
V. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

D. PUBLIC SERVICES / POLICE PROTECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Manhattan Beach Police Department (MBPD) is the cornerstone for community public safety. The site is served by the MBPD located at 420 15th Street, which has a staff of 96 full-time and 25 part-time employees and volunteers. This includes 63 sworn officers. The current Police Department building was originally constructed in 1958 and was designed to support 58 employees. The total size of the original structure was 10,637 square feet with approximately 10,000 square feet added since construction. The police utilize a modular trailer for office space, and lease office space within the main Post Office. The result is a Police Department that is located in more than one location, which negatively impacts the Department's ability to efficiently and effectively protect and serve the community.¹⁰

The needs assessment prepared for the Police Department has identified a need for approximately 42,000 square feet of space, twice the size of the existing facility. In addition; there is insufficient space for patrol, investigative, traffic and administrative functions, the current facility does not meet current building codes and regulations, or seismic safety codes; and it lacks sufficient and secure parking for visitors, employees and Department vehicles.

According to the MBPD, existing personnel and equipment levels are considered adequate to meet current demands for police service in the City.¹¹ The average response time is approximately two minutes and forty seconds to emergency calls for service. The standard officer to population ratio, maintained by the MBPD, is approximately two officers per 1,000 population. The City of Manhattan Beach's 1997 population was estimated at approximately 34,000. In addition, crime rates in the Manhattan Beach area are classified as "low."

¹⁰ *The City of Manhattan Beach Police Department Fact Sheet at website; [http:// www.ci.manhattan-beach.ca.us/](http://www.ci.manhattan-beach.ca.us/).*

¹¹ *The MBPD, Lieutenant Dale E. Reissig, fax response, April 13, 2000.*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Thresholds of Significance

The proposed project's impact upon public safety would be considered significant if the proposed project substantially increases the on-site population, or provides unsafe design elements into the proposed structures and site plan, to the extent that it would diminish the current level of police protection services provided by the MBPD. The adequacy of police protection is based on the availability of police personnel and equipment, response time, and the MBPD's judgment for project needs (e.g. anticipated crime rate and police activity level) in the area.

Project Impacts

Implementation of the proposed project will result in increased activity on the project site, which could create a greater demand for police protection services. The Civic Center portion of the project will involve reconstructing the existing Police and Fire Department Facilities. Due to the age and condition of the existing structures, as assessed in the Public Facilities Fact Sheet, the Fire Department building (10,568 square feet) and Police Department building (20,000 square feet) will be demolished and reconstructed on-site.¹² The facilities are proposed to be replaced with a two-level (one level below grade), approximately 57,000 square foot combined Police and Fire Department Public Safety Facility incorporating all administrative and operational functions of these departments. The net increase in developed floor area over existing conditions (for Police and Fire Department services) is approximately 26,432 square feet. The proposed Public Safety Facility building is intended to accommodate the spatial and modernization needs of both departments. Other than the relocation of Police Department personnel currently operating out leased office space in the Post Office, it will not involve any staffing or personnel increases on-site.

The new Public Safety Facility will include the following police serving functions; improved service areas to enhance service to residents and visitors, additional room for current and future crime fighting technologies and crime prevention programs, and an underground firing range. The functional design of the Public Safety Facility will complement as well as enhance the police presence within the Civic Center, the Metlox Development, and the surrounding Downtown Commercial neighborhood. Parking is proposed to be provided on-grade and below grade for Police Department, Fire Department and

¹² Source: *The City of Manhattan Beach Police Department Fact Sheet at website; [http:// www.ci.manhattan-beach.ca.us/](http://www.ci.manhattan-beach.ca.us/).*

Public Library functions, and for Civic Center public and staff. The subterranean parking, which due to limited visibility from the general public at street level, could increase the risk to public safety.

