

**Section 5.12**  
**SHERIFF SERVICES**

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## 5.12 SHERIFF SERVICES

This section provides an analysis of police services, which is based on information provided by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Sheriff's Department) and the California Highway Patrol (CHP). The Sheriff's Department maintains ultimate review and approval authority over aspects of the proposed development that relate to police protection, and may identify further recommendations and/or requirements.

### 5.12.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

#### LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

The Santa Clarita Valley Station of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is responsible for providing general law enforcement to the City of Santa Clarita through an on-going contract between the two agencies. The contract between the City of Santa Clarita and the County of Los Angeles is renewed annually and currently extends until June 2009. Funding for the Sheriff's Department in the City is provided by the City under the terms of the contract.

The Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff Station would be responsible for providing general law enforcement to the project area. The Sheriff Station is located near the intersection of Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Boulevard, at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway in Valencia. The Sheriff Station maintains a staff of 165 sworn deputies, and serves an area of 656 square miles and a population of approximately 220,000 (including the City itself).<sup>1</sup> The Sheriff's Department has an ideal population ratio of one deputy per 1,000 residents. With current staffing of 165 sworn deputies currently assigned, the existing ratio is 1 deputy per 1,333 residents. Equipment and services provided to the City include 24-hour designated County cars, helicopters, search and rescue, mounted posse, and emergency operation centers.<sup>2</sup>

The Sheriff's Department also conducts Search and Rescue operations through its Santa Clarita Valley station. Search and Rescue operations conducted by the Sheriff's Department are generally conducted in mountainous terrain (i.e., downed aircraft or lost hikers). The Santa Clarita Station Search and Rescue team uses the station's helicopter and has access to the Antelope Valley station's helicopter. Mutual aid exists with other Search and Rescue teams located both within and outside of Los Angeles County, and are organized through the State's Office of Emergency Services. Search and Rescue operations are funded through the Reserve Forces Bureau and private sources. Urban search and rescue operations (i.e., rescues from building collapse), are performed by the County Fire Department.

The performance goals for the police services program as outlined in the City's 2007-2008 budget include:

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<sup>1</sup> Per phone communications with Court Miller, Operations Sergeant, County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, Santa Clarita Valley Station, September 5, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Per written communications with Patti A. Minutello, Captain of the Santa Clarita Valley Station, on March 3, 2004 and confirmed April 21, 2005.



- ◆ Work to maintain neighborhoods and business communities free from the blight of graffiti;
- ◆ Partner with the City to combat gang related and juvenile crimes with recreational opportunities, intervention strategies, and traditional enforcement, and make extensive use of the Teen Court and Community Court programs;
- ◆ Work to increase resident safety and awareness to prevent auto theft, car burglaries, and other crime; and
- ◆ Reduce collisions through officer enforcement and use of the red light photo enforcement program.

The Sheriff's Department has established an optimal response time for services of 10 minutes or less for emergency response incidents (a crime that is presently occurring and is a life or death situation), 20 minutes or less for priority incidents (a crime or incident that is currently occurring but which is not a life or death situation) and 60 minutes or less for non-emergency responses (a crime that has already occurred and is not a life or death situation).<sup>3</sup> These response times represent the range of time required to handle a service call, which is measured from the time a call is received until the time a patrol car arrives at the incident scene. Response time is variable particularly because the nearest responding patrol car may be located anywhere within the station's patrol area, and not necessarily responding from the station itself.

### **STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE/EVACUATION PLANS**

After the 1993 Oakland fire, the State of California passed legislation authorizing the State's Office of Emergency Services to prepare a Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) program which sets forth measures by which a jurisdiction handles emergency disasters. By December 1996, each jurisdiction was required to show the Office of Emergency Services that it is in compliance with SEMS through a number of measures, including having an up-to-date emergency management plan, which would include an emergency evacuation plan. Non-compliance with SEMS can result in the State withholding disaster relief from the non-complying jurisdiction in the event of an emergency disaster.

