

1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the Draft EIR discusses police protection within the project area. Sources of information used in the preparation of this section include: coordination with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), the LAPD website, and the Safety element of the City of Los Angeles General Plan.

2. METHODOLOGY

Potential project impacts were evaluated based on consultation with the LAPD to determine the adequacy of existing and anticipated staffing, equipment and facilities to meet the additional demand for police protection services resulting from development of the proposed project. Although the LAPD does not maintain an internal minimum officer to population ratio, effects on the officer to population ratio and the net increase in reported incidents and calls for service were taken into consideration when determining the impact of the project on police protection services.

3. EXISTING CONDITIONS

a. Available Service

Los Angeles Police Department

The LAPD provides police protection within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Los Angeles, including the project sites. The LAPD is divided into four bureaus: Central, West, Valley, and South. These four bureaus are subsequently sub-divided into 23 divisions. Presently the Hidden Creeks Estates project site is located within the County of Los Angeles. Therefore, police protection services are currently provided by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. However, as part of the proposed project, the site would be annexed into the City of Los Angeles. Once annexed, according to the LAPD the project site would be located in the Valley Bureau in the Devonshire Area, in Reporting District (RD) 1701 or 1721.¹ The Devonshire Division currently covers 53.9 square miles and Devonshire police station, the station located closest to the project site, is located at 10250 Etiwanda Avenue, which is approximately 7 miles from the project site.

¹ Map of Neighborhood Watch Reporting Districts. Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council. <http://www.prnc.org/documents/neighborhoodwatchmap.pdf>. Accessed on January 17, 2007.

The service boundaries of Valley Bureau share the same boundaries as Los Angeles City for its north, west, and east boundaries. The southern boundary for the Valley Area is Mulholland Drive.² The boundaries for the RD 1701 are as follows: the Los Angeles City boundary to the north, the Los Angeles City boundary to the west, State Route 118 (SR 118 or Ronald Regan Freeway) to the south, and Tampa Avenue to the east.³ The Devonshire Community Police Station has 100 patrol officers and five basic cars.⁴ One car is assigned to cover the area between Browns Canyon and Balboa, north of SR 118.

Crimes committed in the project site area are shown in Table IV.K.1-1, Los Angeles Police Department Crimes by Reporting District of Occurrence.

Table IV.K.1-1
Los Angeles Police Department Crimes by Reporting District of Occurrence

Types of Crimes	RD 1701	RD 1721	Devonshire	Citywide
Burglary from Bus.	3	0	328	4,638
Burglary from Res.	10	10	734	13,785
Burglary Other	5	2	229	3,510
Street Robbery	2	1	194	9,071
Other Robbery	3	1	149	4,522
Murder	0	0	8	490
Rape	1	1	49	1,095
Aggravated Assault	6	7	538	16,086
Burglary from Veh.	21	13	1,130	22,585
Theft from Vehicle	10	2	533	10,807
Grand Theft	24	13	678	11,978
Theft From Person	0	0	11	949
Purse Snatch	1	0	4	335
Other Theft	25	8	1,293	18,039
Vehicle Theft	14	3	1,191	28,458
Bunco	0	0	6	203
Total Crimes	133	61	7,075	146,609

Source: Written Communication with Fred Booker, Lieutenant, Officer in Charge, Community Relations Section, Office of the Chief of Staff, Los Angeles Police Department, January 17, 2007

² The Los Angeles Police Department. Our Communities. http://www.lapdonline.org/our_communities. Accessed on January 17, 2007.

³ Written Correspondence from Dario Del Core, Senior Lead Officer, Central Patrol Division, December 19, 2006.

⁴ Ibid.

From December 11, 2005 through January 7, 2006, the Devonshire station received 309 Code 3 calls for service.⁵ Code 3 calls are emergency calls for service and Code 2 calls are urgent or emergency calls for service.⁶ Devonshire's response time to calls averages approximately 8 minutes.⁷ According to LAPD, a response time of 7 minutes would be optimal. During times of emergency, crossover help from other divisions and from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is available if necessary.

