

17.0

PUBLIC SERVICES

This chapter provides an evaluation of the potential direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect environmental effects of adopting the proposed 2035 San Benito County General Plan (2035 General Plan) on public services, including fire and police protection, schools, libraries, and other County-operated facilities. As established in the Notice of Preparation for the proposed 2035 General Plan (see [Appendix A, Notice of Preparation](#)), development and other activities allowed under the 2035 General Plan may result in adverse changes to the level of public services and facilities available within San Benito County (County). Wildfire hazards and related fire protection services are evaluated in Chapter 12, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; recreational facilities and parklands are evaluated in Chapter 18, Recreation; and utilities and service systems including water supply, treatment, and distribution are evaluated in Chapter 20, Utilities and Service Systems.

The following environmental assessment includes a review of public services potentially affected by the implementation of the 2035 General Plan, including a description of existing public services and facilities within the project area, and the effects that could result from development that would be allowed under the 2035 General Plan.

The existing conditions of the public services within the County were determined by, among other things, a review of the existing County's General Plan goals and policies; state and County planning documents; the County's population estimates; and by using information provided by the San Benito Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), including Municipal Service Review (MSR) documentation. Existing conditions were also determined through personal communications with knowledgeable County staff and by analyzing Geographical Information System (GIS) information. Potential impacts related to public services, compiled and analyzed based on California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) assessment criteria and relative to public service provisions, were determined by comparing potential urban and other development that would likely be constructed under the 2035 General Plan to the existing conditions, consistent with guidelines adopted by the County.

17.1 SETTING

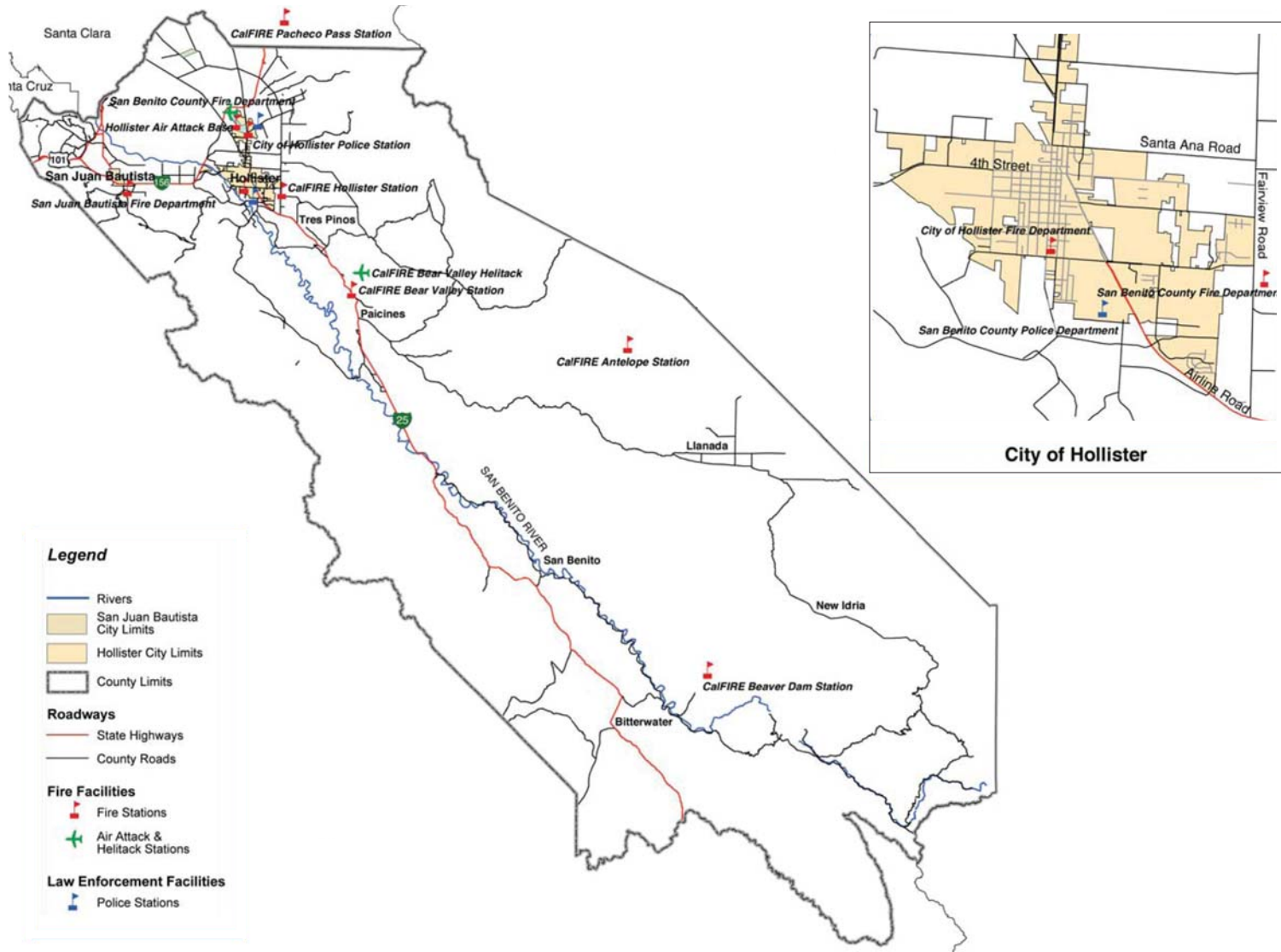
The County's environmental and regulatory settings for public services are described below are based on the General Plan Background Report (San Benito County 2010b). Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines §15150, this document is incorporated into the Revised Draft EIR (RDEIR) by reference as though fully set forth herein. Where necessary, information originating from the Report has been updated with the best available and most current data, as previously discussed in Section 4.3. The Report is available for download at: www.sanbenitogpu.com/docs.html. Copies of the Report may be viewed during standard business hours (8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.), Monday through Thursday, at the San Benito County Planning and Building Department, 2301 Technology Parkway, Hollister, California 95023. County offices are closed to the public on Fridays.

17.1.1 Environmental Setting

Law Enforcement

The County's Sheriff's Office has the primary responsibility of protecting the life and property of citizens living in the unincorporated areas of the County (See [Figure 17-1](#)). The Sheriff's Office is led by the Sheriff Coroner. Executive staff includes the Undersheriff, Lieutenant/Jail Commander, and the Operations Lieutenant. The Sheriff's Office includes the following units and divisions:

- **Agricultural Investigations.** The County has recognized that agricultural crime is an escalating problem requiring serious attention, and is a persistent problem in rural areas. The theft of crops, tractors, equipment, and commercially grown flowers has led to an estimated annual loss of \$30 million to California farmers, according to the Rural Police Project. As part of the Rural Police Project, which is overseen by the County Sheriff's Office, the County has staffed one full time detective to investigate agricultural crime and is working with the District Attorney's Office to staff one part time deputy district attorney for such crimes. The focus of the project will be to increase law enforcement efforts for agriculture specific crimes. The project will coordinate work with 12 other counties in central California to develop a strategy to fight agricultural theft on both a regional and local basis.
- **Chaplain Program.** The purpose of the Sheriff's Chaplain Program is to assist deputies that deal with people in crisis situations by providing counseling services. Types of counseling services cover death or near death emergencies, death notification, some domestic altercations, and other emotional, non-violent occurrences.



not to scale

Source: San Benito County Planning and Building Department 2010;
California Department of Fire and Resources Assessment Program (FRAP) 2010

Figure 17-1 Fire and Police Stations in San Benito County

2035 San Benito County General Plan Revised DEIR



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- **Corrections.** The Corrections Division administers the jail system in the County. The County Jail is located on Flynn Road in Hollister. The facility provides inmate workers to various agencies around the County to assist with work projects. The Corrections Division is comprised of approximately 32 non-sworn Correctional Officers, Sergeants, and support staff. There are also Correctional Officers assigned to Court Security and Prisoner Transportation. the County's inmate average daily population is about 100 persons at any given time.
- **Explorer Program.** The Sheriff Explorer Program offers an opportunity to educate and involve youth in police operations and serve the community. Many law enforcement agencies, including the County Sheriff's Office, use Explorers in crime prevention, traffic control, telecommunications, and community policing projects.
- **Investigations.** The Investigations Division handles crimes against persons, youth services, property crimes, and narcotics enforcement. This includes fraud, theft, burglary, robbery, homicide, sexual assault, general sex crimes, and missing person cases. Additionally, the Investigations Division carries out the duties and responsibilities of the coroner. The Investigations Division is comprised of four detectives.
- **K 9 Unit.** The Canine Unit supports various other departments with suspect apprehension, drug detection, searching for lost persons, crowd control, officer protection, and public awareness. The Canine Unit currently (2010) consists of one handler and one canine.
- **Off-Road Enforcement.** The County Sheriff's Office Off-Road Enforcement Unit (OREU) is a specialized unit deployed to remote areas of the County to provide law enforcement services for those involved in off road vehicle recreation. The OREU currently (2010) consists of two sergeants, three deputies, and one reserve deputy. The unit has a twenty two foot cargo trailer and three Suzuki 300 King Quad All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) that were purchased with grant money. The grant was funded by the California Department of Parks and Recreation Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Recreation program. The team deputies enforce all State and local laws, including regulations pertaining to OHV registration, safe handling and proper operation, trespassing, illegal dumping, and the destruction of natural resources.
- **Patrol.** The Patrol Division personnel are the first to respond to emergencies within the County. Patrol Deputies handle the enforcement of criminal and vehicle code regulations, and investigate misdemeanors and felony crimes. Patrol Deputies are also responsible for the enforcement of some of the County Code ordinances, including parking. In addition to law enforcement duties, the following services are provided through the Patrol Division:

