



Section 5.18:

Police Protection



5.18 POLICE PROTECTION

This section identifies police protection services within the City of Murrieta and provides an analysis of potential impacts associated with the buildout of the proposed General Plan 2035. Information in this section is based on information in the proposed General Plan 2035 Safety Element, and information provided by the Murrieta Police Department.

5.18.1 REGULATORY SETTING

CALIFORNIA PENAL CODE

The *California Penal Code* establishes the basis for the application for criminal law in California.

MURRIETA MUNICIPAL CODE

Title 8 of the *Murrieta Municipal Code* establishes regulations related to health and safety, while *Title 9* establishes regulations related to public peace, morals, and welfare. Code enforcement responsibilities are identified in *Title 16*, Chapter 16.84, Enforcement Provisions.

5.18.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Police Department (Department) is organized into two main Divisions: Operations and Support. The Operations Division includes Traffic, Patrol, and officers who oversee several other types of programs.¹ The Support Services Division includes Code Enforcement, Investigation, the Records Bureau, the Special Enforcement Team, the Dispatch Center, and programs geared towards youth and schools.

Youth Programs

Several educational programs are tailored for students in 1st grade through 12th grade: 9-1-1 For Kids, D.A.R.E. and Red Ribbon Week, Every-15-Minutes, and Kid Print/Safety Fairs. The School Resource Officer Program assigns officers full-time to middle and high schools.²

¹ City of Murrieta Police Department, "Operations Division: Table of Personnel Organization," November 2009; and Lt. Dennis Vrooman, Public Information Officer, Murrieta Police Department, telephone conversation, December 22, 2009.

² City of Murrieta Police Department, "Support Services Division: Table of Personnel Organization," November 2009.



Police Activities League (PAL) coordinates recreational, educational, and athletic activities for disadvantaged or at-risk youth between the ages of 5 and 17. Police officers volunteer their time to attend PAL events with the intention of providing mentorship and to serve as positive role models. PAL activities create an environment where youth and law enforcement are able to communicate with each other in a neutral environment to foster positive attitudes and mutual respect.³

Three programs exist for youth rehabilitation. The Youth Accountability Team assesses the situations and arrests of delinquent youth aged 12 to 17 and implements a program aimed at rehabilitation, including service referrals and visits.⁴ The Youth Accountability Board is made up of community volunteers wanting to assist in the rehabilitation of juveniles who have been arrested for minor criminal law violations.⁵ The Southwest Valley Youth Court provides an alternative approach to juvenile justice in which juvenile respondents are sentenced by a jury of their peers for infractions and non-violent misdemeanor crimes.⁶

Multi-Family Housing Project Review

New multi-family housing developments going through the development review process must participate in the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program. Through this program, the Department provides recommendations for improving the safety of the developments using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies. Tenants also sign a lease addendum form, which lists criminal acts that result in immediate termination of the lease. Communication between rental property managers and the Department helps both parties to deal with problem tenants.⁷

Community Participation

Community participation is encouraged through many of the Department’s programs. For instance, in Home to School Safety Patrols, parents and community members monitor designated locations around schools to ensure the safety of children on their way to and from school. The Special Enforcement Team manages Murrieta’s Neighborhood Watch program. Police Station

³ City of Murrieta Police Department, “Police Activities League,” <http://murrieta.org/datapages/dataprograms.asp?id=65>, accessed December 21, 2009.

⁴ City of Murrieta Police Department, “Youth Accountability Team,” <http://murrieta.org/datapages/dataprograms.asp?id=64>, accessed December 21, 2009.

⁵ City of Murrieta Police Department, “Youth Accountability Board,” <http://murrieta.org/datapages/dataprograms.asp?id=63>, accessed December 21, 2009.

⁶ City of Murrieta Police Department, “Youth Court,” <http://www.murrieta.org/datapages/dataprograms.asp?id=62>, accessed December 21, 2009.

⁷ Lt. Dennis Vrooman, Public Information Officer, Murrieta Police Department, telephone conversation, December 22, 2009.