The California Office of Emergency Services coordinates an emergency organizational network of local Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) in the State's cities, regional EOCs within each county, and the California Office of Emergency Services. The regional office of the California Office of Emergency Services is located in Los Alamitos, and the Los Angeles County's EOC is located in downtown Los Angeles. The County Office of Emergency Management has prepared the County's Multi-Hazard Functional Plan, which details the coordination of County agencies during and after a catastrophic event and establishes the framework for the mutual aid agreements with the CHP, and Federal, State, and other local governments in the region. It also serves as the emergency management plan (including emergency evacuation plan) for the entire County. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted a revised plan on February 17, 1998.

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<sup>3</sup> Per phone communications with Court Miller, Operations Sergeant, County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, Santa Clarita Valley Station, September 5, 2007.



### **CITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE/EVACUATION PLANS**

The City of Santa Clarita has prepared an SEMS, which is responsible for emergency operations within City boundaries. The Santa Clarita City Manager is the Director of Emergency Services for the City. The primary emergency operations center for the City of Santa Clarita is City Hall, located at 23920 Valencia Boulevard. A secondary emergency operations center (should City Hall be unavailable) is the Transit Maintenance Facility located at Constellation Road.<sup>4</sup>

The City of Santa Clarita serves as the EOC for the Santa Clarita Valley area. The Santa Clarita EOC works in cooperation and coordination with local and regional offices of the California Office of Emergency Services and the Los Angeles County Fire and Sheriff's Departments to coordinate community action in the event of a disaster, such as fire suppression, search and rescue, evacuation, post-disaster safety inspections, and clean-up efforts in its service area, which includes the City of Santa Clarita. The City's EOC can be entirely self-sustaining during disaster operations.<sup>5</sup>

### **CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL**

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) provides traffic regulation enforcement for unincorporated Santa Clarita Valley and surrounding areas from its station located at 28648 The Old Road, near the interchange of Interstate 5 and State Route 126. The CHP patrols a service area of approximately 700 square miles, which includes Interstate 5, State Route 126, State Route 14, and all unincorporated areas and roadways. This service area extends westerly to the Ventura County line, east to Agua Dulce, north to State Route 138 (and along State Route 138 to Avenue 22 East), and south to State Route 118.

The primary responsibility of the CHP is to patrol State Highways and County roadways in the previously identified service area, enforce traffic regulations, respond to traffic accidents, and to provide service and assistance for disabled vehicles. The CHP also has a major role in the State's enhanced anti-terror activities.<sup>6</sup> The CHP's overall level of staffing is about 10,700 positions. The department is comprised of uniformed (sworn) and non-uniformed (non-sworn) personnel, with uniformed personnel accounting for approximately 7,300 positions, or 67 percent, of total staff.<sup>7</sup>

In the Santa Clarita Valley area, the CHP maintains a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. The Newhall CHP area is staffed by 88 uniform and nine non-uniform personnel.<sup>8</sup> The Los Angeles and Orange County areas are served on a limited basis by a helicopter and a fixed wing aircraft based out of Fullerton Airport.

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<sup>4</sup> Per information from the Riverpark Draft EIR, telephone interview with Donna Nuzzi, Emergency Services Coordinator, City of Santa Clarita, November 20, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Analysis of the 2006-2007 Budget Bill*, Legislative Analyst's Office, February 2006.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Officer Espizito, California Highway Patrol, Santa Clarita Valley Station, per phone conversation August 21, 2008.



## 5.12.2 SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLD CRITERIA

The City of Santa Clarita Local CEQA Guidelines (Resolution 05-38) adopted on April 26, 2005, as well as the City's General Plan and Municipal Code serve as the basis for identifying thresholds determining the significance of the environmental effects of a projects. Where thresholds are not specifically identified, the Initial Study checklist contained in Appendix A of this EIR relating to sheriff services and facilities have been utilized to formulate additional significance criteria in this section. Accordingly, a project may create a significant environmental impact if the following occurs:

- ◆ Substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or expanded sheriff and highway patrol protection services or facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives.

The proposed HMNMH Master Plan has been evaluated based on this standard. Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant unavoidable impact.