- *Reserves.* The Sheriff's Reserves are a trained work force that supplements the Patrol Division in all areas of law enforcement. The Reserve Deputy Sheriff is a paid position.
- *School Resource Officer (SRO).* The SRO serves as a law related counselor, law related education teacher, and law enforcement officer. General School Resource Officer Services include: providing consultation and information to student support services and other school staff; providing law related education, minors' rights and responsibilities, school attendance, and substance abuse prevention; advising school staff with regard to current illegal activities within the community that may impact the school community; and providing support to the schools' truancy program.
- **Student Support Services.** Representatives serve as a liaison between students, parents, and social agencies that provide services to the school. They also: participate in school activities, student organizations, and athletic events; participate in parent, teacher, staff, and student meetings as requested; answer questions students may have regarding criminal or juvenile law; actively work towards reducing gang activity on campus; and address individual student truancy problems.
- **Deputy Services.** The Sheriff's Office provides Special Law Enforcement Services for public and private events held in the County.
- **House Watch Program.** The Sheriff's Office offers a House Watch Program for County residents that are going on vacation or leaving the area for any length of time. This program is restricted to County residents, and those who live in Tres Pinos, San Juan Bautista, and Aromas. This service does not apply to Hollister residents.
- **Fingerprinting.** The Office of Education provides fingerprint registration via LiveScan technology, which submits digitally scanned fingerprints directly to the California Department of Justice.
- **Permits.** County residents and businesses are required to obtain an Alarm Permit for building and home alarm devices. Concealed Weapons Permits are issued, at the discretion of the Sheriff, to any person who provides proof that he/she is of good moral character, that good cause exists for the issuance, and that the person applying is a resident of the County. The Sheriff may issue to that person a license to carry a pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person.
- **Volunteer Mounted Search and Rescue Unit.** The Sheriff's Office Volunteer Search & Rescue Unit is a nonprofit organization formed for the purpose of assisting the Sheriff in search and rescue, and promoting goodwill among the residents of the County and elsewhere. This unit assists in the location of lost children or hikers, provides assistance

during times of disaster, and provides other support missions at the direction of the Sheriff. Volunteers are required to meet stringent standards in rescue training, CPR & First Aid Certification, and horsemanship skills.

Sworn Deputies. The County Sheriff's Office is located in Hollister and operates a substation in San Juan Bautista. In 2014 the Sheriff's Office had 11 deputy positions designated for street patrol, which does not include patrol services provided in Hollister and San Juan Bautista (Kennedy 2014). These levels indicate a staffing level of 0.58 officers per 1,000 residents based on the population in the unincorporated County in 2014 of approximately 18,936 people. There is also the Sheriff, two captains, five sergeants, and four deputies working special assignments.

Response Time. The time it takes for an officer to respond to a call is referred to as the "response time." Factors that affect response times include the number of officers on duty, the size of the patrol area, the density of the population served, the distance to the call, the level of traffic congestion, and the number of incidents occurring at the same time.

Call Types. Emergency 911 calls that originate in the unincorporated portions of the County are received by the San Benito County Communications Dispatch Center (also known as Hollister Com) located at 471 Fourth Street in Hollister. The Communications Center coordinates dispatch services through a private contractor and routes calls to the Sheriff's Department, the Fire Department, and the EMS Communications Center. Which department responds to the call coming from unincorporated areas depends on the location of the call and the type of emergency. Calls from unincorporated areas may be routed to police, fire, or EMS response from various agencies due to mutual aid agreements between the County, the two cities, and the State's CAL FIRE unit. As a result, all calls received through the Communications Center Dispatch for law enforcement service are routed to the Patrol Division and a call for fire service is routed to the San Benito Monterey (BEU) Unit in Monterey. Once a call is received at the BEU Unit in Monterey, if the call is related to urban, wildland, or auto fires in the County, it is typically routed to the County Fire Department/ CAL FIRE station in Hollister. All emergency calls requiring medical services are forwarded to the ambulance dispatch, which are provided by American Medical Response.

Court Security Services: Marshal

The mission of the County Marshal's Office is to serve the County judiciary and protect the public by ensuring a safe environment in the Superior Courts of the County. Representatives of the department serve court orders, civil process, summons and complaints, and warrants. They enforce the laws of the County and the State of California. The Marshal is elected by the registered voters of the County for a six year term. Other services provided by the Marshal's Office include: coordinating juror security and Court trial issues that relate to security, enforcing rental evictions, assisting other law enforcement agencies, and participating in the community through public service opportunities.

Correctional Services

The County Jail facility is located in Hollister. The original jail was built in 1874 and housed up to 50 prisoners in shared cells. An approximately 28,000 square foot facility opened in November 1992 and has a rated capacity of 124 inmates. The jail consists of two maximum security modules with a capacity of 27 inmates each and two medium security modules with a maximum of 35 inmates each. The jail also houses female inmates in two separate housing units. One unit can house up to 10 medium security female inmates and the other up to eight maximum security inmates. The County's inmate population averages about 100 persons at any given time (San Benito County 2014c). There are also Correctional Officers assigned to Court Security and Prisoner Transportation.

Work Alternative Program. In lieu of incarceration the Jail Division of the Sheriff's Office has an inmate Work Alternative Program. The Sheriff Work Alternative Program is known as S.W.A.P. To qualify for S.W.A.P., the person must have received a jail sentence of 40 days or less. The program accepts court commitments from all California counties.

County Coroner

The Coroner, acting under the authority of the California Penal Code, Government Code, and Health and Safety Code, provides a preliminary inquiry into any death reported. This hearing is recorded and, if circumstances warrant, a full investigation into the cause of death is completed. In the County each Deputy Sheriff is trained as a Deputy Coroner, and the Investigations Division carries out the duties and responsibilities of the Coroner.

Fire Protection

There are both urban and wildland fire hazards in the County. This creates the potential for injury, loss of life, and property damage if there is inadequate fire personnel staffing, equipment, and response times. Urban fires primarily involve the uncontrolled burning of residential, commercial, or industrial structures due to human activities. Only structural fires are discussed in this chapter. Wildland fire risk and response are discussed in Chapter 12.

Urban Fires and Response Capabilities

Urban fires primarily involve the uncontrolled burning of residential, commercial, and industrial structures due to human made causes. Factors that exacerbate urban structural fires include substandard building construction, highly flammable materials, delay in response, and inadequate fire protection services. Much of the County is located within State Responsibility Areas, directly protected by CAL FIRE engines responding from State owned fire stations. While the County Fire Department is responsible for fighting urban and structural fires within unincorporated County, other fire responsibilities are distributed among several agencies

including the Aromas Tri County Fire Department, Hollister Fire Department, and San Juan Bautista Volunteer Fire Department. The following describe the basic capabilities of and infrastructure and equipment managed by the various fire departments and agency stations in the County (See [Figure 17-1](#)).

County Fire Services. The County contracts with the Hollister Fire Department to coordinate fire service for the entire County, including the City of Hollister and San Juan Bautista. In 2014, there were 3,644 fire calls, with an average seven-minute response time. According to the Background Report, the County's existing goals are to have five-minute average response times in local-responsibility areas and fifteen minute average response times in state-responsibility areas. With the aid of CAL FIRE, discussed below, the County has been meeting its response time goals. The County also has current plans to construct a fire station in the northern portion of the county at Aerostar Way and Flynn Road and is considering a new fire station in the southern portion of the County. The primary responsibility of the Hollister Fire Department is to provide services for structural fires rather than wildland fires. Although the County does not own a fire station, it does own fire equipment, including a water tender, a Type III engine, three Type I engines (one located at the Hollister Station, one given to the San Juan Bautista Volunteer Fire Department for mutual aid, and one reserve engine), and two utility pick-up trucks.

The Fire Department is not principally responsible for the wildland fire protection in the SRA, but responds as initial automatic aid to many of these areas. Wildland fires can be very labor intensive and vast commitments of resources are often required. A large fire may require the fire apparatus to remain at the scene for several days, causing equipment and staffing problems within the County Fire Department. As such, CAL FIRE often responds to wildland fires and the County provides secondary response, as needed. With the assistance of CAL FIRE, County response times have been adequate.

CAL FIRE. CAL FIRE is a State wildland fire agency established to protect non Federal, unincorporated lands within California, and is described in detail in Chapter 12.

Aromas Tri-County Fire Department. The Aromas Tri County Fire Protection District (ATCFPD) provides fire protection services within its service area in San Benito, Santa Cruz, and Monterey Counties, and operates under a Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement with CAL FIRE. ATCFPD provides a constant daily minimum staffing of one Battalion Chief, one Fire Captain, one Fire Apparatus Engineer, and one Firefighter II on the primary response engine. The fire station is located at 492 Carpenteria Road in Aromas. It houses one Type I fire engine, one Type III fire engine, one utility pickup, and one chief's command vehicle. An additional Type III wildland engine is housed at the station and staffed seasonally with a four person crew. The ATCFPD battalion chief provides back up chief officer coverage to the SBCFD at no charge to the County.

Fire Prevention and Suppression

Several factors influence the ability of fire departments to provide adequate levels of service within the County. These factors, including housing and population density, accessibility by fire vehicles, and water supply and availability, are discussed below.

Housing Density. Most of the County population lives in low density housing in rural areas of the County, with higher density development concentrated in Hollister, San Juan Bautista, and Aromas. Housing and population densities generally decrease with increased distance from these three urban centers, thereby increasing the time necessary for firefighters to respond to an incident.

Accessibility. The northern part of the County is crisscrossed with major traffic arteries that can provide quick response times to urban fires. However, the southern part of the County has fewer major traffic arteries and is mainly accessed by SR 25, making fire response times longer than in the northern part of the County.