Access to public parking will be provided via the 15th Street (north) and 13th Street (south) driveways. The proposed public driveway at 15th Street will provide access to surface parking, as well as access to below grade parking via a driveway ramp located within the interior of the surface parking lot. The public driveway at 13th Street provides access to surface parking only. Police/Fire secured parking is accessed from 15th Street, 13th Street, and two locations along Valley Drive. The driveway at 15th and 13th Streets will provide direct access to below-grade secured parking. The Valley Drive locations access on-grade secured parking.

Based on the size and type of land uses proposed, the Metlox commercial development is expected to generate approximately 165 new employees. In addition, the project is expected to generate an additional 3,442 daily vehicle trips to the project area. With an increased on-site population, demands upon police services are naturally expected to increase to some extent. However, because the commercial project will be developed adjacent to the Public Safety Facility, the response time would be immediate should an emergency arise on site or within the immediate project vicinity. In addition, the level of police presence on site would in itself deter criminal activities. According to MBPD, the proposed project would not have a negative impact on police response times. An efficient and modern police facility with adequate parking for emergency response vehicles will enable police personnel to respond to critical incidents in a more timely manner.¹³ In addition, the proposed development will have a minimal effect on the police service during construction and demolition of the police building(s). As discussed with the department, patrol officers normally patrol the city in marked police vehicles and respond from the field to calls for service. However, the increased demand on the MBPD by the project may impact response times to other emergencies in the City.

The proposed project would be required to comply with the MBPD's various police protection requirements (e.g., lighting, landscaping, building design, etc.). As such, it is not anticipated that the increase in the number of employees and visitors associated with the proposed project would substantially increase the requirement for services from the MBPD. Additionally, the proposed subterranean parking could present a public safety concerns associated with limited visibility from the street level. This has been a major consideration throughout the design and planning phases of the proposed project. However, it is one that can be mitigated through heightened security measures during the on-going operation of the project. Operation of the subterranean parking garage will include

¹³ The MBPD, Lieutenant Dale E. Reissig, fax response, April 13, 2000.

an on-site valet attendant during normal operating hours and will include private security patrol officers on an intermittent and as-needed basis. The MBPD has indicated that existing staffing levels are adequate and the inclusion of lighting, signage and an on-site valet during hours of operation will assist in lowering the risk to public safety.¹⁴ Therefore, project impacts on police protection service would be less than significant.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

No related projects were identified in the surrounding project area. However, implementation of the proposed project in conjunction with the ambient growth (or infill development rate) would further increase demands for police protection service. Increases in population and employee uses in the City would increase average response times, primarily for non-emergency calls. However, the impacts created by new development would be reduced by the incorporation of required security measures into each proposed development. In addition, the MBPD monitors the need for police services and proposes appropriate service enhancements through the yearly budgetary process. Therefore, cumulative impacts to police protection service would be less than significant.¹⁵

MITIGATION MEASURES

Although no significant impacts upon public safety (police services) have been identified, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented to further reduce the risk to public safety.

- Prior to the issuance of building permits, project site plans should be subject to review by the MBPD and MBFD. All recommendations made by the MBPD and MBFD relative to public safety (e.g. emergency access) should be incorporated into conditions of project approval (i.e., Master Use Permit or Development Agreement).
- Prior to the approval of the final site plan and issuance of each building permit, the project applicant shall submit plans to the MBPD for review and approval for the purpose of incorporating safety measures in the project design, including the concept of crime prevention through environmental design (i.e., building design, circulation, site planning, and lighting of parking structure and parking areas). Design considerations should include an evaluation of

¹⁴ The MBPD, Lieutenant Dale E. Reissig, fax response, April 13, 2000.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

electronic surveillance systems, emergency call boxes and lighting systems in addition to architectural elements that allow direct vertical and horizontal views outside of the structure.

- The provision of an on-site valet attendant and/or patrol by private security officers during operation of the project shall be considered at peak parking demand times, as needed. This mitigation measure shall be incorporated into the conditions of project approval (i.e., Master Land Use Permit or Development Agreement) at the discretion of the City Council.

LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Project impacts on public safety would be less than significant before and after mitigation.