## 5.12.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### CONSTRUCTION-RELATED SHERIFF IMPACTS

*Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

*Impact Analysis:* During the construction of the proposed HMNMH Master Plan, Sheriff's service requirements on the project site have the potential to increase over existing demands as a result of both increased persons and the presence of buildings and equipment on the project site.

The daytime population would increase due to the presence of construction workers on the project site. This increase in the daytime population would vary due to the type of construction activities being conducted (i.e., site grading, construction of structures, or infrastructure improvements).

There is a potential for increased calls for service to the project site as a result of the increased number of persons at the project site. Due to the presence of building materials, construction equipment, and related temporary office buildings, the potential for vandalism and theft is greater; thereby, increasing Sheriff's calls for service demands for property protection. The calls for Sheriff service could be accommodated by existing staff levels; thus sheriff staffing levels would remain the same, resulting in a less than significant impacts. To ensure that impacts remain at less than significant levels, Mitigation Measure SS1 has been included that would require the hospital to secure private on-site security service during construction of the proposed project.

Slow-moving construction-related traffic on adjacent roadways could reduce optimal traffic flows and could impact sheriff services by delaying emergency vehicles traveling through the area. However, construction-related traffic would not result in a significant impact on sheriff's services or traffic flows because Mitigation Measure SS2 limits construction-related traffic to occur only during



off-peak hours, which would cease upon completion of construction. Therefore, construction-related sheriff impacts would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above.

*Mitigation Measures:*

- SS1** During construction, private security patrols shall be utilized to protect the project site.
- SS2** Construction-related traffic, including all off-site earthmoving operations, shall be limited to between the hours of 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM in order to avoid weekday peak traffic conditions.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

**OPERATIONAL-RELATED SHERIFF IMPACTS**

*Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:* Potentially Significant Impact.

*Impact Analysis:* The County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department would have the responsibility to provide general law enforcement, including traffic control and enforcement, for the project site under the existing contract between the City and the County. While the proposed project would not directly induce population growth, buildout out of the proposed HMNMH Master Plan would generate employment and thereby indirectly increase the population within the City (refer to Section 5.2, Population and Employment). The population increase anticipated with implementation of the project is consistent with growth forecasts. As service levels needs increase due to increased population or other factors affecting the community, the terms of the City's contract is evaluated to determine whether additional Sheriff staff would be needed. Payment of Police Facility Fees, as required under Mitigation Measure SS8, would be used to help pay for additional needed facilities associated with build out of the community.

Potential impacts to Sheriff services could arise as a result of project design, landscape materials, and building orientation. However, with the incorporation of safety design techniques into the project design (refer to Mitigation Measures SS3 through SS8) and payment of applicable fees, potentially significant security impacts to persons and property would be reduced to a less than significant level. Therefore, operational-related sheriff impacts would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above.

*Mitigation Measures:*

- SS3** As final site and building plans are submitted to the City for approval in the future, Sheriff's Department design requirements which reduce demands for service and ensure adequate public safety (such as those pertaining to site access, site security lighting), shall be incorporated into building designs.



- SS4** Project design shall landscape the project site with low-growing groundcover and shade trees, rather than a predominance of shrubs that could conceal potential criminal activity around buildings and parking areas.
- SS5** Project design shall provide lighting around and throughout the development to enhance crime prevention and enforcement efforts.
- SS6** Project design shall provide clearly visible (during the day and night) address signs and/or building numbers for easy identification during emergencies.
- SS7** Project design shall provide visibility of doors and windows from the street and between buildings.
- SS8** Concurrent with the issuance of building permits, the project applicant shall participate in the Police Facility Fee Program to the satisfaction of the City of Santa Clarita.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

### **EMERGENCY RESPONSE/EVACUATION PLANS**

*Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

*Impact Analysis:* The City's Emergency Preparedness Plan (Plan) details the City's specific responsibilities before, during and after an emergency. The Plan is in compliance with the State Emergency Services Plan. The proposed development would not impair or physically interfere with the Plan. The Plan does not identify any emergency access routes, however, McBean Parkway is a major arterial through the City and provides access to Interstate 5 for emergency evacuation. Additionally, it is anticipated that traffic flow would be temporarily impacted along McBean Parkway during construction of the proposed HMNMH Master Plan. With implementation of Mitigation Measure SS2, construction-related traffic would be limited to off-peak hours, and this impact would cease upon completion of construction. Any street closures or temporary obstruction would be subject to all emergency access standards and requirements, and/or reviewed by the Los Angeles County Fire Department, thus, reducing impacts to a less than significant level. Impacts in this regard would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria.

