the two schools serving the projects (Lakewood Elementary School and Columbia Middle School) is limited, and other schools in the district are already operating overcapacity. The district has added 41 classrooms to its schools since 2005 and expects to add more classrooms as enrollment continues to increase (Williams, 2013). The projects would therefore contribute to significant cumulative impacts on Sunnyvale School District schools. As provided by state law, however, payment of school impact fees is deemed to fully mitigate the impacts of new development on school services. The projects' contribution to cumulative impacts on Sunnyvale School District schools would therefore be reduced to a less-than-significant level through payment of school impact fees.

In the Fremont Union High School District (FUHSD), enrollment increases resulting from the projects, in combination with other past, present, and foreseeable projects, are expected to cause the need for new or physically altered school facilities. As noted under "Environmental Setting" above, 15 new classrooms at Fremont High School are scheduled to open by the fall of 2015, but current expansion plans are not expected to keep up with district-wide enrollment. The projects would therefore contribute to significant cumulative impacts on FUHSD schools. As provided by state law, however, payment of school impact fees is deemed to fully mitigate the impacts of new development on school services. The projects' contribution to cumulative impacts on FUHSD schools would therefore be reduced to a less-than-significant level through payment of school impact fees.

REFERENCES

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