4.6 PUBLIC SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

This section provides discussion on public services with respect to Tentative Tract 52717 and is divided into two topics: ***4.6.1 (Fire Protection)*** *and* ***4.6.2 (Police Protection)****.*

4.6.1 FIRE PROTECTION

4.6.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to describe the City's existing fire protection services and the potential impacts to said services with ultimate development of TT 52717. Sources used in the preparation of this section include: Los Angeles County Building and Safety Code, Los Angeles County Fire Code, the City of San Dimas General Plan, *the supplement to EIR on Specific Plan No. 4, and written communication with County of Los Angeles Fire Department officials.*

4.6.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

a. Staffing & Facilities

The specific plan area receives fire protection and paramedic service from the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. Fire Station 153, located at 1577 E. Cypress Street, Covina, CA 91723, is the jurisdictional station for this property (see **Figure 4.6.1-1**). It is approximately 1.7 miles (6.8 minutes) from the project site. It has a 4-person quint (a combination engine/ladder truck apparatus). Existing service to the project area is considered adequate.[1]

b. Wildland Fire Hazard Potential

The State legislature has declared that prevention of fire is a matter of statewide concern because of the threat fires pose to the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety. To address these concerns, the Legislature has enacted §51175-51189 of the California Government Code. The purpose of this chapter is to classify lands in the state so that it can be determined whether fire hazard is present and to outline minimum performance and site planning standards for property owners in such designated places. This allows public officials a means to identify measures that will retard the rate of spread, and reduce the potential intensity of uncontrolled fires that threaten to destroy resources, life, or property, and to require that those measures be taken.

The County of Los Angeles Fire Department has designated lands in the County with regard to their potential for wildland fires consistent with state law. These designations, determined by the County

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1 David Leininger, Acting Chief, County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division, Written Communication dated August 31, 2001.

Forester, are based on an area's accessibility, amount and type of vegetative cover, water availability, and topography. The only two designations used by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department are the Moderate Fire Hazard (formerly Fire Hazard Zone 3) and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone [VHFHSZ], which was formerly known as Fire Hazard Zone 4. Areas within the County, which are not designated as either of the two fire hazard zones, are not considered to be subject to wildland fire hazards. The VHFHSZ has more restrictive building requirements than former Fire Zone 3; however, areas within the VHFHSZ may, upon development, meet the criteria of this lessor zone, and may be redesignated as a Moderate Fire Hazard Zone at the discretion of the County Forester.

The VHFHSZ typically has the following vegetative types: chaparral, coastal sage, riparian, and oak woodland vegetation communities. Wildland fires are relatively common occurrences in these plant communities, which include, but are not limited to, ceanothus, chamise, sumac, sages, and wildland grasses. These plant species have adapted to periodic wildland fire conditions, and maintain a healthy ecosystem in the regional vicinity. In areas where these plant communities border urban development, the frequency of fire events may be diminished as a result of proactive fire prevention and fire suppression measures. Fire prevention measures include prescribed burns, vegetation thinning/removal, and creation of fuel modification zones,[2] whereas fire suppression measures involve controlling fires once they have started (e.g., fuel breaks, use of fire fighting equipment, etc.).

During the spring months, vegetation typically begins to lose its moisture content and, by the summer and fall when dry Santa Ana wind conditions begin to occur, the potential for wildland fires becomes extremely high. Historically, large fires tend to burn in former Fire Zones 3 and 4 every twenty to twenty-five years. When chaparral and coastal sage growth is younger, it is more succulent, with little or no dead or dying branches. This provides less horizontal fuel continuity; has a higher average fuel moisture content; and, as a result, is usually more fire retardant. As these plant species reach twenty plus years in age, their dead-to-live fuel ratio increases, creating more available fuel to carry fire with very high intensities and energy releases. Generally, fire prevention for urban development in wildland fire hazard areas focuses on restricting the types of building materials used, building design, and incorporating setbacks or fuel modification zones. An area designated as a Moderate Fire Hazard Zone would have less severe fire hazard conditions than an area designated as VHFHSZ, and, therefore, would have fewer restrictions involving building construction and site design. Development within a VHFHSZ is required to meet the building construction requirements specified in the County's *Fire Code* and *Building and Safety Code*.

