

IV.I.2 Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

1. INTRODUCTION

This section addresses the potential impacts of the proposed Herald Examiner project on fire protection and emergency medical response services in the City of Los Angeles. Where potentially significant impacts are identified, mitigation measures are recommended to reduce such impacts to acceptable levels. Sources utilized in the preparation of this section include written correspondence with the City of Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) and consultation of the LAFD website (<http://www.lafd.org/>).

2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The LAFD is a full-spectrum life safety agency protecting approximately 4 million people in Los Angeles City. As stated in the City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework Element, fire prevention, fire protection and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) for the City of Los Angeles is provided by the LAFD.

The LAFD's 3,382 uniformed personnel protect life, property and the environment through their direct involvement in fire prevention, firefighting, emergency medical care, technical rescue, hazardous materials mitigation, disaster response, public education and community service. Approximately 330 non-sworn support personnel provide technical and administrative expertise in their corresponding pursuit to further the LAFD mission.

A total of 1,038 uniformed firefighters per platoon duty shift, a 24-hour shift (including 207 serving as firefighters/paramedics), remain on duty at 103 neighborhood fire stations located across the department's 471-square-mile jurisdiction that includes the City of Los Angeles. Last year, the LAFD responded 714,658 times to various incidents.

The project sites are currently served by two neighborhood fire stations, Fire Stations No. 9 and No. 10, which are both within close proximity of the project sites. Fire Station No. 10 is the closest to the project at 0.3 mile and is located at 1335 South Olive Street. Fire Station No. 9 is located approximately 1.1 miles from the project sites and is located at 430 East 7th Street in the Central City/Fashion District. A map of the locations of these two fire stations that serve the project is shown in **Figure IV.I.2-1, Fire Stations Serving the Herald Examiner Project**.

Fire Station No. 9 is staffed with 17 members at all times. Of those 17 members, five members are assigned to the fire truck, four members are assigned to a fire engine, four members are assigned to a

second fire engine, two members are assigned to a paramedic rescue ambulance and two members are assigned to a second paramedic rescue ambulance.¹

Fire Station No. 10 is staffed with 14 members at all times. Of those 14 members, six members are assigned to the light force (truck and engine), four members are assigned to the fire engine, two members are assigned to the paramedic rescue ambulance, and two members are assigned to the basic life support (BLS) rescue ambulance. There are no upgrades currently planned for either fire station.²

The response time for Fire Station No. 10 to the project sites would be 3.1 minutes, and the response time from Fire Station No. 9 to the project sites would be 5.1 minutes. These response times meet the desired performance standards in the amended February 21, 1999, Los Angeles Fire Code (LAFD), Section 57.09.07 Table 9-C, Response Distances that if Exceeded Require the Installation of an Automatic Fire Sprinklers System. The maximum response distance for high-density residential and commercial neighborhoods is 1.5 miles. According to Captain William Wells of the LAFD, services for the project area are considered adequate.³

3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

As stated in the City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework Element, fire prevention, fire protection and EMS for the City of Los Angeles are provided by the LAFD. Fire department services are based on the community's needs, as determined by ongoing evaluations. When an evaluation indicates increased response time, the acquisition of equipment, personnel and/or new stations is considered. As development occurs, the Fire Department reviews environmental impact reports and subdivisions' applications for needed facilities. Where appropriate, construction of new facilities is required as a condition of development.

There are goals and policies set forth by the City of Los Angeles in the General Plan Central City Community Element that relate to fire services. A description of applicable goals and policies is provided in **Section IV.A, Land Use**. As discussed in **Section IV.A**, the project does not conflict with applicable General Plan goals and policies relating to police protection services.

¹ Written correspondence from William N. Wells, Captain II-Paramedic, Planning Section LAFD, September 30, 2005.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Figure IV.I.2-1

Fire Stations Serving the Herald Examiner Project

4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

a. Significance Criteria

The *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* indicates that a project normally would have a significant impact on fire protection if it requires the addition of a new fire station or the expansion, consolidation or relocation of an existing facility to maintain service.

In addition, the LAFD evaluates the demand for fire protection and prevention on a project-by-project basis to determine if a proposed project would require additional equipment, personnel or facilities and to review a project's emergency features. The proposed project is also subject to the LAFC. The LAFC uses standards that would include consideration of the project size, proposed uses, required fire flow, response time and distance for engine and truck companies, fire hydrant sizing and placement standards, access and potential to use or store hazardous materials.

Standards of the LAFC that are applicable to the proposed project are listed in **Table IV.I.2-1**, below. These are the standards for high-density residential and neighborhood commercial developments, which corresponds to the proposed Herald Examiner project.