Water Supply and Availability. Rural and outlying areas have the additional problem relating to water supply availability. Unreliable water sources and delays in water delivery can limit a fire response team's ability to control the spread of a fire. As a result of limited pressurized water supplies in rural areas (i.e., fire hydrants), water often must be delivered to the scene of the emergency through the use of water tenders, one of which is owned by the County Fire Department. Thus, fires in these areas require more resources than in urban areas for adequate response.

Emergency Medical Services

Emergency Preparedness

An emergency is a life, property, or environment threatening incident, particularly one that occurs suddenly or unexpectedly. The purpose of emergency preparedness is to minimize threats to public safety by preparing and planning adequate response to potential emergencies. The Office of Emergency Services and the Emergency Medical Services Agency is responsible for preparing and planning for response to potential emergencies and medical disasters. The Office of Emergency Services includes the following programs and services:

San Benito County Office of Emergency Services (OES)

Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Planning. This departmental program develops and maintains the Emergency Operations Plan in accordance with State guidelines.

County Communications Center (9-1-1). The County Communications Center serves as the 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for the entire County area, including the cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, which contract for services and contribute funding. The Communications Center provides centralized Countywide dispatching for emergency medical, fire, and law enforcement services, and for County Public Works. The center also processes criminal and traffic warrants.

Emergency Medical Services. This division plans, coordinates, and evaluates emergency medical services to ensure that emergency medical care is available and consistent at the emergency scene, during transport, and in the emergency room. The EMS system includes fire departments, ambulance companies, hospitals, police departments, the American Red Cross, and the American Heart Association.

Other Services. In addition, the Emergency Services Department provides training in various aspects of pre hospital emergency medical care. The department also plans and manages activities such as disaster medical preparedness, ambulance contracts and rate structure, communications, multi casualty incident response, and emergency trauma response in coordination with other agencies.

County Service Area 36. The department also develops and administers the budget for County Service Area 36, which funds Advanced Life Support (ALS or paramedic) ambulance services and enhanced emergency medical services through participating agencies Countywide through benefit assessments on property. Currently (2010), the property assessment is \$20 per year per single family dwelling.

San Benito County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency

EMC System. The County has an EMS system that is overseen by the County Emergency Medical Care Commission, a board certified emergency physician, and a pre hospital advisory committee. The County's EMS Plan is approved by the State EMS Authority and identifies the overall needs and objectives for the County's EMS systems in accordance with State system standards and guidelines. EMS systems consist of manpower and training, communications, transportation, assessments of hospitals and critical care centers, system organization and management, data collection, public information and education, and disaster response. In 2007 the EMS system met most minimum standards and guidelines, but did not meet standards for data management systems, system design evaluation, disaster response, and trauma care. As a result, the County developed both plans to address the deficiencies. For example, in 2004 the San Benito Trauma Plan was approved by the State EMS Authority; however, full implementation has not yet occurred, although the Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital meets the requirements to be designated a Level IV Trauma Center.

Disaster Medical Response. The County Office of Emergency Services has developed an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that contains a Medical/Health Annex. The Annex identifies the medical and health components to address policies and procedures for providing and maintaining services during major disasters. It will be used primarily for major, area-wide disasters that create sufficient casualties to overwhelm local response capabilities.

State Mutual Aid System

The foundation of the State of California's emergency planning and response is a statewide mutual aid system, which is designed to ensure that adequate resources, facilities, and other support are provided to impacted jurisdictions when their own resources are inadequate to cope with a given situation. The basis for this system is the California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement, which has been adopted by all of California's cities and counties. Under this agreement, each jurisdiction retains control of its own personnel and facilities, but gives and receives help wherever it is needed. State government, on the other hand, is obligated to provide available State resources to assist local jurisdictions during emergencies, and to manage State recovery assistance programs. The State is broken into six mutual aid regions and three administrative regions. The County is in Region II, the Coastal Region, which also consists of Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Lake, Napa, Marin, Sonoma, Solano, San Francisco, Contra Costa, Alameda, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Monterey Counties. The County implements a similar mutual aid system plan when certain medical situations occur that go above and beyond emergency response plans for smaller incidents. Emergency response planning for such events always includes all existing County personnel, facilities, and resources, in addition to resources from neighboring counties and State organizations.

Multi-Casualty Incident (MCI) Plan. The Multi Casualty Incident (MCI) Plan goes into effect when more casualties are produced than can be managed by normal available resources. When an MCI incident occurs, the Communications Call Center will notify all responding agencies, ambulance dispatch, the Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital, and the California Highway Patrol to broadcast a possible or “activated” MCI. The declaration in the broadcast would describe the type of incident, the location and best access routes, exposure areas, need for specific types and number of resources, types of injuries, and the designation of the incident.

County Emergency Systems

The following summaries highlight some of the County's emergency response system services that assist the County in preparing, responding to, and mitigating emergency and medical incidents. These include the Countywide joint dispatch system, ambulance services, emergency shelters, and hospitals.

Ambulance Service Providers. The County has contracted with American Medical Response (AMR) for all paramedical services. They are also the only approved private Advanced Life Support (ALS) provider in the unincorporated County to deliver its services through ground ambulances under the County's Emergency Ambulance Zone Exclusive Operating Area (EOA). AMR has an auto aid agreement with Westmed Ambulance of Monterey County to provide ambulance life support (ALS) services to the southwestern portion of the County when necessary. There are two full time ambulances serving the majority of the County on a 24 hour basis. There is a third ambulance available on weekends (Zamzow 2014).

There are currently no EMS aircraft based in the County. Therefore, the County has developed agreements for the use of out of County emergency medical air services from Monterey, Santa Clara, Stanislaus, and San Luis Obispo Counties. The County also relies on several other providers for private emergency air transport. Emergency transport is also provided through the Antelope Fire Station in Paicines, the Aromas Tri County Fire District located in Aromas, the Bear Valley Fire Station, also located in Paicines, the Hollister Air Attack Base, the Hollister Fire Department, the County Fire Department, the San Juan Bautista Volunteer Fire Department, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation Department in Hollister.

EMS Response Times. The State EMS Authority designates response time standards for urban, rural, and wilderness areas. For example, response times for basic life support and CPR must not exceed five minutes for urban areas, 15 minutes for suburban and rural areas, and must occur as quickly as possible for calls from wilderness areas. Data from the County's EMS providers indicates that the County meets the minimum emergency medical service response times.

Trauma Center. The San Benito EMS Agency developed a trauma plan for the County, which was approved by the State EMS Authority. However, the implementation of the plan has not been fully accomplished by the Agency. For example, there is no trauma center located in the County. Instead, the San Benito EMS Agency uses air ambulances to transport patients to trauma centers in other counties. This does not affect first response times.

Emergency Shelters. There are four licensed shelters in the County, including the New Idria Mines, which provides a facility for up to 45 persons, San Benito High School, which can accommodate up to 225 persons, the County Jail, which can accommodate 90 persons, and Keystone Seed Company, which has facilities for up to 60 persons.

Advanced Life-Support Systems. The County has a Paramedic Emergency Medical Services Program, including the administration of paramedic and advanced life support services. The County also has an automatic aid agreement with Monterey County for ambulance service from Kings City to respond to calls for service in the southwestern portion of the County.

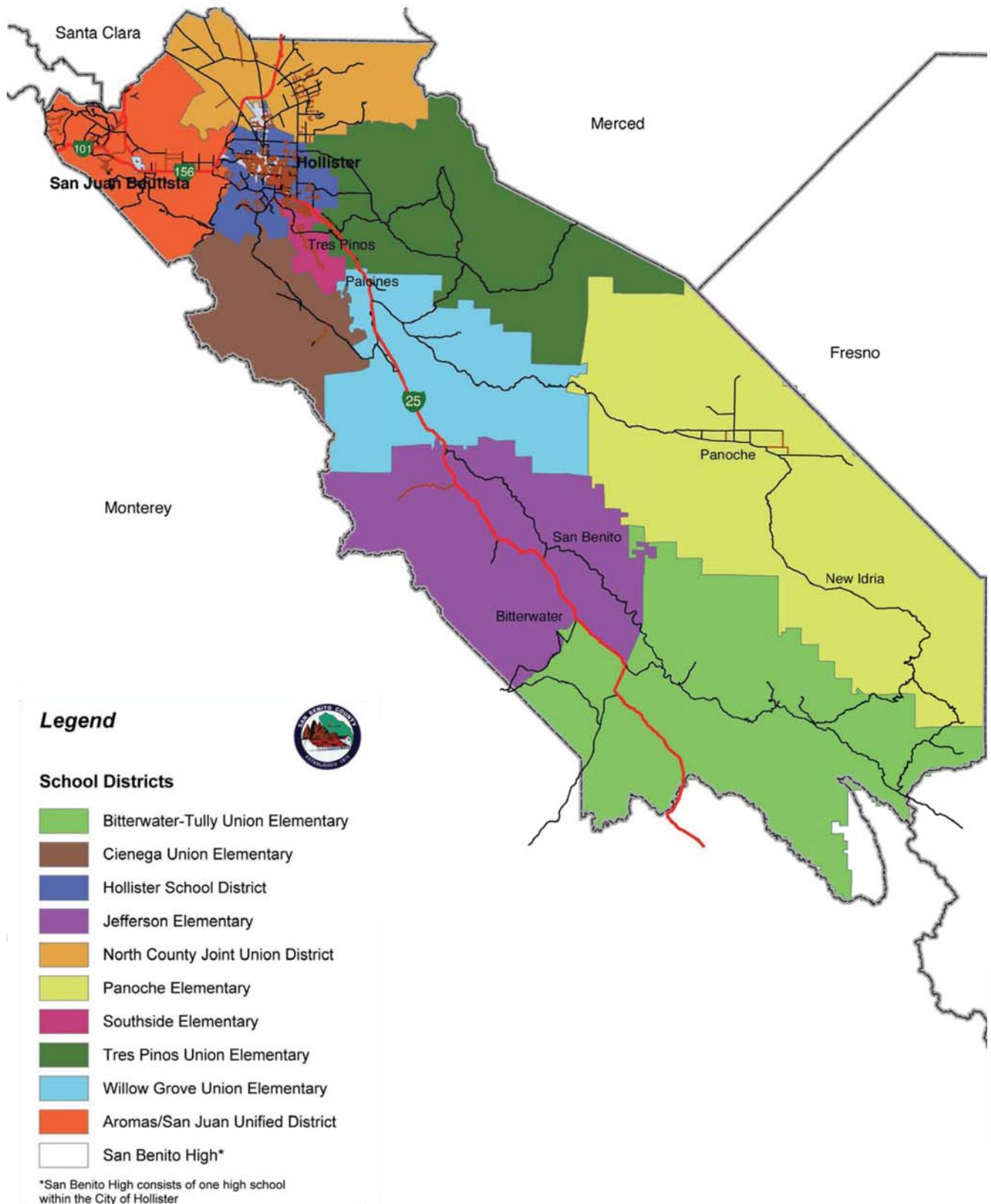
All-Terrain Vehicle Response. The Hollister Hills State Vehicular Recreation Area is staffed by Park Rangers who are certified EMTs. They use all-terrain vehicles to respond to medical emergencies within the park. The Sheriff's Office also has an off road enforcement unit that uses all-terrain vehicles and a mounted search and rescue unit.