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2 A fuel modification zone is that area surrounding a structure that has been planted, irrigated, and maintained to reduce the ignition potential of vegetation in the zone, and the flame length and heat output of the wildland fire. It provides a gradual transition from flammable native vegetation to irrigated, fire-resistant vegetation.

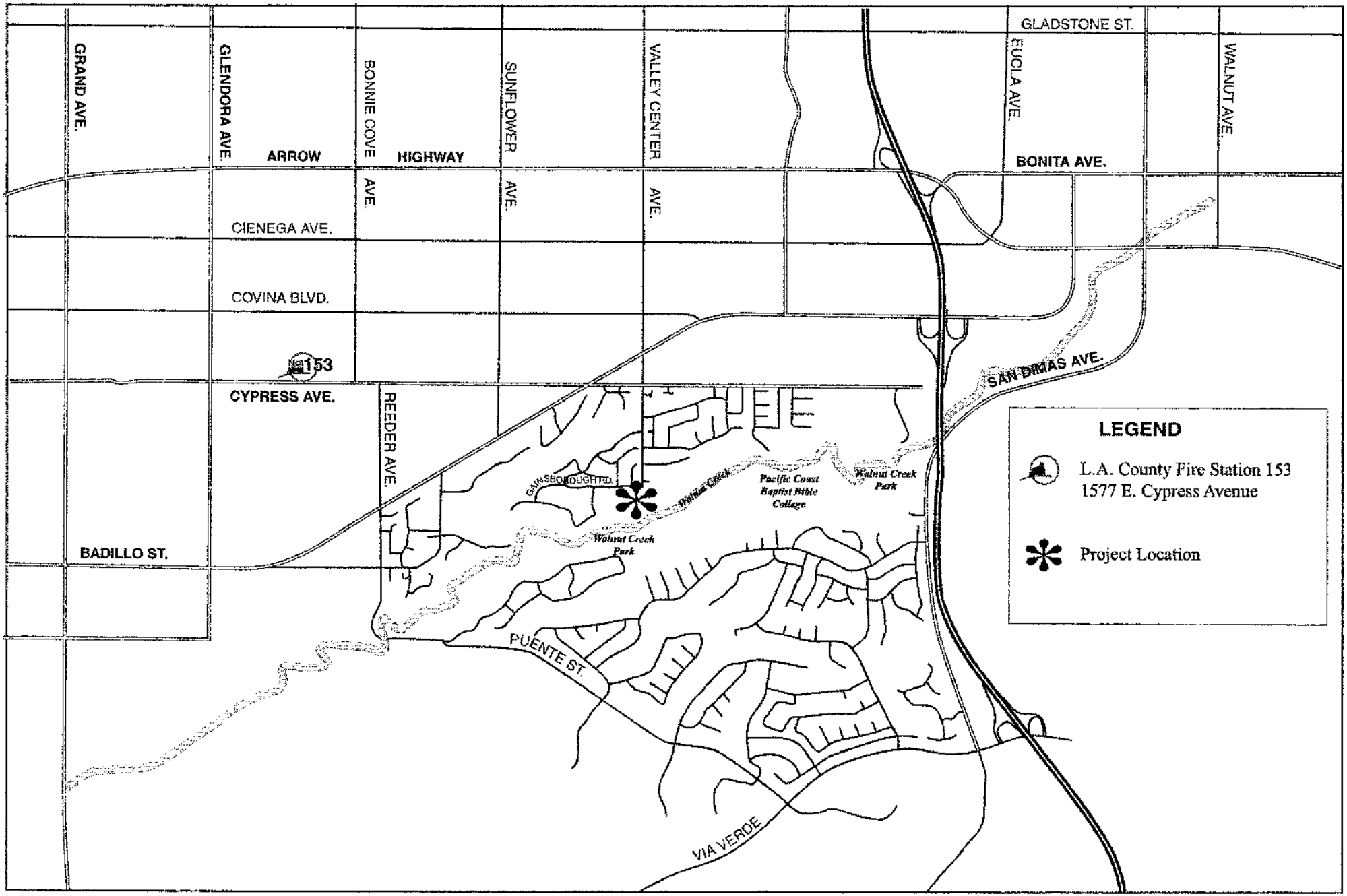

FIGURE **4.6.1-1**

Fire Station Locations

The 18.9-acre site may be characterized from a fire/vegetation management view as a VHFHSZ. Several factors contribute to this designation, including the mixture of vegetation types presently on the site that contain a high degree of combustibility, such as grasses and non-native eucalyptus trees. Other considerations include the site topography, limited existing access, and adjacency to natural open space.

c. Plans and Policies for Fire Fighting

The City of San Dimas and the County of Los Angeles have adopted fire prevention regulations on single family residential units to decrease the damage and danger incurred by a fire before the emergency crews can respond. Some standards, such as the need to provide all weather access, adequate fire flow, and fire hydrants is a requirement of all new development. Other standards, such as restrictions on street width or cul-de-sac length, vary dependent upon circumstances unique to a project and its setting and are to be determined at the time of final site plan approval.

The availability of sufficient on-site water pressure to serve development is a basic requirement of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. The County of Los Angeles Fire Department requires sufficient capacity for fire flows. For residential uses, the Department typically requires 1,250 gallons per minute at 20 pounds per square inch residual pressure for a two-hour duration. Fire flow requirements for the project will be set by the Fire Department prior to final site plan approval.

Due to the relatively higher fire hazard potential which exists in County-designated Fire Zones, development within these Fire Zones is subject to the County *Fire Code* and County *Building and Safety Code* which are aimed at reducing the hazard potential to acceptable levels. For example, development projects within the VHFHSZ are subject to Section 1117.2.1 of the County *Fire Code*, which requires that a registered landscape architect and the Forestry Division of the Fire Department approve a fuel modification plan, a landscape plan, and an irrigation plan.

