

Section 3.13

Public Services and Recreation

This section describes the environmental and regulatory setting for public services and recreation, including schools, fire protection and emergency medical services, police protection, and parks. It also describes impacts on public services and recreation that would result from implementation of the San Rafael Transit Center Replacement Project (proposed project) and other build alternatives and mitigation for significant impacts where feasible and appropriate. Impacts related to the No-Project Alternative are discussed in Chapter 5, Alternatives to the Project.

3.13.1 Existing Conditions

3.13.1.1 Regulatory Setting

There are no relevant federal or state regulations related to public services and recreation that pertain to the proposed project.

Local

The City of San Rafael General Plan 2020

The following goals and policies from *The City of San Rafael General Plan 2020* pertain to public services and recreation and relate to the proposed project (City of San Rafael 2016).

Goal 29: Parks and Recreation

It is the goal for San Rafael to have recreation facilities and programs, parks and playfields for all age groups throughout the community. San Rafael recognizes the essential nature of Parks and Recreational services to its residents. Numerous parks, public spaces, and playing fields are integral to the life of the City. Recreational facilities and playfield are well maintained and consistently upgraded. Attention to community need generates proposals for new facilities.

Policy PR-1. Standards. Maintain, and where possible exceed, a recreation standard of three acres of park and recreation facilities per 1,000 residents.

Policy PR-15. Downtown Recreation. Encourage the creation of recreational facilities and gathering places open to the public, such as plazas, green spaces, and unexpected places such as the alley improvements behind Art Works Downtown.

Goal 30: A Safe Community

It is the goal of San Rafael, as the first priority for city government, to provide excellent fire, public safety and paramedic services and to be prepared in the case of disaster or emergency. San Rafael residents deserve to feel safe and secure wherever they live, work and play.

Policy S-26. Fire and Police Services. Maintain adequate cost-effective fire protection, paramedic and police services. Minimize increases in service needs from new development through continued fire prevention and community policing programs.

Policy S-27. Community Policing and Fire Service. Actively promote Community Policing and Community Fire Servicing in order to facilitate closer relations between police and fire departments and neighborhood groups, businesses and residents.

Policy S-28. Paramedic Services. Continue to seek adequate and cost-effective ways to provide accessible and reasonable emergency medical services.

Policy S-29. Effective Communication System. Ensure that all City agencies with public safety responsibilities are provided with effective, reliable and robust emergency communications systems and equipment. The system and equipment should have adequate capacity and redundancy to ensure these agencies can accomplish their missions. Appropriate consideration should also be given to the communications needs of agencies that may be required to supply mutual aid to or from other jurisdictions.

Policy S-32. Safety Review of Development Projects. Require crime prevention and fire prevention techniques in new development, including adequate access for emergency vehicles.

Policy S-33. Disaster Preparedness Planning. Ensure disaster preparedness in cooperation with other public agencies and appropriate public-interest organizations. Expand abilities of residents to assist in local responses to disasters.

Policy S-37. Functioning Public Utilities Following Earthquake. Locate and construct vital public utilities as well as communication and transportation facilities in a way that maximizes their potential to remain functional during and after an earthquake.

Draft San Rafael General Plan 2040 and Downtown San Rafael Precise Plan

The City of San Rafael (City) is currently working on the Draft *San Rafael General Plan 2040* (City of San Rafael 2020a). This update to *The City of San Rafael General Plan 2020* is accompanied by a Draft *Downtown San Rafael Precise Plan*, which provides a roadmap to growth and development in the Downtown San Rafael neighborhood (City of San Rafael 2020b). Applicable policies from these plans are listed below.

Goal CSI-3: Exceptional Public Safety Services. Provide and maintain exceptional fire, public safety, and paramedic services.

Policy CSI-3.1: Investment in Public Safety Services. Maintain cost-effective police, fire protection, and paramedic facilities, equipment, and services. Manage increases in costs through effective preventative measures, such as fire prevention and community policing.

Policy CSI-3.2: Mitigating Development Impacts. Engage the Police and Fire Departments in the review of proposed development and building applications to ensure that public safety, fire prevention, and emergency access and response needs are considered and effectively addressed.

Policy CSI-3.4: Quality of Life Programming. Maintain programs to proactively address quality of life issues, such as peace disturbances, loitering, littering, and vandalism. Focus on personal contact with residents and businesses and build positive relationships with all segments of the community.