Hospitals. The County includes one local acute care hospital, the Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital located at in Hollister. The hospital includes an ambulatory surgery center, 119 licensed beds and two private recovery rooms, an approximately 7,600 square foot outpatient surgery center, a skilled nursing facility, and a testing clinic (OSHPD 2014). The ambulatory surgery center features three state-of-the-art surgery suites, large pre- and post-op areas, 10 beds and two private recovery rooms. It also includes a pre-op admissions testing clinic. Hazel Hawkins is a designated paramedic base station hospital and a Level IV trauma center; however, as mentioned above, the County still lacks a designated trauma center. As a result, most trauma cases are transported to centers in neighboring counties. Generally, the County limits its EMS system ground ambulances to no more than 30 minute transport times when traveling beyond the County lines. Countywide, there was an average of 2.0 beds per thousand population in 2014 (119 beds/57,517 persons) (OSHPD 2014). This is lower than the California average of 2.17 beds per thousand and the national average of 3.0 beds per thousand in the United States (Census 2010, CHCF 2013). Also, a much higher number of acute care beds per thousand are available in neighboring counties available to residents of unincorporated County.

American Red Cross. The American Red Cross services the County and its cities by providing welfare and shelter service in the event of an emergency. The Red Cross has the responsibility to provide relief for the disaster caused needs of people affected by a natural disaster. Its program is conducted through local chapters, and is financed by its own programs.

Schools

The County Office of Education coordinates educational services for the residents of the County. Pre-kindergarten (K) through Grade 12 educational services are offered through nine elementary school districts, one high school district, and one unified district for a total of 12 districts in the County (See [Figure 17-2](#)). The Office of Education also provides alternative education at Santa Ana Opportunity School, San Andreas Continuation High School, and Pinnacles Community/Court School. The 12 school districts include 17 elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools. The Office of Education operates a Juvenile Hall/Community School and the San Benito County Opportunity School. For the 2013-2014 school year, the County enrolled 11,206 students (CALPADS 2014).



Source: San Benito County Planning and Building Department 2010

Figure 17-2



not to scale



School Districts in San Benito County

2035 San Benito County General Plan Revised DEIR

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Library

County services designated as education services include the County's Libraries and Cooperative Extension. For a discussion of public education in the County, refer to Section 7.9, Schools, of this document. The County library is consolidated with the Hollister Public Library, and located in a single library building in Hollister. Services at the library are available on weekdays. The library is a member of the Monterey Bay Cooperative Library System (MOBAC), a multi-type library consortium of 19 full members (public, academic and special) and several networking members in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties. The County Library Bookmobile operates three days each week, with stops scheduled at various schools, convalescent and nursing facilities, apartment facilities, the Tres Pinos Post Office, and the Visitors Center at Pinnacles National Monument. The San Benito County Free Library also offers an Adult Literacy Program, a Kids' Place Program, and a Teen Space Program. The Library also has The San Benito County Free Library has entered into a contract to bring high-speed computer networking to certain facilities, improving connection speeds.

17.1.2 Regulatory Setting

State

- **California Fire Code.** In accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Division 1, Chapter 4, the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) has established minimum standards for fire suppression and emergency medical services. The standards include, but are not limited to, guidelines on the handling of highly combustible materials, fire hosing sizing requirements, restrictions on the use of compressed air, access roads, and the testing, maintenance, and use of all fire-fighting and emergency medical equipment.
- **California Uniform Fire Code.** The Uniform Fire Code (UFC) contains regulations relating to construction, maintenance, and use of buildings. Topics addressed in the code include fire department access, fire hydrants, automatic sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, fire and explosion hazards, safety, hazardous materials storage and use, provisions intended to protect and assist fire responders, industrial processes, and many other fire-safety requirements for new and existing buildings.
- **California Department of Education Standards.** The California Department of Education has published the *Guide to School Site Analysis and Development* to establish a valid technique for determining acreage for new school development. Rather than assigning a strict student/acreage ratio, the guide provides flexible formulas that permit each district to tailor its answers to accommodate its individual conditions.

- **California Library Services Act.** California public libraries engaged in cooperative efforts with neighboring libraries are supported through funded programs of the California Library Services Act, designed to encourage interlibrary cooperation.
- **California Government Code.** There are several sections of the California Government Code that regulate the County's provision of public services, including, but not limited to statutes that ensure a free County library, provide requirements for County auditors, and delineate the duties and responsibilities of the Board of Supervisors, District Attorney's office, and Public Defender's office. Sections of the code also mandate that an Office of Sheriff be established in each County in California.
- **Education Code Section § 17620.** Section 17620 authorizes any school district to levy a fee on development projects within the district for the construction or reconstruction of school facilities (subject to the limitations set forth in Government Code § 65995), provided the district can show justification for levying the fees.
- **Government Code Section § 65995.** This section governs the consideration of impacts and mitigation related to schools conducted pursuant to CEQA. It limits the County to charging no more than the statutorily required impact fees authorized under § 17620 to offset school impacts, unless the school district conducts a School Facilities Needs Assessment and meets specific conditions. Section 65995 states that the payment of a fee, pursuant to Education Code § 17620 and in the amount specified in §§ 65995.5 or 65995.7 of the Government Code, will fully and adequately mitigate the provision of school facilities related to new development. This section also prohibits the County from disapproving a project based on the inadequacy of school facility fees, or the project applicant's refusal to provide school facilities mitigation.
- **California Health and Safety Code.** There are several sections of the California Health and Safety Code that delineate the responsibilities of the County Health Officer.
- **State of California Proposition 1A/Senate Bill 50.** Proposition 1A/Senate Bill (SB) 50 (Chapter 407, Statutes of 1998) was a school construction measure that was approved by the voters on the November 3, 1998 ballot. It authorized the expenditure of State general obligation bonds totaling \$9.2 billion through 2002, primarily for the modernization and rehabilitation of older school facilities and the construction of new school facilities related to new growth. Of the \$9.2 billion, \$2.5 billion was targeted for higher education facilities and the remaining \$6.7 billion was targeted for K-12 facilities, throughout the state. Proposition 1A/SB 50 also implemented significant fee reform by amending the laws governing developer fees and school mitigation. The fee reforms imposed restrictions on the power of cities and counties to require mitigation for school facilities impacts as a

condition of approving new development. It allowed school districts to levy fees according to three different statutory fee structures.

- **Mental Health Services Act.** In November 2004, the voters approved Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). The goals of the MHSA are to: 1) reduce long-term adverse impact on individuals, families, state and local budgets due to untreated mental illness, 2) expand innovative service programs for children, adults and seniors, 3) reduce stigma associated with being diagnosed with a mental illness, 4) impose a one percent income tax on personal income in excess of \$1 million, 5) generate approximately \$254 million in fiscal year 2004-05, \$683 million in 2005-06 and increasing amounts thereafter. Much of the funding will be provided to County mental health programs to fund programs consistent with their local plans.
- **Welfare and Institutions Code.** Sections of this code provide the Department of Mental Health (DMH) with increased funding, personnel and other resources to support County mental health programs and monitor progress toward statewide goals for children, transition age youth, adults, older adults and families.

County

- **1992 General Plan.** The existing General Plan contains numerous goals and policies related to the provision of public services and facilities.
- **Fire Code.** Title 21, Chapter 21.01, Article II, § 21.01.021(N) of the San Benito County Code adopts the 2010 California Fire Code, with modifications, as the County Fire Code (Uniform Fire Code Section 10.30 (c)). It requires developers to provide approved water supplies capable of delivering adequate fire flow for fire protection to all premises upon which buildings or portions of buildings are constructed. The County is authorized to charge fees to cover the cost of any fire department service pursuant to Title 5, Chapter 5.01, Articles VIII (§5.01.280 et seq.) and X (§5.01.340 et seq.). Article X also outlines the building plan check process, required sprinkler systems, and inspection fees.

SBCFD additionally reviews development plans and building permits for compliance with the Uniform Building Code and County Fire Code. The County Fire Code requires developers to provide approved water supplies capable of delivering adequate fire flow for fire protection to all premises upon which buildings or portions of buildings are constructed. Water supply may consist of reservoirs, pressure tanks, elevated tanks, water mains, or other fixed systems capable of supplying the required fire flow.

- **School Facilities Fees and Dedications.** Title 5, Chapter 5.01, Article VI (§ 5.01.160 et seq.) provides a method for financing interim school facilities necessitated by new

residential developments causing conditions of overcrowding, which implements and is consistent with California Government Code section 65970.