The crime rate represents the number of crimes reported in an area over a given period of time and, thus, affects the anticipated needs, projection for staff, and equipment for the LAPD. Generally, the crime rate in a given area will increase as the level of activity or population intensifies. However, due to other factors, such as police presence, crime prevention measures, and on-going legislation/funding, potential for an increase in crime rate is not directly proportional to the increase in land use activity.

The predominant crimes in the Devonshire area are aggravated assault, other types of theft, and burglary from vehicles. As of December 9, 2006, the crime in the Devonshire area has decreased. Total Part I crimes (murder, sexual battery, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and auto theft) decreased by 2.3 percent, total Violent Crime decreased by 3.4 percent, and Property Crime decreased by 2.2 percent.⁸ Predominant crimes Citywide are burglary/theft, personal/other theft, and grand theft auto. The crime in the City of Los Angeles has decreased by 8 percent in the past year. Below, Table IV.K.1-2, The Devonshire Area and Citywide Crime Statistics Profile, lists crime statistics for the Devonshire area and the whole City of Los Angeles. The statistics are year-to-date (YTD) through December 30, 2006.

Other Protective Services

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department provides police protection services for unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, and provides contract services to various cities. The Sheriff's Department also currently provides protective services to the project site since it is presently located in an unincorporated area of the County. Once annexed into the City of Los Angeles, the Sheriff's Department would no longer provide primary police protection for the project area, but police protection services from the Sheriff's Department would be available to assist the LAPD with secondary or back-up protection services when requested.

⁵ Personal Communication with Officer Marco Jimenez, Community Relations Section, February 7, 2007.

⁶ www.lapdonline.org, November 28, 2002.

⁷ Written Correspondence from Dario Del Core, Senior Lead Officer, Central Patrol Division, December 19, 2006.

⁸ The Los Angeles Police Department Official Website. Devonshire Community Newsletter. Vol. VII No. 12. December 2006.

Table IV.K.1-2
The Devonshire Area and Citywide Crime Statistics Profile
(YTD is December 30, 2006)

Types of Crimes	Devonshire YTD 2006	L.A. Citywide YTD 2006	Devonshire YTD 2005	L.A. Citywide YTD 2005	Devonshire % Change	L.A. Citywide % Change
Homicide	9	477	6	489	50%	-2%
Rape	26	899	37	970	-30%	-7%
Robbery	306	14,190	264	13,473	16%	5%
Aggravated Assault	310	14,098	424	15,493	-27%	-9%
Burglary	1,096	19,890	1,163	21,751	-6%	-9%
Grand Theft Auto	855	24,496	895	26,675	-4%	-8%
Burglary/Theft from Vehicle	1,836	29,741	1,477	32,727	24%	-9%
Personnel/Other Theft	1,409	27,613	1,801	30,558	-22%	-10%
Total Crimes	5,847	131,404	6,067	142,136	-4%	-8%

Source: www.lapdonline.org, crime statistics, Citywide and Devonshire Division, 12/03/06 – 12/30/06, January 4, 2007.

b. Adequacy Assessment Criteria

Adequacy of police protection services for a given area is based on a combination of assessment factors, including officer to population ratio, type of land uses, response time, and available equipment.

The officer to population ratio is important from both a response and a prevention perspective. A higher officer-to-population ratio means that more officers are available to respond to calls as needed, thereby decreasing the response time. Conversely, if the officer-to-population ratio is reduced, it could mean that the average response time to emergency calls would increase. A high number of officers visibly serving and patrolling in the field may also act as a deterrent to crime because of greater police presence. In the Devonshire area, there are currently 100 patrol officers per 190,000 residents in the service area.⁹ This translates to 0.526 patrol officers per 1,000 residents. Although LAPD does not hold an internal officer-to-population ratio standard, many cities strive to maintain a minimum of 2.0:1,000. The Devonshire officer to population ratio is below the standard 2.0:1,000 found in other cities.

