

Section 5.11
FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES





5.11 FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

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

5.11.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Fire protection service is provided to the City of Santa Clarita by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. The project site receives priority fire protection and emergency medical service from Fire Stations 73, 124, and 126. Fire Station 73 is located approximately 2.0 miles southeast of the project site. The station maintains one fire engine and one paramedic squad and is supported by six personnel. The response time to the project site is approximately 4.8 minutes. Fire Station 124 is located at 25870 Hemingway Avenue in Stevenson Ranch, which is approximately 1.9 miles southwest of the project site. The station maintains one fire engine and one paramedic squad, and is supported by five firefighters, two of whom are paramedics. The response time to the project site is approximately 4.6 minutes. Fire Station 126 is located at 26320 Citrus Drive in Santa Clarita, which is also approximately 1.8 miles northeast of the project site. Fire Station 126 maintains an engine company and a quint (combination engine/ladder truck apparatus), for a total staffing of seven personnel. The response time to the project site is approximately 4.8 minutes. Should a significant incident occur, the project site would be served by the resources of the Fire Department.

The level of service provided to areas within the City is determined by the Fire Department. Nationally recognized response time targets for urban areas are five minutes for a basic life support unit (engine company) and eight minutes for an advanced life support unit (paramedic squad). The Fire Department is currently meeting these standards. The average response time in the City of Santa Clarita during 2003 was five minutes and 43 seconds. It should be noted that the City encompasses rural and undeveloped areas as well as urban areas.

The Fire Department annually updates their Five-Year Capital Plan. This plan identifies anticipated facilities that would be constructed during the five-year planning horizon. Funding used for land acquisitions, facility improvements, and funding of new equipment is generated through the Fire Department's Developer Fee Program, while funding used for increases in staffing is generated from local property taxes. As of February 2008, the current fee collected for the Santa Clarita Valley (Fire Department Area of Benefit 2) is \$0.9341 per square foot of new development (includes all land uses), which is collected at the time building permits are issued. However, this developer fee is subject to be updated annually. The applicant is required to pay fees under the County Fire Department Developer Fee Program for land and construction of fire stations, and the full cost of fire fighting equipment.

FIRE CODES AND GUIDELINES

According to the Fire Department, the project site is located within the areas described by the Forester and Fire Warden as a Fire Zone 3. The availability of sufficient on-site water pressure is a basic requirement of the Fire Department. Based upon correspondence with the Fire Department, the fire flow capacity for hydrants within the project site may require up to 5,000 gpm at 20 psi



residual pressure for a five-hour duration.¹ Final fire flows would be based on the size of the buildings, their relationship to other structures, property lines, and the types of construction used.

5.11.2 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 project. Where thresholds are not specifically identified, the Initial Study checklist contained in Appendix A of this EIR relating to fire protection services and facilities has 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 fire 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.

5.11.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

CONSTRUCTION-RELATED FIRE IMPACTS

Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation: Potentially Significant Impact.

Impact Analysis: As discussed in Section 3.0, Project Description, the proposed project is planned to be built over a 15-year period. Buildout of the proposed HMNMH Master Plan involves the net addition of approximately 327,363 square feet of medical office and hospital uses, which includes demolition of the 8,000-square-foot existing Foundation and Administrative Office Building. In addition, the project proposes the development of four parking structures to provide 1,923 spaces and 308 surface parking spaces (totaling 2,231 spaces), and 147 new hospital beds (totaling 368 beds).

Construction activities have the potential to increase fire hazards on-site. However, the City reviews all development projects and requires standard conditions of approval (COA) to mitigate project-related impacts in this regard. The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD), Facilities Development Division (FDD) reviews and approves all plans and specifications for the construction, alteration, and addition to hospital buildings and skilled nursing homes, and observes construction activities to ensure compliance with the provisions of the California Building Standards Code, *Title 24, California Code of Regulations*. This includes plan review of the design details of the architectural, structural, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems. All projects are

¹ Source: Letter correspondence from Davis R. Leininger, Chief, Forestry Division at the Los Angeles County Fire Department. January 27, 2005.



required to comply with applicable State, City, and County code and ordinance requirements for fire protection. The Los Angeles County Fire Department has reviewed the proposed project plans to date. Implementation of Mitigation Measures FS1 through FS3 would reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, construction-related fire impacts would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above.

Mitigation Measures:

- FS1** Concurrent with the issuance of building permits, the project applicant shall participate in the Developer Fee Program to the satisfaction of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department.
- FS2** Adequate access to all buildings on the project site shall be provided and properly maintained for emergency vehicles during the building construction process to the satisfaction of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department.
- FS3** Adequate water availability shall be provided to service construction activities to the satisfaction of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

OPERATIONAL-RELATED FIRE IMPACTS

Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation: Potentially Significant Impact.