Policy CSI-3.6: Mutual Aid. Maintain mutual aid agreements for police and fire service with other jurisdictions and community service districts to ensure that the capacity exists to adequately respond to local emergencies.

Goal PROS-1: Quality Parks for All to Enjoy. Sustain high quality parks that meet the recreational needs of all those who live and work in San Rafael.

Policy PROS-1.1: Park Classification. Maintain a system of community, neighborhood, pocket, and special use parks. These parks should be complemented by larger region-serving parks and open spaces, and by school recreation areas.

3.13.1.2 Environmental Setting

Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

Fire, paramedic, and emergency services in San Rafael are provided by the San Rafael Fire Department. The San Rafael Fire Department employs 69 uniformed emergency shift personnel, a fire chief, two administrative staff, an emergency manager, a household hazardous waste coordinator, and four part-time inspectors (City of San Rafael 2020c). The San Rafael Fire Department operates six fire stations throughout the City. Additionally, the San Rafael Fire Department has joint powers agreements and standard mutual aid agreements with other fire departments in Marin County, which minimize response times in fire emergencies (City of San Rafael 2020c). The closest two fire facilities that would serve all build alternatives are Fire Stations 51 and 52, which are both approximately 0.5 mile away.

During calendar year 2019, the San Rafael Fire Department reported that it responded to 27 residential structure fires and 27 non-residential structure fires. It also responded to 22 vehicle fires, 16 outdoor property fires, 16 wildland fires, and 28 dumpster/rubbish fires. There was a total of 10,980 calls for service, including 7,048 for rescue, emergency medical services, ambulances, and similar services. There were also 664 false alarms, 39 mutual aid responses, 185 hazardous response incidents, and 2,885 other incidents (animal rescue, smoke, etc.) (City of San Rafael 2020c).

The San Rafael Fire Department maintains a response time goal consistent with the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1710 to respond within 5 to 7 minutes following a call for service 90 percent of the time. New equipment and vehicles are periodically acquired to continue to meet this response time standard and to replace old equipment.

Police Protection

The San Rafael Police Department, headquartered at San Rafael City Hall, provides police services to the City. A new 44,000-square-foot Public Safety Center opened in August 2020 across the street from the existing facility. As of October 19, 2019, the San Rafael Police Department had a total of 60 full-time sworn personnel and 22 full-time nonsworn personnel, for a total staff of 82. This equates to 10.2 sworn personnel per 10,000 residents and 13.9 total personnel per 10,000 residents (City of San Rafael 2020c). The closest police facility to the project area is the Public Safety Center, approximately 2,500 feet northwest of the project area.

The San Rafael Police Department is organized into two divisions: the Operations Division, which includes patrol, park rangers, Downtown foot beat, and traffic enforcement; and the Administrative Services Department, which includes records, dispatch personnel, training, crime prevention, community engagement, and detective units (City of San Rafael 2020c).

In 2019, the San Rafael Police Department received 21,735 emergency calls and 76,874 administrative calls. This equates to an average of 1,035 emergency calls a month or about 60 per day. In total, the San Rafael Police Department receives between 800 and 1,000 calls per month. The San Rafael Police Department received a total of 38,877 calls for service in 2019, which was a 0.2-percent decrease from 2018 (City of San Rafael 2020c).

Schools

The City is served by three public school districts: the San Rafael Elementary School District, San Rafael High School District, and Miller Creek School District. The San Rafael Elementary School District and San Rafael High School District are operated collectively by San Rafael City Schools. Between these two districts, there are seven elementary schools, one middle school, one kindergarten through eighth grade school, and three high schools. In the 2018–2019 school year, the San Rafael Elementary School District had an enrollment of 4,614 students and the San Rafael High School District had an enrollment of 2,640 students. The Miller Creek School District operates in northern San Rafael and in nearby unincorporated areas. It contains three elementary schools and one middle school. Students matriculating from the Miller Creek School District attend Terra Linda High School, one of the three high schools in the San Rafael High School District. In the 2019–2020 school year, the Miller Creek School District had an enrollment of 2,024 students. Enrollment in San Rafael’s public elementary and middle schools in both districts remained stable during the years 2014 to 2019, with high school enrollment gradually increasing by 11.6 percent in this time.