*Mitigation Measures:* Refer to Mitigation Measure SS2. No additional mitigation measures are required.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

### **CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL (CHP) SERVICES**

*Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

*Impact Analysis:* Upon buildout of the proposed HMNMH Master Plan, demands for CHP services on the I-5 freeway and at the I-5/McBean Parkway on- and off-ramps would increase due to



vehicular traffic generated by the project. According to Caltrans' *Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies*, project volumes that result in less than 100 peak hour trips, as well as freeway conditions that do not exhibit noticeable delay, do not require preparation of freeway mainline traffic studies. The traffic study prepared for the project evaluated I-5, north and south of McBean Parkway and determined that project volumes are less than 100 trips during peak hours. In addition, this section of the I-5 freeway was the subject of a recent Caltrans study which demonstrated that with planned construction of truck climbing lanes and HOV lanes, the freeway will operate at acceptable levels of service for future cumulative conditions that include the project's traffic. Through increased revenues generated by the proposed project, funding for additional staffing and equipment would be available to the CHP and would be allocated by the State CHP office to the Santa Clarita Valley Station to meet future demands. Based on the CHP's anticipation to maintain this same level of service, no significant project-related impacts on CHP services are anticipated. As such, CHP impacts would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above and impacts would be less than significant.

*Mitigation Measures:* No mitigation measures are required.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

## 5.12.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### SHERIFF AND CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL SERVICES

*Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

*Impact Analysis:* Cumulative population growth attributable to the proposed project and related projects would decrease the existing level of service of the Sheriff's Department in the City and unincorporated areas in the Santa Clarita Valley. However, as the proposed project and related projects are developed, tax revenues from property and sales taxes would be generated and accrued by the City of Santa Clarita and Los Angeles County, as applicable. A portion of these revenues would then be allocated, in accordance with the City of Santa Clarita and County of Los Angeles contractual service agreement, to maintain staffing and equipment levels for the Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Substation in response to related demands. Although the proposed project and related projects would increase demands for Sheriff's services, these service demands can be met through the allocation of revenues collected from the cumulative project developments using existing sources. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated.

Increased revenues generated by the proposed project and related projects via motor vehicle registration fees paid by new on-site residents and businesses would provide funding for additional staffing and equipment for the CHP that could be allocated by the State CHP office to the Santa Clarita Valley Station to meet future demands. Based on the CHP's anticipation to maintain the same level of service, no significant cumulative impacts on CHP services are anticipated. Therefore, cumulative sheriff and CHP impacts would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above.





*Mitigation Measures:* No mitigation measures are required.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

### **EMERGENCY RESPONSE/EVACUATION PLANS**

*Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

*Impact Analysis:* The resident and daytime populations of the cumulative project sites would increase above current levels upon buildout of the proposed project and related projects. These populations would be subject to potential emergencies (e.g., earthquake, fire, etc.). However, all development projects in the Santa Clarita Valley are subject to review and approval by the Los Angeles County Fire Department, which requires that, among other conditions, adequate access exists for emergency vehicles. Given that the proposed project and related cumulative projects would be required to provide adequate emergency vehicle access, cumulative development would not adversely affect or prevent implementation of any emergency response or evacuation plans. As such, impacts would be less than significant in this regard and would not exceed the significance threshold criteria identified above.

*Mitigation Measures:* No mitigation measures are required.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Less Than Significant Impact.

### **5.12.5 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS**

With imposition of the required mitigation measures, implementation of the proposed project would result in less than significant project impacts related to sheriff protection and California Highway Patrol services and facilities during both construction and operation. All other identified impacts were concluded to be at less than significant levels, and did not require mitigation. As such, no significant unavoidable impacts would result from implementation of the Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital Master Plan.