- **Capital Improvements Impact Fee.** Title 5, Chapter 5.01, Article IX (§5.01.310 et seq.) generates revenue to defray the costs of capital improvements necessitated by new development projects in the County. Revenue in the capital improvements impact fee ordinance funds is used for the financing or the acquisition of capital expenditures, projects or improvements in the County's Capital Improvement Plan. Capital improvements include, without limitation, those capital improvements involved in the provision of law enforcement.

17.2 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The public services analysis evaluates whether implementation of potential development and construction of infrastructure that would be allowed to occur under the 2035 General Plan project could result in adverse effects to the provision of public services provided in the County, such that the construction of new and expanded facilities would cause environmental impacts.

17.2.1 Significance Criteria

As set forth in Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section XIV, Public Services, Question a, the following criteria have been established to quantify the level of significance of an adverse effect to public services being evaluated pursuant to CEQA. The numeration of each criterion below corresponds to the questions in the checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (e.g., XIV.a). An impact would exceed a significance threshold under these circumstances:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the 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 public services: fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, and other public facilities (XIV.a)

For a discussion on whether the proposed 2035 General Plan would result in adverse physical impacts on recreational facilities, including parks, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, see Chapter 18, *Recreation*. Wildfire hazards and related fire protection services are evaluated in Chapter 12, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, and utilities and service systems including water supply, treatment, and distribution are evaluated in Chapter 20, *Utilities and Service Systems*.

17.2.2 Analysis Methodology

The following evaluation includes a review of the public services within the County potentially affected by development allowed under the 2035 General Plan. To determine impacts, the evaluation compares existing public service conditions to future demand anticipated by 2035.

As discussed in Section 4.5.7, Potential Growth Scenarios, the EIR analysis takes into account the two growth scenarios: Scenario 1 and Scenario 2. For this programmatic level of analysis, there will be no difference in the impacts that would result from these two growth scenarios because the County would apply the 2035 General Plan policies, including additional policies from mitigation measures contained in the certified EIR, addressing public services impacts equally in approving development, regardless of location. It is anticipated that site-specific analysis of impacts to public services including a project-level review would be required for particular development proposals under the 2035 General Plan that may be considered in the future.

Among other things, the County's public services were identified and evaluated according to County documentation on existing facilities, inventories of equipment, and staffing levels. Given the program level nature of the proposed 2035 General Plan and thus the programmatic level of review in this RDEIR, specific project-level impacts are not identified or discussed in this RDEIR since the ultimate scope and location of future individual development projects is not currently known and the exact locations and features of any future public service facility projects necessary to serve those new developments are not currently known. Instead, based on reasonably available information, the impact analysis describes the new and expanded public facilities that may be required to serve the County projected increased population that may occur by 2035. The impact analysis factors in whether the 2035 General Plan goals and policies would reduce impacts related to the need to expand or construct new public facilities to serve the increased population.

17.2.3 Environmental Impacts

The following discussion examines the potential public service impacts, including impacts to fire protection services, police and law enforcement services, school facilities, and libraries, from the proposed project based on the significance criteria described above. To the extent it is determined that the development contemplated under the 2035 General Plan would trigger the need for new or expanded public service facilities, the potential environmental effects of actually constructing and operating public service facilities to support such development are incorporated within the programmatic level analyses set forth in Chapters 5 through 22 of this RDEIR. More specific analysis of the impacts of constructing and operating such facilities would be undertaken at a project level review at such time as an individual development proposal came forward.

Table 17-1 summarizes 2035 General Plan policies that would mitigate environmental impacts associated with public services, including an explanation of how the policy would avoid or reduce impacts.

Table 17-1 2035 General Plan Goals and Policies that Mitigate Public Service Impacts

Goals and Policies	How the Goal/Policy Avoids or Reduces Impact	Impact PS-#
Public Facilities and Services Element		
<p>GOAL PFS-1: General Public Facilities and Services</p> <p>To provide residents and businesses quality, cost-effective, and sustainable public facilities and services.</p>	<p>Sets out the County’s broad goal of reducing impacts related to increased demand for fire and police protection services and other public facilities by ensuring adequate, quality, sustainable, and cost-effective services are provided.</p>	<p>1,2</p>
<p>Policy PFS-1.1: Essential Facilities and Services</p> <p>The County shall ensure that adequate public facilities and services essential for public health and safety are provided to all County residents and businesses and maintained at acceptable service levels. Where public facilities and services are provided by other agencies, the County shall encourage similar service level goals.</p>	<p>Minimizes impacts related to the need to construct new and expanded fire and police protection facilities by determining the acceptable level to deliver services to protect public health and safety.</p>	<p>1,2</p>
<p>Policy PFS-1.2: Facilities and Services Deficiencies</p> <p>The County shall coordinate with other public facility and service providers, such as Cal Fire and water districts, to identify and find solutions to key infrastructure deficiencies in the County.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts from the provision of fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency response services by ensuring the County coordinates with other public facility and services providers, which helps ensure efficiency in service provision and thus reducing the need to construct new or expand public service facilities.</p>	<p>1,2</p>

Goals and Policies	How the Goal/Policy Avoids or Reduces Impact	Impact PS-#
<p>Policy PFS-1.10: Maximize Use of Existing Facilities</p> <p>The County shall require new development projects to be designed and sited to use existing facilities and services to the extent practicable and to the extent that such a design and site choice would be consistent with good design principles.</p>	<p>Requiring new development to be designed and sited to maximize the use of existing facilities and services would increase service efficiencies and reduce the need to plan for and construct new facilities.</p>	<p>1,2</p>
<p>Policy PFS-1.11: Pay Fair Share</p> <p>The County shall require new development to pay its fair share of public facility and service costs.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts related to the increased demands for fire and police protection services by requiring that new development pay its fair share of funding new equipment and staffing necessary to maintain levels of service.</p>	<p>1,2</p>
<p>Policy PFS-1.12: New Development Requirements</p> <p>The County shall require new development, in compliance with local, State, and Federal law, to mitigate project impacts associated with public facilities and services, including, but not limited to, fire, law enforcement, water, wastewater, schools, infrastructure, roads, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities through the use of annexation fees, connection fees, facility construction/expansion requirements, or other appropriate methods.</p>	<p>Minimizes construction-related impacts that may be caused by constructing expanded or new fire protection, law enforcement response and emergency response facilities to serve demand created from new development.</p>	<p>1,2</p>
<p>Policy PFS-1.13: Service Agency Notification</p> <p>The County shall notify the appropriate agencies (e.g., cities, special districts, school districts, emergency service providers) of new development applications within their service areas early in review process to allow sufficient time to assess impacts on facilities and services.</p>	<p>Reduces environmental impacts through early review and analysis of how new development proposals may impact public services.</p>	<p>1,3</p>

Goals and Policies	How the Goal/Policy Avoids or Reduces Impact	Impact PS-#
<p>Goal LU-9: City Fringe Areas</p> <p>To ensure that planning and development approvals within city fringe areas are coordinated between the County and the Cities in order to ensure future growth in these areas is orderly, efficient, and has sufficient and necessary public facilities and infrastructure.</p>	<p>Ensures urban development within city fringe areas is coordinated, which allows the consolidation of public services and more efficient response times thereby reducing the demand for new or altered governmental facilities.</p>	
<p>Policy LU-9.1: Orderly City Expansion</p> <p>The County shall support the orderly expansion of urban uses within the spheres of influence of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, recognizing that the Cities have primary responsibility for determining the type, intensity, and timing of future development in these areas.</p>	<p>Supports a shifts of urban development to existing urban lands within spheres of influence in Hollister and San Juan Bautista, thereby improving the consolidation of public facilities, response times, and the efficiency of service levels, thereby reducing the demand for new or altered governmental facilities.</p>	
<p>Goal PFS-10: School and Library Facilities</p> <p>To collaborate with school districts and other education providers to develop high quality educational facilities and programs that serve existing and future residents.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts to school and library facilities by coordinating with school districts to provide necessary educational services, thereby reducing the demand for new or altered governmental facilities which would otherwise trigger the need to construct new or expanded facilities.</p>	3,4
<p>Policy PFS-10.2: School District Consultation</p> <p>The County shall encourage early consultation between school districts and the County when proposing new, or modifying existing, school site locations.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts related to the need to construct school facilities by working with local school districts when proposing new or modifying existing school districts to develop solutions to reduce overcrowding in schools and minimize financial constraints related to constructing new facilities.</p>	3

Goals and Policies	How the Goal/Policy Avoids or Reduces Impact	Impact PS-#
<p>Policy PFS-10.3: New School Location</p> <p>The County shall encourage school districts to site new schools in locations that are consistent with current and future land uses. The County shall also encourage the siting of new schools near residential areas with safe access for students to walk or bicycle to and from their homes.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts from new educational facilities by ensuring land use consistency and appropriate siting that encourages access via walking and bicycling, thereby reducing land use and other environmental impacts related to the construction of such new facilities.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Policy PFS-10.4: Multiple-Use School Facilities</p> <p>The County shall encourage multiple-use school facilities, including opportunities for civic and cultural uses, recreation facilities, and service programs to efficiently provide for education, recreation, and community meeting space.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts related to the need to construct school facilities by encouraging multiple-use school facilities that provide education, recreation, and community meeting spaces.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Policy PFS-12.5: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design</p> <p>The County shall include the Sheriff Department in the review of development projects, specifically for residential subdivision and commercial development, to adequately address crime and safety, and promote implementation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts related to the need for new police and law enforcement services and facilities by incorporating crime prevention by environmental design principles and including the Sheriff's Office in the review of all development projects.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Goal PFS-13: Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services</p> <p>To coordinate with fire protection and emergency service providers to ensure adequate fire facilities, equipment, and services are available to protect County residents and property from fire.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts to fire protection and emergency response facilities by ensuring that coordination occurs with other fire and emergency response providers in order that County residents and property are protected.</p>	<p>1</p>