Enrollment projections prepared by San Rafael City Schools for the San Rafael Elementary School and High School Districts in March 2014 anticipated a 15-percent increase in elementary school enrollment between 2014 and 2019 (about 700 students). This increase did not materialize. The district also forecast an increase of 12 percent in the high schools, which did occur. Forecasts prepared in 2014 anticipated an increase of about 400 students for Kindergarten through fifth grade, 400 students for grades 6 through 8, and 200 high school students between 2019 and 2026 (City of San Rafael 2020c).

The Miller Creek School District prepared its latest projections in 2017. Forecasts for the Miller Creek School District extend to the 2026–2027 school year, projecting relatively stable enrollment numbers during that period (City of San Rafael 2020c).

San Rafael public schools in the vicinity of the project area include James B. Davidson Middle School, Laurel Dell Elementary School, Madrone High School, and San Rafael High School. James B. Davidson Middle School is approximately 0.4 mile southwest of the project area. Laurel Dell Elementary School is approximately 0.5 mile southwest of the project area. Madrone High School and San Rafael High School are approximately 0.4 mile east of the project area.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

The City of San Rafael Recreation and Child Care Services Division of the Library and Recreation Department manages City-owned parks and recreational facilities in San Rafael. *The City of San Rafael General Plan 2020* establishes a goal of 3 acres of park and recreation facilities per 1,000 residents (City of San Rafael 2016). The total area of parkland in the City is calculated by adding the total acres of developed park space to half of the total acres of recreational facilities at public schools. A 2019 report on the existing condition of parks and recreation indicates that there are approximately 244 acres of parks in San Rafael (including parks within the City limits and in the unincorporated areas of San Rafael). According to these data and the most recently reported population statistics, the City currently maintains a ratio of approximately 4.14 acres of parks per 1,000 residents within the city limits (City of San Rafael 2019a), which is above the goal of 3 acres of park and recreation facilities per 1,000 residents.

Existing bicycle paths in the vicinity of the project area include:

- Puerto Suello Bike Path: A class I north-south off-street trail that runs along the east side of Hetherton Street and has a southern terminus at 4th Street
- Mahon Creek Path: A class I east-west off-street trail that runs along San Rafael Creek and through the BioMarin campus
- Class III east-west bike route on 4th Street throughout the project area, with a gap between Hetherton Street and Irwin Street
- Class III north-south bike route on Lincoln Avenue with a northern terminus at 2nd Street
- Class III north-south bike route on Grand Avenue with a southern terminus at 5th Avenue

Parks closest to the project area include Albert Park, approximately 1,600 feet south, and Boyd Memorial Park, approximately 2,000 feet north.

Other Public Facilities

Other public facilities in the vicinity of the project area include the San Rafael Public Library and the San Rafael Community Center. The San Rafael Public Library is approximately 0.5 mile northwest of the project area. Existing library facilities in the City have been identified as insufficient to meet existing populations, and the Draft *San Rafael General Plan 2040* identifies the need to expand or relocate the main branch of the library system to meet demand. The San Rafael Community Center, which offers rental spaces for meetings and events as well as programs, classes, and activities for pre-school aged children, youth, and adults, is approximately 0.3 mile southwest of the project area.

3.13.2 Environmental Impacts

Four different build alternatives, which are all in Downtown San Rafael within 500 feet of the existing transit center, are being evaluated. Public services and recreation impacts were analyzed for the project area rather than specific build alternatives because the location of each build alternative would experience a nearly equivalent impact for each resource considered here. Impacts for the build alternatives are presented together unless they differ substantially among alternatives.

3.13.2.1 Methodology

The potential impacts associated with public services and recreation are evaluated on a quantitative and qualitative basis through coordination with respective service agencies. The study area for public services and recreation is the City of San Rafael. Significant impacts would occur if the proposed project would adversely affect the ability of service agencies to provide adequate service to the project area or to other existing service areas, resulting in the need for new facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Identifying the project area's public services involved review of the following documents and sources of information:

- City of San Rafael website
- City of San Rafael planning documents:
 - Review of *The City of San Rafael General Plan 2020* and Draft *San Rafael General Plan 2040*
- San Rafael Fire Department website

- San Rafael Police Department website

3.13.2.2 Thresholds of Significance

The following California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Appendix G thresholds identify significance criteria to be considered for determining whether a project could have significant impacts on public services and recreation.