Response time is defined as the total time from when a call requesting assistance is made until the time that a unit responds to the scene. Calls for police assistance are prioritized based on the nature of the call. For example, a crime in progress may receive a higher priority than a call that is reporting a crime already

⁹ Written Correspondence from Dario Del Core, Senior Lead Officer, Central Patrol Division, December 19, 2006.

committed. Also, the potential for harm to citizens is considered when a call is received. Unlike fire protection services, police units are often in a mobile state. As a result, actual distance between a headquarters facility and the project sites is of minimal relevance. Instead, the number of officers patrolling the street is more directly related to the realized response time. If the LAPD does not employ a sufficient number of officers, then the response time may increase.

Equipment availability and training skills are also important factors in determining the adequacy of police protection services. Equipment and training skills impact the LAPD's ability to handle a situation efficiently. Inadequate equipment and training may result in longer response times or inefficient service. Additional police officers do not ensure adequate service if they do not have adequate training and equipment. As stated above, the Devonshire Station is equipped with standard police equipment. The LAPD offers thorough training, including In-Service and specialized Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) certified schools, Roll Call Training, Divisional Training Days and Management Development Advisory Board, including Supervisory Leadership Institute (Sergeants), FBI National Academy (Lieutenants), Command College (Captains and above), Hughes Advanced Leadership, Cristando House, and West Point Leadership.

4. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

As stated in the City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework Element primary police law enforcement services are provided by the LAPD and supplemental services are provided by the Los Angeles County Sheriff, the California Highway Patrol, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

All law enforcement agencies within the State of California are organized and operate in accordance with the applicable provisions of the California Penal Code. This code sets forth the authority, rules of conduct and training for peace officers. Under state law, all sworn municipal and County officers are State Peace Officers.

The County of Los Angeles is required by state law to organize a formal mutual aid agreement between all police departments within its jurisdiction. This agreement is set forth in the Mutual Aid Operations Plan for Los Angeles County. The Mutual Aid Operations Plan provides a structure of response should an emergency in the City of Los Angeles arise that requires immediate response by more law enforcement personnel than would be available to the LAPD using all available resources.

In the LAPD's Programs, Resources, Services, and Strategies of the LAPD, Reducing Crime in the City of Los Angeles in 2005 report a list of programs, resources, services, and strategies are set forth by the LAPD to prevent and reduce crime in the City of Los Angeles.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

a. Significance Criteria

The L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide indicates that the determination of a project's significance to police protection shall be made on a case by case basis, considering:

POL-1 The population increase resulting from the proposed project, based on the net increase of residential units or square footage of non-residential floor area;

POL-2 The demand for police services anticipated at the time of project build out compared to the expected level of service available. Consider, as applicable, scheduled improvements to LAPD services, (facilities, equipment, and officers) and the project's proportional contribution to the demand; and

POL-3 Whether the project includes security and/or design features that would reduce the demand for police services.

b. Project Impacts

Impacts related to police are considered significant if:

POL-1 The population increase resulting from the proposed project, based on the net increase of residential units or square footage of non-residential floor area.

Anticipated population increase from the proposed Hidden Creeks Estates project is discussed in detail in Section IVJ, Population and Housing. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the construction 188 residential units within the Community of Chatsworth-Porter Ranch, which would result in a population increase of approximately 549 new residents. According to the Chatsworth-Porter Ranch Community Plan, the residential portion of the proposed development would help accommodate the anticipated growth in population of the Community. The 549 new residents from the project would account for 0.39 percent of the projected population increase within the City of Los Angeles between 2005 and 2010. The project site would be located within the Devonshire Station service area. With project implementation, additional residents would increase the demand for protection services provided by the Devonshire Station. However, the increased tax base and motor vehicle registration fees paid by project residents would fund necessary increases in law enforcement staffing and equipment. Therefore, this additional funding would increase the amount of patrol cars and officers and would result in less than significant impacts to police protection services.