Goals and Policies	How the Goal/Policy Avoids or Reduces Impact	Impact PS-#
<p>Policy PFS-13.2: Mutual Aid Agreements</p> <p>The County shall maintain mutual aid agreements between fire districts and emergency service providers to ensure residents and property are adequately served and to facilitate the efficient use of available resources.</p>	<p>Minimizes impacts related to the need to construct new and expanded fire protection and emergency response facilities by establishing mutual aid agreements between fire districts and emergency response providers and efficiently using available resources.</p>	1
<p>Policy PFS-13.6: Visible Signage</p> <p>The County shall require that all roads and buildings are properly identified by name or number with clearly visible signs in order to promote faster response times.</p>	<p>Makes fire response more efficient because by requiring all roads and buildings contain proper identification and visible signage, responders will be able to find them more quickly.</p>	1
<p>Policy PFS-13.8: Fire Station Locations</p> <p>The County shall strive to locate new fire stations in areas that ensure the minimum response times to service calls.</p>	<p>Minimizes impacts from the need to construct or expand new facilities by locating new fire station in areas in areas of most need and that ensure minimum response times to service calls, thereby increasing service efficiency and reducing the need for additional facilities to be built or expanded.</p>	1
<p>Policy PFS-13.9: Fire Safety Standard Compliance</p> <p>The County shall ensure that all proposed developments are reviewed for compliance with the California Fire Code and other applicable State laws.</p>	<p>Ensures that all proposed developments are reviewed for compliance with the California Fire Code and other applicable State laws thereby reducing the demand for fire protection services and related need to provide new or altered fire protection facilities.</p>	1

Goals and Policies	How the Goal/Policy Avoids or Reduces Impact	Impact PS-#
<p>Policy PFS-13.10: Adequate Fire Flows for Agricultural Facilities</p> <p>The County shall require all agricultural commercial facilities to have adequate water supply and fire flows to meet the State Fire Code and other appropriate State laws.</p>	<p>Avoids the need for constructing new facilities by ensuring all agricultural commercial facilities within the County have adequate water supply for fire protection.</p>	<p>1</p>
Land Use Element		
<p>Goal LU-1: Countywide Growth and Development</p> <p>To maintain San Benito County’s rural character and natural beauty while providing areas for needed future growth.</p>	<p>Reduces demand for new or altered governmental facilities by focusing growth to urban areas in order to increase the efficiency and delivery of public services.</p>	<p>1,2</p>
<p>Policy LU-1.1: Countywide Development</p> <p>The County shall focus future development in areas around cities where infrastructure and public services are available, within existing unincorporated communities, and within a limited number of New Communities, provided they meet the requirements of goal section LU-7.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts related to the need to provide additional fire protection, law enforcement and other public service facilities by directing growth to urban communities around cities where existing infrastructure and facilities are already in place, thereby minimizing the need to construct new or expanded facilities.</p>	<p>1,2</p>
<p>Policy LU-1.3: Future Development Timing</p> <p>The County shall ensure that future development does not outpace the ability of either the County or other public/private service providers to provide adequate services and infrastructure. The County shall review future development proposals for their potential to reduce the level of services provided to the existing communities or place economic hardships on existing communities, and the County may deny proposals that are projected to have these effects.</p>	<p>Minimizes impacts related to the demand for additional fire protection, law enforcement and other public service facilities by promoting compact development that will direct growth to more urban locations with higher residential densities, allowing such facilities to consolidate services and provide more efficient levels of service to a larger population.</p>	<p>1,2</p>

Goals and Policies	How the Goal/Policy Avoids or Reduces Impact	Impact PS-#
<p>Policy LU-1.7: Community Plans</p> <p>The County should consider the development and adoption of Community Plans for existing unincorporated communities in order to maintain/establish a community identity, coordinate traffic and circulation improvements, promote infill development where public services are already in demand, identify recreational needs and, ensure coordinated development.</p>	<p>Reduces impacts to existing and future public facilities by considering the adoption of Community Plans for existing communities to promote infill development where public services are already in demand, which allows the consolidation of public services and more efficient response times.</p>	1,2
<p>Goal LU-4: Residential Development</p> <p>To encourage variety in new unincorporated residential development while also providing incentives for clustered residential as a means to protect valuable agricultural and natural resources.</p>	<p>Encouraging a variety of new unincorporated residential development and incentives for clustered residential areas would protect valuable resources and concentrate development, thereby increasing the efficiency and delivery of public services and avoiding impacts from the provision of new or altered facilities.</p>	1,2
<p>Goal LU-9: City Fringe Areas</p> <p>To ensure that planning and development approvals within city fringe areas are coordinated between the County and the Cities in order to ensure future growth in these areas is orderly, efficient, and has sufficient and necessary public facilities and infrastructure.</p>	<p>Ensures that urban development within city fringe areas is coordinated, which allows the consolidation of public services and more efficient response times, which thereby decreases the need for new or expanded government facilities.</p>	1,2
<p>Policy LU-9.1: Orderly City Expansion</p> <p>The County shall support the orderly expansion of urban uses within the spheres of influence of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, recognizing that the Cities have primary responsibility for determining the type, intensity, and timing of future development in these areas.</p>	<p>Shifts urban development to existing urban land uses within spheres of influence in Hollister and San Juan Bautista, thereby improving the consolidation of public facilities, response times, and the efficiency of service levels and avoiding the need for new or altered facilities.</p>	1,2

Goals and Policies	How the Goal/Policy Avoids or Reduces Impact	Impact PS-#
Health and Safety Element		
<p>Policy Goal HS-1: Emergency Preparedness To maintain the necessary level of fire, EMS, law enforcement, and disaster preparedness for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of people living, working, and residing in San Benito County.</p>	Sets the County’s overall goal to reduce the need to plan for and expand fire protection and emergency response services within the unincorporated County by maintaining the necessary level of disaster preparedness for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the people living and working in the County.	1
<p>Policy HS-1.5: Mutual Assistance Programs The County shall continue its mutual assistance programs and work closely with the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, as well as State and Federal authorities, in assuring emergency preparedness and response in the event of a major disaster.</p>	Reduces the need for new or altered governmental facilities by ensuring efficient cooperation among jurisdictions to provide necessary services.	1
<p>Policy HS-1.6: Emergency Preparedness Exercises The County shall coordinate with local and regional jurisdictions to conduct emergency and disaster preparedness exercises to test operational and emergency plans.</p>	Promotes efficiency in emergency disaster responses by coordinating all of the County’s resources, reducing the need to add new facilities.	1
<p>Policy HS-1.9: Emergency Operations Center The County shall continue to maintain the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as the single point for centralized management and coordination of emergency response and recovery operations during a disaster or emergency.</p>	Reduces the need for new or altered facilities by maintaining the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as the single point for centralized management and coordination of emergency response and recovery operations.	1

Source: San Benito County 2011, 2014; EMC Planning Group 2014; Planning Partners 2012.

Impact PS-1: Demand additional fire protection and emergency response services in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives, requiring the construction of new or physically altered governmental facilities, resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts (XIV.a).

Level of Significance: Less than significant, no mitigation required.

Implementation of the proposed 2035 General Plan would allow development and the construction of residential and non-residential uses and related infrastructure that would increase the demand for fire protection and emergency response services within the unincorporated County and result in the expansion or construction of new facilities. Nevertheless, these facilities would not have a substantial physical impact on the environment. This is a less than significant impact.

As discussed in Chapter 4 of this RDEIR, the County's population will increase by 2035, and the 2035 General Plan plans for this projected population. The proposed 2035 General Plan contains goals and policies to maintain fire protection service provisions and response times, offset additional maintenance fees and new staffing costs through increased revenues generated by impact fees, address funding of fire protection facilities to serve existing and new development, and improve the effectiveness of emergency response services. The 2035 General Plan would allow development in each city's sphere of influence (SOI) and on land designated for development in other areas of the unincorporated County. Development in these areas could be served by existing facilities, such as the CAL FIRE Hollister station, and may not require the expansion of existing facilities or new construction. The 2035 General Plan also has study areas to determine the suitability of various areas for new communities. Various policies in the 2035 General Plan ensure that development in New Community Studies Areas would have adequate public infrastructure and funds for fire services.

Other policies support coordination among cities and service districts, mutual aid agreements, fire safety compliance, service expansion, improved signage, and fire facility fees. These policies will make it more efficient to provide fire and emergency response services, even as population increase. For example, Goal PFS-13 directs the County to coordinate with fire protection and emergency service providers, which makes providing service more efficient. In addition, several of the policies reduce impacts of increased population by encouraging growth in areas that already have adequate fire and emergency facilities.

The Land Use Element also has several goals and policies that focus on directing growth where existing infrastructure and public services are available, increasing the efficiency and delivery of public facilities and services, and reducing the likelihood that new facilities would need to be constructed. Goals and policies directing growth towards areas with existing infrastructure would reduce the need to extend public services, such as fire protection and emergency medical services to new locations. For example, Goal LU-1 indirectly encourages development in areas

that already are developed, and thus already have the infrastructure needed to provide fire services, since this goal seeks to preserve the County's rural character. Goal LU-4 would minimize impacts on public services, such as fire protection and emergency response facilities and services, by providing incentives for clustered residential development. Clustering residential development in the unincorporated County would focus the need for facilities and services to specific areas rather than requiring the extension of services to scattered locations across the County. A clustered pattern of growth allows fire stations to consolidate services and provide efficient levels of service, levels of service, and reduce the need to construct new facilities that may result in adverse environmental impacts. Goal LU-9 directs that planning within city fringe areas is coordinated between the County and the cities. This goal and its supporting policies allow public service improvements needed to serve future growth in these areas to be orderly and efficiently planned, including fire protection and emergency medical services.