Tours and the Ride-Along Program provide community members a closer look at the Police Department.⁸

Reserve Officer Program

The Department expands its capacity with the Reserve Officer program, as well as with the Volunteer Program in which participants volunteer at least 16 hours per month. Volunteers assist in Neighborhood Watch, Crime Free Multi-Housing, parades, citizen patrols, front counter and receptionist responsibilities, as well as school patrols and other special events.⁹

Other Department Programs

Other programs and responsibilities of the Department include the S.W.A.T. Team, Mounted Equestrian Patrol, Off-Road Motorcycle Enforcement, K-9 Program, DUI Checkpoints, Roving Patrols, Live Scan Fingerprinting, Court Ordered Registrants, Property and Evidence, and Towed/Impounded Vehicles.¹⁰

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS

The Department has an automatic aid agreement with the Hemet Police Department S.W.A.T. Team and participates in mutual aid agreements with other S.W.A.T. Teams in Riverside County. The Department also follows the State of California Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan. Resources shared through these agreements include Murrieta’s bloodhound—used for investigations—and the Riverside County Sheriff’s helicopter.¹¹ In addition, the Department participates in a number of regional task forces, including the Gang Task Force (GTF) and Riverside Auto Theft Interdiction Detail (RAID).

RESPONSE TIMES

The Police Department has established targets for response times, depending on the urgency of the call. *Table 5.18-1, Response Times* provides these target times and actual response times over the last three years.

⁸ City of Murrieta Police Department, “Police Department,” <http://www.murrieta.org/services/police/index.asp>, accessed December 21, 2009.

⁹ City of Murrieta Police Department, “Volunteer Programs,” <http://murrieta.org/datapages/dataprograms.asp?id=14>, accessed December 21, 2009.

¹⁰ City of Murrieta Police Department, “Police Department,” <http://www.murrieta.org/services/police/index.asp>, accessed December 21, 2009.

¹¹ Lt. Dennis Vrooman, Public Information Officer, Murrieta Police Department, telephone conversation, December 22, 2009.



**Table 5.18-1
Response Times**

Call Type	Target Response Time (minutes:seconds)	Actual Response Time ¹ (minutes:seconds)
Priority 1	6:00	6:19
Priority 2	15:00	14:27
Priority 3	35:00	36:08

¹ Average response times over 2007, 2008 and 2009 to date (early December).
Sources:
Lt. Dennis Vrooman, Public Information Officer, Murrieta Police Department, Police Protection Services Questionnaire, December 9, 2009.
Lt. Dennis Vrooman, Public Information Officer, Murrieta Police Department, telephone conversation, December 22, 2009.

CRIMES AND POLICE ACTIVITY

The Los Angeles Times ranked Murrieta as the second safest city in the nation for cities with populations over 100,000 based on 2008 preliminary FBI statistics that showed a violent crime rate of 8.4 per 10,000 residents.¹² Crimes numbers from the past 4 years are shown in *Table 5.18-2, Crime Statistics*.

**Table 5.18-2
Crime Statistics**

	2009	2008	2007	2006
TOTAL REPORTS TAKEN	7,777	8,461	8,273	8,556
Officer Initiated Activities	40,511	40,867	33,365	29,990
Police Responses	43,021	45,272	43,804	41,509
Fire Responses	6,699	6,447	6,666	6,108
TOTAL ACTIVITIES PROCESSED	90,231	92,586	83,835	77,607
PART 1 CRIMES				
Homicide	0	1	3	2
Rape	17	12	9	9
Robbery	34	23	46	31
Assault	199	357	393	388
Burglary	427	442	483	560
Larceny	881	898	1195	1184

¹² City of Murrieta news release, “Murrieta 2nd Safest City in the Nation,” July 8, 2009.