Impacts related to police are considered significant if:

- POL-2 The demand for police services anticipated at the time of project build out compared to the expected level of service available. Consider, as applicable, scheduled improvements to LAPD services, (facilities, equipment, and officers) and the project's proportional contribution to the demand.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the construction 188 residential units within the Community of Chatsworth-Porter Ranch, which would result in a population increase of approximately 549 new residents. Currently there are 100 patrol officers for the approximately 190,000 residents in the Devonshire service area.¹⁰ This translates to 0.526 patrol officers per 1,000 residents. The project site would be located within the Devonshire Station service area. With project implementation, additional residents would increase the demand for protective services provided by the Devonshire Station. Furthermore, no additional police stations are proposed for the Community of Chatsworth-Porter Ranch or surrounding areas.¹¹

Calls for police service as a result of project implementation are anticipated to be typical of residential incidents and emergencies. Residential areas typically increase the number of police calls for burglaries and domestic disputes, but an increase in both emergency and non-emergency calls would be expected. No additional police stations are proposed for the Community of Chatsworth-Porter Ranch or surrounding areas.¹² As such, implementation of the proposed project has the potential to result in increased calls and demand for protective services. However, the increased tax base and motor vehicle registration fees paid by project residents would fund necessary increases in law enforcement staffing and equipment. Therefore, the additional funding would increase the amount of patrol cars and officers and project implementation would result in less than significant impacts to police protection services.

Impacts related to police are considered significant based on:

- POL-3 Whether the project includes security and/or design features that would reduce the demand for police services.

The project would be designed to provide security features that ensure a secure environment for project residents and employees. Secured entry and exit points, security fencing, security lighting, and other essential features would be introduced in the project. Additionally, as required through mitigation measures MM-PP-1 through MM-PP-4 below, prior to the issuance of building permits, the applicant would coordinate with the LAPD's Crime Prevention Unit (CPU) to incorporate necessary security

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Personal Communication with Officer Marco Jimenez, Community Relations Section, February 7, 2007.

¹² Ibid.

measures for the purpose of incorporating “defensible space” and other crime prevention features into the project design. Additionally, in order to help the Devonshire area commanding officers during responses to emergencies the applicant would provide a diagram demonstrating access routes to each portion of the project site. Therefore, through implementation of mitigation, potentially significant project-related impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

c. Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project would result in an increase in residential land uses within LAPD’s Devonshire service area. As discussed in Section III, General Description of Environmental Setting, additional related projects are proposed and/or planned within the project vicinity. Both the project and other planned and approved developments throughout the City could cumulatively increase the need for services from the LAPD. This demand would be met by increases in law enforcement staffing and equipment as needed, which would be funded by increased revenues from the increased tax base and motor vehicle registration fees paid by project residents. Moreover, each project is subject to review by the LAPD to ensure that adequate access, visibility, and security is provided. Therefore, the project would not contribute to any significant cumulative impacts to police services.

d. Mitigation Measures

MM-PP-1 A construction traffic routing plan shall be prepared per Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) requirements that would facilitate the movement of construction vehicles. In addition, access on to the project site shall remain clear and unobstructed; proposed roadway modifications shall assure adequate access to the proposed project site and adjacent areas; security features shall be incorporated on the construction site, such as fencing and locked entrances; and construction equipment, tools and material shall be secured by locking or placing them within sheds and/or other inaccessible areas while not in use.

MM-PP-2 The project applicant shall contact LAPD’S CPU to incorporate appropriate crime prevention features into the project design. Examples of crime prevention design features include the following.¹³

- Housing units can be designed so as to allow neighbors to "self-patrol" their environments.

¹³ Los Angeles Police Department. Design Out Crime. City of Los Angeles. Retrieved from http://www.lapdonline.org/prevent_crime/content_basic_view/8852 on February 7, 2007.

- Fences around housing developments can be designed in ways that avoid creating hiding places for criminals.
- Vines or planted coverings may be placed on walls to deter graffiti.

MM-PP-3 During project construction, a designated parking area with a security officer shall be provided for the construction workers.

MM-PP-4 Upon completion of the project a diagram of each portion of the property, including access routes and any additional information that might facilitate police response, the diagram shall be submitted to the Devonshire area commanding officer.

e. Adverse Effects

With implementation of the mitigation measures listed above, no adverse effects would result from the proposed project.