The Health and Safety Element contains goals and policies focused on emergency preparedness. Emergency preparedness refers to the coordinated efforts by the County and other agencies to prevent, prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate natural and manmade disasters or emergencies. Implementation of several of the policies outlined in this Element would be the responsibility of the County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services (OES). For example, Goal HS-1 and its supporting policies require the County to maintain the necessary level of disaster preparedness for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of people living, working, and residing in the County. While these policies are focused on emergency response, they also would require the County Sheriff's OES to provide sufficient and coordinated fire protection services at a central location, which allows administrative functions to be efficient and minimizes the need to hire new staff to oversee expanded fire services.

Together, the goals and policies outlined under the Public Services and Facilities, Land Use, and Health and Safety Elements would ensure that adequate funding and service provisions are in place to support and maintain adequate levels of service for fire protection, and that such facilities are strategically located to minimize the need to construct new facilities to serve urban development. This would improve the effectiveness of emergency response services. The proposed goals and policies would ensure that federal, state, and local standards and a range of services and programs are in place to protect lives and property, and reduce the risk of fires.

Nevertheless, the 2035 General Plan would accommodate future residential and commercial development that would lead to increased demands for fire protection and emergency response services. This increased demand would likely result in the construction of new or expanded facilities at unknown locations generally in areas of the County designated for urban uses. New or expanded infrastructure associated with fire protection services may include an additional administration building or headquarters office, an expanded or new fire station, and new storage garages for fire equipment, trucks, hoses, and other amenities. Construction of new and

expanded fire facilities could result in potentially significant short-term noise, air quality, biological resource, cultural resource, traffic, and water quality impacts from construction activities. Long-term significant impacts could include the loss or degradation of agricultural, biological, and cultural resources, use of hazardous substances for fire suppression, noise impacts due to fire sirens, and increased use of surface water and groundwater supplies. These development impacts have been evaluated on a programmatic level in this RDEIR in appropriate chapters based on reasonably available information. In addition, all future public service facility construction plans would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and undergo project-level environmental review. The range of potential effects that would be evaluated during environmental review is detailed in [Table 17-2](#).

Table 17-2 Potential Impacts of Constructing and Operating New Fire Station Projects

Environmental Resources	Possible Impacts
Aesthetics/Visual Resources	The addition of new fire facilities could affect the visual environment. New fire stations near or in residential areas or highly visible areas could cause negative impacts.
Agriculture	Some irrigated land or grazing land could be taken out of production where new or expanded fire facilities, including fire stations, could be located.
Air Quality, Odors, and Climate Change	Air emissions from construction equipment and traffic could occur during the construction phase of new fire facility projects.
Biological Resources (Wetlands and Riparian Habitat)	Possible changes in the amount or functions and values of various types of wetlands from the construction of new fire facilities,
Biological Resources (Botanical), including Special Status Species	Disturbance to rare plants and their habitat and other types of vegetation from construction activities.
Biological Resources (Wildlife), including Special Status Species	Changes in the amount and quality of wildlife habitat where fire facilities would be located.
Cultural Resources	Historic, prehistoric, and ethnographic resources could be affected by the construction of new fire facilities
Geology and Soils	Increase in erosion and sedimentation from construction activities; geologic hazards could cause problems for new facilities if not sited carefully.

Environmental Resources	Possible Impacts
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Construction of new fire facilities would involve the use of hazardous materials during construction, which could result in accidental release, etc.
Water Quality and Hydrology	Changes in total suspended solids and other water quality parameters of concern during construction of new facilities.
Compatibility with Existing Land Uses and Other Policies and Plans	Due to noise and nighttime work activities associated with emergencies, some new fire facilities may not be compatible with surrounding land uses.
Noise	Loud noises could occur during the construction phase of new fire stations. Long-term impacts associated with sirens and fire truck traffic would result in an increase in ambient noise levels.
Transportation	Local roads would experience traffic increases during construction of new facilities. Temporary impacts related to fire truck access may also occur during emergencies.
Utilities and Public Service Systems	The siting of new facilities could require the installation or modification of existing or planned public utilities, including communication and energy infrastructure.
Energy	The construction and operation of new facilities would require the use of energy.
Other CEQA issues, including recreation, growth inducement, etc.	New construction also would be evaluated on the remainder of the thresholds listed in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Source: Adapted from County of Napa, Napa County General Plan Update Draft Environmental Impact Report, 2007.

Although it is reasonably foreseeable that new fire and emergency and other public service facilities would be constructed, because it cannot be known where such facilities would be located, it is not possible to determine the potential effects at any one location. The potential effects of constructing such facilities are incorporated in the programmatic level analysis set forth in Chapters 5-22 of this EIR and as summarized in [Table 17-2](#). As noted in other chapters of this RDEIR, the 2035 General Plan contains policies to avoid or reduce many adverse environmental effects that could occur with the construction of infrastructure necessary to serve planned growth. Additionally, future plans for new fire station facilities would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and undergo project-level environmental review, which would ensure compliance with specific regulations, such as the County Zoning Code and Noise Ordinance,

and would avoid or reduce the potential that new facilities would result in substantial adverse physical impacts on the environment to the extent feasible. Project-level environmental review would ensure that the potential environmental effects of each new fire station or other facility would be identified and needed mitigation measures would be established.

Together, the proposed 2035 General Plan policies to minimize the number of new or expanded facilities necessary to maintain adequate levels of service, as well as policies to reduce or avoid environmental effects, coupled with the required subsequent site-specific environmental review of new facilities, would ensure that the construction of new fire stations and other facilities would not result in reasonably foreseeable, substantial adverse physical effects at a community level.

Impact PS-2: Demand for the construction of new or physically altered police protection and law enforcement facilities, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives, resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts. (XIV.a).

Level of Significance: Less than significant, no mitigation required.

The proposed 2035 General Plan would plan for increases in population and employment in the unincorporated County, thereby increasing the demand of providing law enforcement services and potentially causing the need to construct new facilities to provide police protection services. Because of proposed 2035 General Plan policies, and the requirement for project-level environmental review for any new or altered facilities, this would be a less-than-significant impact.

The coverage area of Sheriff's Office encompasses the entire unincorporated County. The Sheriff's Office maintains stations in Hollister and San Juan Bautista and has 21 sworn deputies to serve the unincorporated County, which does not include sworn officers for incorporated cities. This represents a current staffing level of 1.1 officers per 1,000 residents. Also, the County manages a 28,000-square-foot jail facility with an average daily population of approximately 130 inmates and a rated capacity of 142 inmates.

Land use changes and development that would be accommodated under the proposed 2035 General Plan would continue to be served by existing County law enforcement services and facilities, particularly if most growth occurs within cities' SOI and unincorporated areas with existing facilities. However, the population growth projected under the 2035 General Plan would increase the demand for police protection and law enforcement services, and would likely require the expansion or construction of police and law enforcement facilities. The Sheriff's Office workloads would continue to increase with a growing population, as would needs for new correctional staffing, facilities, and services to meet the demand of an increasing inmate

population. Therefore, implementation of the proposed 2035 General Plan is expected to require the construction or expansion of some of these new facilities to serve new growth, which may cause environmental impacts.

During the development of the 2035 General Plan, the County provided specific goals and policies intended to guide the overall development and preservation of resources within the County. The County also developed goals to protect the life and property of the residents living in the County by maintaining law enforcement service levels and response standards, addressing the need to fund and construct new facilities, and improving roadway systems to enhance emergency access. There are several proposed goals and policies under the 2035 General Plan contained in the Public Services and Facilities and Land Use Elements that would reduce the demands on police protection and law enforcement services and minimize environmental impacts related to the construction or expansion of additional police protection facilities. [Table 17-1](#) lists goals and policies that support police protection and law enforcement services.

The Public Facilities and Services Element contains numerous goals and policies designed to guide and fund the logical and efficient expansion of public services in the County, specifically police protection and law enforcement services that are experiencing improvement limitations due to funding constraints, including Goal PFS-1 and its supporting policies. Goal PFS-1 would provide residents and businesses quality, cost-effective, and sustainable public facilities and services and its supporting policies would ensure adequate facilities are provided, for example by requiring new development to pay its fair share of the costs. The Public Facilities and Services Element also provide goals and policies aimed at protecting the lives and property of residents through law enforcement services. For instance, Goal PFS-13 and its supporting policies encourage optimum staffing levels for both sworn sheriff deputies and civilian support staff to provide quality law enforcement services in the County.

There are various land use policies outlined in the Land Use Element that would direct future growth to cities' SOIs and areas in the unincorporated County with existing public services, which would increase the efficiency to deliver public services. Several policies supporting Goals LU-1 and LU-4 encourage infill development and clustered residential communities. These policies would reduce impacts related to providing police protection facilities by making the delivery of such services more efficient than if growth occurred haphazardly throughout the County. Goal LU-9 would ensure that planning and development approvals within city fringe areas are coordinated between the County and the cities to ensure future growth in these areas is orderly, efficient, and has sufficient public infrastructure.

Together, these goals and policies would reduce the demands on police protection and law enforcement services that may result from increased needs for services from future development. Proposed goals and policies would ensure that the provision of police protection and law enforcement services is maintained, that increased costs would be offset by facility impact fees

generated by new development, and that needed police facilities and services would be funded and constructed, as needed. Although it is reasonably foreseeable that new police protection or law enforcement facilities would be constructed, because it cannot be known where such facilities would be located, it is not possible to determine the potential effects at any one location. To the extent

New or expanded infrastructure associated with police protection and law enforcement services may include new administration offices, an expanded County jail, additional police stations, sub stations, and sheriff facilities, and new storage and parking areas for police vehicles. Construction of new and expanded police facilities could result in potential short-term noise, air quality, biological resource, cultural resource, traffic, and water quality impacts from construction activities. Long-term impacts could include the loss or degradation of agricultural, biological, and cultural resources due to the siting of new facilities. All future police station facility construction plans would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and undergo project-level environmental review. The range of potential effects that would be evaluated during environmental review is similar to those detailed for fire stations in [Table 17-2](#).