**Table 5.18-2 [continued]
Crime Statistics**

	2009	2008	2007	2006
Auto Theft	156	166	277	225
Arson	4	10	2	4
TOTAL	1,718	1,909	2,408	2,403
TRAFFIC COLLISIONS				
Traffic Collision Responses	1,292	1,225	1,371	1,497
Damage Reports	541	477	464	458
Injury Reports	238	216	258	263
Fatal Reports	0	0	1	1
TOTAL COLLISION REPORTS	779	693	723	722
CITATIONS ISSUED:				
Parkers	943	1,203	1,225	542
Others (including red light camera)	13,018	13,292	11,077	10,750
TOTAL CITATIONS	13,961	14,495	12,302	11,292
ARREST:				
Misdemeanor Adult Arrests	1,667	2,024	1,540	1,435
Felony Adult Arrest	564	548	639	642
Misdemeanor Juvenile Arrests	169	308	307	266
Felony Juvenile Arrest	138	147	101	120
TOTAL ARRESTED	2,538	3,027	2,587	2,463
Sources: City of Murrieta Police Department, "Police Activity Report," December 2007, December 2008, December 2009.				

PROJECTED NEEDS

As the Department has grown, spaces in the headquarters that were originally intended for other uses have been converted into offices, such as the community room and interview room. An expansion of the facility was approved by the City Council in 2007, but not built. Funding has been approved for design but not construction of a facility expansion that is tentatively planned at 20,639 square feet. This expansion would accommodate needed office space for officers and staff, as well as a training room.¹³

¹³ Lt. Dennis Vrooman, Public Information Officer, Murrieta Police Department, telephone conversation, December 22, 2009.



5.18.3 SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLD CRITERIA

The issues presented in the Initial Study Environmental Checklist (Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*) have been utilized as thresholds of significance in this Section. Accordingly, police protection service impacts resulting from the implementation of the proposed General Plan 2035 may be considered significant if they would result in the following:

- Substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or result in the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which may cause significant environmental impacts in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives.

Based on these significance thresholds and criteria, the proposed General Plan 2035’s effects have been categorized as either “no impact,” a “less than significant impact,” or a “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant unavoidable impact.

5.18.4 PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

■ BUILDOUT OF THE CITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN 2035 COULD RESULT IN THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL POLICE FACILITIES OR PERSONNEL.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact Analysis: Future police protection levels would be considered adequate if existing emergency response times and staffing levels could be maintained. However, if buildout associated with the proposed General Plan 2035 causes Department standards to not be achieved, police protection services would be considered inadequate, thereby constituting a significant impact. As a result, additional facilities, personnel, and equipment may be required to maintain adequate levels of police protection within the City.

The Murrieta Police Department provides police protection throughout the City. Buildout of the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in increased development throughout the City, and as a result, an increased demand for police protection services.

As of 2009, current staffing levels do not meet the Department’s target. Additionally, current response times for Priority 1 and Priority 3 calls are longer than target times. Response times for Priority 2 calls are shorter than target times. As noted in the Environmental Setting Section, additional funding is needed for construction of the 20,639-square foot facility that was approved



by the City Council in 2007. It is anticipated that this facility would provide needed office space for additional officers and staff, as well as a training room.

The City charges Development Impact (DIF) fees for new development within the City, including for law enforcement, as shown Table 5.18-3, Law Enforcement Mitigation Fees.

**Table 5.18-3
Law Enforcement Mitigation Fees**

Land Use	Mitigation Fee (per unit or SF)
Rural Estate Dwelling Unit	\$231.25
Single Family Dwelling Unit	\$231.57
Multi-Family Dwelling Unit	\$240.06
Office	\$0.11
Commercial	\$0.23
Industrial	\$0.02
Source: City of Murrieta Fiscal Year Mitigation Fee Schedule, 2009-2010	

As individual projects are proposed within the City, the Murrieta Police Department service levels and staffing requirements would be evaluated to determine if additional staffing and/or facilities would be required. As the proposed General Plan buildout would occur over a 25-year period, the Murrieta Police Department would effectively plan for increases in population and police protection service demand. The following goals and policies in the proposed General Plan 2035 (Safety Element Goals SAF-9, SAF-10, SAF-11 and their associated policies), and continued collection of DIF Fees would reduce impacts resulting from the proposed General Plan 2035 to a less than significant level. No service shortfall requiring additional personnel or equipment is anticipated as a result of the implementation of the proposed General Plan 2035.

Goals and Policies in the Proposed General Plan 2035:

SAFETY ELEMENT

Goal SAF-9 High-quality and timely police services are provided to all residents and businesses in Murrieta.