Would the proposed project:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or a 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 following public services:
 - a) Fire Protection?
 - b) Police Protection?
 - c) Schools?
 - d) Parks?
 - e) Other Public Facilities?
- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

3.13.2.3 Impacts

Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of New or Physically Altered Governmental Facilities or a 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 Following Public Services

Construction

All Build Alternatives

Fire Protection

Construction of the proposed project would not induce population growth in the City of San Rafael. Therefore, it would not be expected to substantially increase the demand for fire protection services and would not require new or physically altered fire protection facilities.

Project construction could affect emergency access near the project area on a temporary basis. Lane closures and construction-related changes to traffic patterns could delay or obstruct the movement

of emergency vehicles traveling near the project area. Implementation of a Traffic Control Plan for the duration of construction would include detours and clear signage provided to route traffic, including emergency vehicles, around construction areas. As discussed in Chapter 2, Project Description, this plan would follow the guidance contained in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices on temporary closures of vehicle lanes, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks and appropriate detours for these facilities. This would ensure that adequate emergency access is maintained during construction. Accordingly, impacts related to construction activities would be ***less than significant***.

Police Protection

As discussed above in regard to fire protection services, construction of the proposed project would not induce population growth in the City. Therefore, the proposed project would not be expected to substantially increase the demand for police protection services and would not require new or physically altered police protection facilities.

Construction activities could temporarily obstruct the movement of emergency vehicles, including police vehicles, in and around the project site. Implementation of a Traffic Control Plan for the duration of construction would provide detours and clear signage to route traffic, including emergency vehicles, around construction areas as necessary and maintain adequate emergency access. As discussed in Chapter 2, Project Description, this plan would follow the guidance contained in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices on temporary closures of vehicle lanes, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks and appropriate detours for these facilities. This impact would be ***less than significant***.

Schools

Construction of the proposed project would not directly induce population growth within the City. Construction employees would be expected to commute to the project area from their existing place of residence. Construction of the proposed project would not be expected to create school enrollment as a result of construction bringing new residents to the City. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in increased school enrollment or require any new or modified school facilities. ***No impact*** would occur.

Parks

The City of San Rafael General Plan 2020 establishes a goal of 3 acres of park and recreation facilities per 1,000 residents (City of San Rafael 2016). Currently, the City exceeds its target ratio of park area to population, with approximately 4.14 acres of parks per 1,000 residents within the city limits (City of San Rafael 2019a). The nearest parks to the project area include Albert Park, 1,600 feet south, and Boyd Memorial Park, approximately 2,000 feet north. Construction of the proposed project would not restrict access to these or any other existing park facilities and would not physically affect parks. Construction of the proposed project would not induce temporary population growth in the City. Therefore, construction would not increase the use of park facilities in San Rafael and would not result in the deterioration of existing park facilities or in the need for new park facilities in order to maintain appropriate performance indicators.

Existing bicycle paths are described in Section 3.13.1.2, Environmental Setting. Construction of the proposed project may result in temporary conflicts with these existing bicycle facilities. This would be avoided to the extent feasible through the implementation of a Traffic Control Plan that addresses

circulation for transit, bicycles, pedestrians, and private vehicles. As discussed in Chapter 2, Project Description, this plan would follow the guidance contained in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices on temporary closures of vehicle lanes, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks and appropriate detours for these facilities.

A *less-than-significant* is anticipated.

Other Public Facilities

Other public facilities in the vicinity of the project area include the San Rafael Public Library and the San Rafael Community Center. Construction of the proposed project would not induce population growth in the City and, therefore, would not result in increased demand for these or other nearby public facilities. No new public facilities would be required. *No impact* is anticipated.

Consequently, construction of the proposed project would not result in the need for new or altered facilities for fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public services. Overall, the impact would be *less than significant*.

Operations

All Build Alternatives

Fire Protection

Operation of the new transit center would not be anticipated to increase the demand for fire protection and emergency services compared to existing conditions. The new transit center included in the proposed project would require a comparable amount of fire protection services to the existing transit center because it would be a similar size to the existing facility and would serve a similar ridership. The existing level of fire and emergency services provided by the City would be sufficient to service the new transit center without reducing the accessibility of fire services to other users in the City because operation of the new facility would not result in an increase local population that would increase demand for fire services. Replacement of the existing transit center may require the relocation of fire hydrants, but any affected hydrants would be replaced to meet their existing capacity. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in population growth and would therefore not induce additional demand for fire and emergency services that would result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities. A *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

Police Protection

Operation of the proposed project would not result in increased demand for police services that would affect service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives compared to existing conditions. The new transit center included in the proposed project would require a comparable amount of police services to the existing transit center. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in population growth and would therefore not induce demand for police services that would result in the need for new or physically altered police facilities. A *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

Schools

Operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to induce population growth within the City because the existing workforce capacity in the City and Marin County would be sufficient to serve the new transit center and no new residents would be added. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in increased school enrollment. For the same reasons, existing school facilities would not be anticipated to deteriorate as a result of the proposed project and new or physically altered school facilities would not be required. **No impact** would occur.