**Table IV.I.2-1
LAFD Fire Code Standards Applicable to the Proposed Project**

Fire Code Standard	For High Density Residential and Neighborhood Commercial
Fire flow	4,000 G.P.M. from 4 adjacent hydrants flowing simultaneously
Land area served by hydrant	100,000 sq. ft.
Distance between hydrants along roads or fire lanes	300–450 ft.
Type of hydrant	2-1/2" X 4" double fire hydrant
Response distance	1.5 miles

Source: Los Angeles Fire Department. Los Angeles Municipal Code, Chapter V – Public Safety and Protection, Article 7 – Fire Protection and Prevention (Fire Code), Section 57.09.06, Tables 9-A, 9-B, 9-C. Los Angeles, California: May 12, 1987. Retrieved from <http://www.lafd.org/library/code.pdf> on December 5, 2005.
sq. ft. = square feet

Methodology

Potential project impacts were evaluated based on communication with the LAFD to determine the ability of the LAFD to maintain adequate service ratios, response times or other performance objectives in the City resulting from development of the proposed project. The Los Angeles Department of Water and

Power (LADWP) was also contacted to determine whether the project sites met the fire flow and fire hydrant standards specified in the LAFD Fire Code.

b. Project Impacts

- *Impacts related to fire are considered significant based on whether or not the proposed project require additional equipment, personnel or facilities and to review a project's emergency features.*

Construction

During construction the proposed project has the potential to impact emergency access routes by obstructing roads and access routes with vehicles, trucks and/or construction equipment. Because the project sites are currently underutilized, few to no emergency calls are requested at the site. Construction of the proposed project would result in the presence of work and delivery crews on the site; therefore, the potential for an increased demand on fire and emergency medical services exists during construction due to the introduction of activities and individuals which may generate new fire and emergency medical calls. The response distances during construction would remain within the performance standards of the LAFC of 1.5 miles for high-density commercial neighborhoods. The two closest fire stations to the project are Fire Station No. 10 and Fire Station No. 9 at 0.3 and 1.1 miles away, respectively.

The LAFC standards for fire flow and fire hydrants in high-density residential and neighborhood commercial developments are stated above in **Table IV.I.2-1**. According to the LADWP, there is sufficient fire flow to meet the 4,000 gallons per minute (GPM) from four adjacent fire hydrants required by the LAFD Fire Code. However, the existing fire hydrants fronting the properties are not 2-1/2" X 4" double fire hydrants as required by the LAFD Fire Code.⁴ Therefore, due to the fact that the fire hydrants closest to the properties are not up to the standard for high-density residential and neighborhood commercial developments in the LAFC, project construction will result in significant impacts to fire service, which can be mitigated to less than significant with the mitigation measure described below (MM-F-4).

Operation

- *Impacts related to fire are considered significant based on whether the project requires the addition of a new fire station or the expansion, consolidation or relocation of an existing facility to maintain service.*

Implementation of the Herald Examiner project would result in an increase in the population in the project vicinity. Approximately 1,087 new residents would be introduced to the project area, and approximately 260 new employees would occupy the retail, office and commercial spaces. As a result of

⁴ E-mail correspondence from Nadia Dale, Environmental Services, City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, December 6, 2005.

this population increase, there would be an increase in demand for fire protection services for residential and commercial-related fire services.

The response during the operation of the proposed project would remain within the performance standards of the LAFC of 1.5 miles for high-density commercial neighborhoods. The two closest fire stations to the project are Fire Station No. 10 and Fire Station No. 9 at 0.3 and 1.1 miles away respectively. According to the City of Los Angeles Fire Department, adequate staff, equipment and fire protection services currently exist to meet the additional demands that would be generated through the implementation of the proposed project.⁵

The LAFC standards for fire flow and fire hydrants in high-density residential and neighborhood commercial developments are stated above in **Table IV.I.2-1**. According to the LADWP, there is sufficient fire flow to meet the 4,000 GPM from four adjacent fire hydrants required by the LAFD Fire Code. However, the existing fire hydrants fronting the properties are not 2-1/2" X 4" double fire hydrants as required by the LAFD Fire Code.⁶ Therefore, due to the fact that the fire hydrants closest to the properties are not up to the standard for high-density residential and neighborhood commercial developments in the Fire Code, project operation will result in significant impacts to fire service, which can be mitigated to less than significant with the mitigation measure described below (**MM-F-4**).

Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not require additional equipment, personnel or facilities to provide adequate fire protection to the project sites. No potentially significant impacts to fire protection services would result.

c. Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project would result in an increase in both residential and commercial land uses within the Downtown Los Angeles 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 would cumulatively increase the need for services from the LAFD. This demand would be met by increases in staffing and equipment as needed, which would be funded by developer fees and the increased tax base associated with the proposed project. Moreover, each project is subject to review by LAFD to ensure that adequate emergency response exists and that adequate emergency site access is provided. Therefore, the project would not individually or cumulatively result in significant impacts to fire protection and emergency medical services.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

d. Mitigation Measures

- MM-F-1. The use of construction and design features, which reduces fire potential and/or promotes containment, including increased spacing between buildings and fire-resistant landscaping, shall be implemented.
- MM-F-2. Upon completion of the project, a diagram of each portion of the property, including access routes and any additional information that might facilitate fire and emergency medical response, shall be submitted to the Fire Chief.
- MM-F-3. During project construction, the contractor shall ensure that roads and alleyways remain unobstructed to provide for emergency access at all times.
- MM-F-4. The project applicant shall coordinate with the LAFD to design and implement upgraded fire hydrants in compliance with the LAFD Fire Code for high-density residential and neighborhood commercial developments. The fire hydrants must be upgraded to 2-1/2" X 4" double hydrants.

e. Adverse Effects

There would be no adverse effects as a result of the proposed project.