Policies

- SAF-9.1 Seek to reach and maintain police officer and civilian support employee staffing levels to effectively and efficiently address the public safety needs, measured through established response times (as shown in General Plan Table 12-3, Target Response Times), crime statistics, crime clearance rates, and community quality of life issues.
- SAF-9.2 Endeavor to respond within six minutes for all Priority 1 calls, 15 minutes for Priority 2 calls, and 35 minutes for Priority 3 calls.
- SAF-9.3 Consider options for locating field stations throughout the City to improve response times for Priority 1 calls and foster relationships with local residents.
- SAF-9.4 Maintain and implement a Police Department Strategic Plan to address staffing and facility needs, service goals, deployment strategies, and other department goals.
- SAF-9.5 Explore options for funding needed facilities, staff, and equipment.
- SAF-9.6 Ensure that new development can be served by police communication systems and provide for the construction of radio towers (repeater sites) in outlying areas.
- SAF-9.7 Evaluate the feasibility of adding cellular services for police communication to accommodate Mobile Data Browsers (MBD) technology.
- SAF-9.8 Maintain a S.W.A.T. team that can respond to barricades and other tactical response needs.

Goal SAF-10 The Police Department coordinates with neighborhoods and community members to enhance safety and continually improve services.

Policies

- SAF-10.1 Collaborate with school districts, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and community members, including neighborhood watch groups, to maintain safety throughout the City.
- SAF-10.2 Provide educational programs that deter unsafe and criminal behavior among youth, including the Youth Accountability Team, Youth Court, and School Resource Officers.
- SAF-10.3 Maintain positive relationships with the community through communication and responsiveness to concerns.



SAF-10.4 Promote participation in the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program among existing multi-family communities.

Goal SAF-11 Design of the physical environment promotes community safety and reduces opportunities for criminal activity.

Policies

SAF-11.1 Involve the Police Department in the development review process to address safety concerns, access issues, and potential traffic conflicts, and identify opportunities to apply CPTED principles.

SAF-11.2 Continue to require new apartment communities to participate in the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program.

SAF-11.3 Coordinate efforts between the Police Department and Planning Department to develop guidelines for implementation of CPTED principles.

SAF-11.4 Continue to ensure that each development or neighborhood in the City has adequate emergency ingress and egress.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures beyond the goals and policies identified in the proposed General Plan 2035 are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Not Applicable.

5.18.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

■ DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN 2035 AND CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO POLICE PROTECTION PERSONNEL, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact Analysis: Cumulative impacts are analyzed in terms of impacts within the City of Murrieta, as police protection service within the City is provided by the Murrieta Police Department. Implementation of the proposed General Plan 2035 along with cumulative development projects within the region would not have a significant impact on police protection services. As the proposed General Plan 2035 buildout would occur over a 25-year period,



Murrieta would effectively plan for increases in population and police protection service demand. It is anticipated that DIF fees would be collected to provide more staffing, equipment, and facilities as need on a project-by-project basis during buildout. Specifically, Safety Element policy SAF-9.4 calls for the maintenance and implementation of a Police Department Strategic Plan to address staffing and facility needs, service goals, deployment strategies, and other department goals. All other goals and policies listed above, as well as payment of DIF fees, would reduce impacts resulting from the proposed General Plan 2035 to a less than significant level. No service shortfall requiring additional personnel or equipment is anticipated as a result of the implementation of the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Goals and Policies in the Proposed General Plan 2035: Refer to the goals and policies referenced above in this Section 5.18.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures beyond the goals and policies identified in the proposed General Plan 2035 are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Not Applicable.

5.18.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Police protection impacts will be less than significant through adherence to and compliance with the goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035. No significant unavoidable police service impacts would occur as a result of buildout of the proposed General Plan 2035.

5.18.7 SOURCES CITED

Murrieta Police Department, written correspondence with Lt. Dennis Vrooman, November 2009 and December 2010.

City of Murrieta Annual Fee Schedule, 2009-2010, accessed December 15, 2010

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City of Murrieta news release, “Murrieta 2nd Safest City in the Nation,” July 8, 2009.

Fire Protection



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