Proposed 2035 General Plan policies to minimize the number of new or expanded facilities necessary to maintain adequate levels of service, as well as policies to reduce or avoid environmental effects, coupled with the required subsequent site-specific environmental review of new facilities, would ensure that the construction of new police protection or law enforcement facilities would not result in reasonably foreseeable, substantial adverse physical effects at a programmatic level, thereby resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

Impact PS-3: Demand for the construction of new or physically altered school facilities, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives, resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts (XIV.a).

Level of Significance: Less than significant, no mitigation required.

Adoption of the proposed 2035 General Plan would accommodate population increases in the unincorporated areas of the County that would also increase the number of school-aged children requiring educational services. The increased demand for public educational services could result in the need to construct new and expanded school facilities, the construction of which may cause environmental impacts. Because of proposed 2035 General Plan policies, and the requirement for the project-level environmental review for any individual facility, this would be a less-than-significant impact.

As population increases in the unincorporated County, greater demands would be placed on existing schools. Without planning improvements to school facilities, overcrowding could occur and existing technologies, facilities, and programs could become outdated. The 2035 General

Plan contains goals and policies that address the demand for educational facilities. In addition, the state has statewide development fee programs to provide funds for school construction and expansion.

In general, budgetary constraints are the primary barrier to improving and expanding educational facilities and services in the County, as existing statutory fees have proven inadequate to fund existing and new school facilities. For example, although the state legislature approved Proposition 1D in 2006, which authorized additional funding to upgrade public schools, little of this funding has been made available to school districts. Also, the lack of special local bond measures such as Mello-Roos bonds has made it difficult for districts to maintain existing school facilities. Consequently, as population increases, greater demands will be placed on existing schools and libraries, and the County will be faced with the challenge of providing more educational services.

Without securing funding sources to plan improvements for existing and new school facilities, in response to the growing numbers of school children and the need to incorporate modern facilities and technology into schools, existing facilities will become overcrowded, inadequate, and outdated. Over time, school districts will need new and expanded facilities. As a result, existing schools may be physically altered and the modernization and the construction of new school facilities would be required, the construction of which could result in a range of environmental impacts.

New or expanded school facilities may include the consolidation of administrative district offices, new or expanded elementary schools, middle schools, or high schools, an expanded community college campus, new charter schools, new or expanded sport fields or school-related recreational facilities, joint-use recreational facilities, temporary classroom modules, special learning centers, school bus parking areas, and safe routes to school, such as pedestrian and bicycle pathways. Construction of new and expanded school facilities could result in potential short-term noise, air quality, biological resource, cultural resource, traffic, and water quality impacts from construction activities. Long-term impacts could include the loss or degradation of agricultural, biological, and cultural resources due to the siting of new school facilities. Impacts may also include air quality and public health impacts associated diesel emissions from bus traffic, the use of hazardous materials near school facilities, and potential pedestrian safety concerns. All future school facility construction plans would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and undergo project-level environmental review by each individual school district. The range of potential effects that would be evaluated for each school facility during environmental review is similar to those detailed for fire stations in [Table 17-2](#).

During the development of the 2035 General Plan, the County identified goals and policies intended to provide quality school facilities within the County. Although the 2035 General Plan does not specify what types of school facilities would be needed, nor where new school sites or

libraries would be located, there are several proposed goals and policies within the Public Services and Facilities Element of the Plan that would minimize potential impacts to educational facilities by ensuring that schools are located near the development to be served. [Table 17-1](#) lists goals and policies that address the demand for educational facilities, and the need to develop and improve school facilities.

The Public Facilities and Services Element contains several goals designed to improve, upgrade, and expand existing schools facilities as needed to accommodate growth. Goal PFS-10 requires the County to collaborate with school districts and other education providers to develop high quality education facilities and programs that serve existing and future residents. To support this goal, there are six policies intended to minimize the need to construct new schools. The outlined goal and its supporting policies under the Public Facilities and Service Element would reduce the likelihood that the County would need to construct new schools.

Together, the County's goals and policies would reduce the demands on existing educational facilities, thereby lessening the need to construct new or expanded facilities, the construction of which may cause environmental impacts. Under the Public Facilities and Services Element, policies address the demand for educational facilities, the need to secure funding through facility impact fees, and the importance of coordination between the County and school districts to ensure that new schools are conveniently located to serve the growing population. Although it is reasonably foreseeable that new school or educational facilities would be constructed, at this time, the type, size, and specific location of future school improvement is not known, and proposed construction plans would depend on the pace and location of residential development. Because it cannot be known where such facilities would be located, it is not possible to determine the potential effects at any one location. The potential effects of constructing or expanding school or other educational facilities would be similar to those described in Chapters 5-22 and indicated in [Table 17-2](#). School development would be planned according to the California Department of Education site design standards, and according to County demographics.

In addition to the foregoing 2035 General Plan goals and policies, the state has instituted school financing mechanisms. Education Code § 17620 and Government Code § 65995 authorize school districts to levy a fee on any development project in order to fund the construction of new or expanded school facilities, provided the district can show justification for levying the fees. School districts then collect the fees at the time of building permit approval for any residential and commercial development project. In 1998, additional funding was made available to school districts under Proposition 1A/Senate Bill 50 (SB 50). This bill authorized the expenditure of additional state bonds for the modernization and rehabilitation of existing school facilities and the construction of new facilities. Although SB 50 implemented significant fee reforms that limit the County and its school districts to collect only the statutorily authorized school mitigation

fees unless each school district conducts a School Facility Needs Assessment, the fees help offset new school construction and capital improvement costs associated with school facilities and staff. In adopting SB 50, the state legislature declared that payment of the statutorily authorized school impact fees constitutes full and complete mitigation of any impacts to school resources and facilities. Therefore, as set forth by the legislature, compliance with the requirements of state law would reduce impacts related to schools to a less than significant level.

Proposed 2035 General Plan policies to minimize the number of new or expanded facilities necessary to maintain adequate levels of service, as well as policies to reduce or avoid environmental effects, coupled with the required subsequent site-specific environmental review of new facilities and SB 50, would ensure that the construction of new school or educational facilities would not result in reasonably foreseeable, substantial adverse physical effects at a programmatic level, thereby resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

Impact PS-4: Demand for the construction of new or physically altered libraries, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives, resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts (XIV.a).

Level of Significance: Less than significant, no mitigation required.

The proposed 2035 General Plan would plan for population increases in the unincorporated County. This could increase the number of people using libraries. The increased demand for public library services could result in the need to construct new libraries or expand existing facilities, which may cause environmental impacts. Because of proposed 2035 General Plan policies, and the requirement for the project-level environmental review for any individual facility, this would be a less-than-significant impact.

The County operates one main branch library in Hollister. It provides a variety of resources and programs such as the Bookmobile, which brings library services to other communities in the County. As population increases, greater demands would be placed on the single library in the County. Without planning improvements to the existing library, or the development of a new library, overcrowding and overuse could place greater demands on existing library resources and programs, such as hard copy and electronic books, computers, and other library resources, resulting in overuse. Accordingly, it is foreseeable that the existing library would be expanded or new libraries built.

During the development of the 2035 General Plan, the County identified goals and policies intended to provide quality library facilities within the County. Although the 2035 General Plan does not specify where new libraries would be located, there is a goal and policy in the Public Services and Facilities Element that would minimize potential impacts to library facilities by ensuring that library services are expanded and upgraded to meet future demand. [Table 17-1](#) lists

goals and policies that address the need to develop and improve library facilities. Goal PFS-10 in the Public Facilities and Services Element directs the County to collaborate with school districts and other education providers to develop high quality education facilities and programs that serve existing and future residents. Collaboration between the library and schools will make delivery of library and educational services more efficient, decreasing the need to construct new facilities as the population expands.

The 2035 General Plan would result in residential development that would increase the demand for library services and would likely result in the construction of new facilities or expansion of the existing library. New library facilities may include additional library offices, the expansion of the existing main branch library in Hollister, or the construction of an additional library. Construction of a new library could result in potential short-term noise, air quality, biological resource, cultural resource, traffic, and water quality impacts from construction activities. Long-term impacts could include the loss or degradation of agricultural, biological, and cultural resources due to the siting of a new library. All future library construction plans would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and undergo project-level environmental review. Although it is reasonably foreseeable that new library facilities would be constructed or existing facilities would be expanded, because it cannot be known where such facilities would be located, it is not possible to determine the project-specific potential effects at any one location.

The 2035 General Plan contains goals and policies to avoid or reduce many adverse environmental effects that could occur from the construction or expansion of libraries. Additionally, the construction or expansion of library facilities would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and undergo project-level environmental review, which would ensure compliance with specific regulations, such as the County Zoning Code and Noise Ordinance, that would avoid or reduce the potential that construction or expansion would result in substantial adverse physical impacts on the environment. Project-level environmental review would ensure that the potential environmental effects of each new library facility would be identified. Needed mitigation measures would also be established. The range of potential effects that would be evaluated during environmental review is similar to the range detailed for fire stations in [Table 17-2](#).

Proposed 2035 General Plan policies to maintain adequate levels of service, as well as policies to reduce or avoid environmental effects, coupled with the required subsequent site-specific environmental review of new facilities, would ensure that the construction of new library facilities would not result in reasonably foreseeable, substantial adverse physical effects at a community level, thereby resulting in a less-than-significant impact.