Parks

The City of San Rafael General Plan 2020 establishes a goal of 3 acres of park and recreation facilities per every 1,000 residents (City of San Rafael 2016). Currently, the City's park and recreation facilities exceed this ratio, with a ratio of approximately 4.14 acres of parks per 1,000 residents within The city limits (City of San Rafael 2019a). None of the proposed project footprints would result in a loss of park space or other recreational facilities. The proposed project would not be anticipated to accelerate the deterioration of existing park and recreation facilities because it would not induce population growth or increase the number of employees in the City. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the need for new or physically altered park facilities in order to maintain appropriate performance indicators for park space.

Existing bicycle paths are described in Section 3.13.1.2, Environmental Setting. Proposed bicycle path projects in the project area include a project that would install a Class IV bikeway along West Tamalpais Avenue through the project area and a project that would install a bikeway along 4th Street to create an east to west downtown connection for bicyclists. Under the Move Whistlestop Alternative, Adapt Whistlestop Alternative, and 4th Street Gateway Alternative, modifications would be made to the existing bicycle network. The Move Whistlestop Alternative and Adapt Whistlestop Alternative would construct the City's planned Class IV bicycle facility on Tamalpais Avenue between 2nd Street and 4th Street. Under the 4th Street Gateway Alternative, the existing Class I bicycle path on the west side of Hetherton Street would be removed between 4th Street and 5th Avenue and bicyclists would use 5th Avenue to connect from the Puerto Suello Bike Path to the planned Class IV facility on Tamalpais Avenue. No modifications to the existing bicycle network would be made under the Under the Freeway Alternative. Adequate bicycle access would be maintained under all build alternatives.

Overall, a **less-than-significant** impact on parks and recreational facilities would occur.

Other Public Facilities

The proposed project is not anticipated to induce population growth the existing workforce capacity in the City and Marin County would be sufficient to serve the new transit center and no new residents would be added. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in increased demand for these and other nearby public facilities. **No impact** is anticipated.

Consequently, operation of the proposed project would not result in the need for new or altered facilities for fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public services. A **less-than-significant** impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Increase the Use of Existing Neighborhood and Regional Parks or Other Recreational Facilities Such that Substantial Physical Deterioration of the Facility Would Occur or Be Accelerated

All Build Alternatives

As discussed previously, the proposed project would not be anticipated to accelerate the deterioration of existing park and recreation facilities because it would not induce population growth in the City. Demand for parks and recreational facilities would not change and ***no impact*** would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Include Recreational Facilities or Require the Construction or Expansion of Recreational Facilities that Might Have an Adverse Physical Effect on the Environment

All Build Alternatives

As discussed previously, none of the build alternative footprints include recreational facilities. None of the build alternatives would result in a loss of park space or other recreational facilities that would require construction of new recreational facilities or expansion of any existing recreational facilities.

The Move Whistlestop Alternative and Adapt Whistlestop Alternative would construct the City's planned Class IV bicycle facility on Tamalpais Avenue between 2nd Street and 4th Street. The 4th Street Gateway Alternative would add Class III bikeways on 5th Avenue between Hetheron Street and Tamalpais Avenue and on Tamalpais Avenue between 4th Street and 5th Avenue. The impacts of constructing these facilities would be minor and are included in the analysis of the Move Whistlestop Alternative, Adapt Whistlestop Alternative, and 4th Street Gateway Alternative throughout this Draft Environmental Impact Report. Under the Move Whistlestop Alternative and Adapt Whistlestop Alternative, there would be no adverse physical effects from the construction of these bicycle facilities.

The Under the Freeway Alternative would not include the construction of any new bicycle facilities.

No other recreational facilities would be constructed or expanded. A ***less-than-significant*** impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.