Impact Analysis: The Fire Department has stated that although the proposed project would be in proximity to existing fire stations, it would increase the demand on existing fire protection resources in the general area. Additional manpower, equipment, and facilities are needed in the area now. Thus, the project applicant would be required to participate in an appropriate funding mechanism, such as a developer fee or an in-kind consideration in lieu of developer fees, to provide funds for fire protection facilities, which are required by new commercial, industrial, and residential development in an amount proportionate to the demand created by the project. Currently, the developer fee is assessed per square foot of building space, adjusted annually, and is due and payable at the time a building permit is issued. As of February 2008, the LACFD's current standard developer fee is \$0.9341 per square foot of development, which is subject to be updated annually. Furthermore, the proposed HMNMH Master Plan would be reviewed by the Fire Department, at which time the specific developer fee amount due would be determined. Implementation of Mitigation Measures FS4 through FS9 would ensure that operational-related fire service impacts are reduced to a less than significant level. Therefore, operational-related fire impacts would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above.

Mitigation Measures:

- FS4** Every building constructed shall be accessible to Fire Department apparatus by way of access roadways, with an all-weather surface of not less than the prescribed width, unobstructed, clear-to-sky. The edge of the roadway shall be within 150 feet of all portions of the exterior walls when measured by an unobstructed route around the exterior of the building.



- FS5** Commercial development shall require fire flows up to 5,000 gallons per minute at 20 pounds per square inch residual pressure for up to a five-hour duration, unless otherwise deemed appropriate by the Fire Department. Final fire flows shall be based on the size of the buildings, their relationship to other structures, property lines, and types of construction used. Fire hydrant spacing shall be 300 feet and shall meet the following requirements:
- ◆ No portion of lot frontage shall be more than 200 feet via vehicular access from a public fire hydrant.
 - ◆ No portion of a building shall exceed 400 feet via vehicular access from a properly spaced public fire hydrant.
 - ◆ Additional hydrants will be required if hydrant spacing exceeds specified distances.
- FS6** Turning radii shall not be less than 32 feet. This measurement shall be determined at the centerline of the road. A Fire Department approved turning area shall be provided for all driveways exceeding 150 feet in length. All on-site driveways shall provide a minimum unobstructed width of 28 feet. The on-site driveway is to be within 150 feet of all portions of the exterior walls of the first story of any building. The centerline of the access driveway shall be located parallel to and within 30 feet of an exterior wall on one side of the proposed structure.
- FS7** Any access way less than 34 feet in width shall be labeled “Fire Lane” on the final building plans.
- FS8** The entrance to the street/driveway and intermittent spacing distances of 150 feet shall be posted with Fire Department approved signs stating “NO PARKING – FIRE LANE” in three-inch high letters. Driveway labeling is necessary to ensure access for Fire Department use.
- FS9** All proposals for traffic calming measures (speed humps/bumps/cushions, traffic circles, roundabouts, etc.) shall be submitted to the Fire Department for review and approval, prior to issuance of building permit.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.11.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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



Impact Analysis: Future development within the City and surrounding unincorporated areas associated with the proposed project and related projects would be required to pay fees under the County Fire Department Developer Fee Program, as deemed appropriate by the LACFD, which would provide the necessary revenues for new equipment and local fire service facilities. Based on the current LACFD's standard developer fee of \$0.9341 per square foot of development as of February 2008, which is updated annually, the proposed project and related cumulative projects would contribute to maintain adequate fire service (refer to Appendix C for cumulative fire service fee calculations). Furthermore, the proposed project and related cumulative projects are required to meet City/County codes and requirements relative to providing adequate fire protection services to the site during both the construction and operational stages of the project. Additionally, because development projects in the Santa Clarita Valley are subject to review and approval by the LACFD, all developments must meet LACFD's fire flow, fuel modification, and site access requirements to protect developments against structure and wildland fire hazards. Consequently, operation of cumulative projects would not diminish the staffing or the response times of existing fire stations in the Santa Clarita Valley, and would not create a special fire protection problem on the various sites that would result in a decline in existing service levels in the area or pose an unacceptable fire risk to people or structures. Therefore, payment of fees and/or development of new fire facilities, as required by the LACFD, would reduce cumulative fire service impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, cumulative fire impacts would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures FS1 through FS9. No additional mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.11.5 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

With imposition of the mitigation measures, implementation of the proposed project would result in less than significant project and cumulative impacts related to fire protection services and facilities during both construction and operation. As such, no significant unavoidable impacts would result from implementation of the Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital Master Plan.



Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital Master Plan Environmental Impact Report

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