County codes, guidelines, and fees are updated from time to time. In all cases, development projects, including the proposed project, are required to incorporate the most current County code requirements that are in effect at the time of map recordation or building permit issuance, respectively.

4.6.1.3 IMPACT ANALYSIS

a. Thresholds of Significance

For the purposes of this analysis, ultimate development of the project would be considered significant if impacts to fire protection services would result in:

- a potential for inadequate staffing of fire stations;
- a substantial decline in response times to handle calls for services;
- special fire protection problems associated with the proposed project or general area; and/or,
- substantial interference with an evacuation plan.

b. Construction Impacts

A large amount of wood framing would occur on the project site during its buildout. In association with the framing operations, electrical, plumbing, communications, and ventilation systems would be installed in each structure. Although rare, fires do occur at construction sites, and it is expected that the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems for the development would be properly installed during framing operations (they would be subject to City and County codes and inspection by City personnel prior to drywalling). In addition, construction sites would also be subject to City and County requirements relative to water availability and accessibility to fire fighting equipment. Therefore, adherence to all codes and requirements during construction would reduce the potential for fire hazards at the project site during construction to below the threshold of significance.

In addition, construction of the project would increase traffic both on and adjacent to the project site during working hours because commuting construction workers, trucks, and other large construction vehicles would be added to normal traffic during the buildout of the project. Slow-moving, construction-related traffic on local adjacent roadways may temporarily reduce optimal traffic flows on local roadways and could conceivably delay emergency vehicles traveling through the area. This potential is considered small given the periodic and short term nature of any construction related traffic and no significant impacts are expected with the use of flagmen and other standard construction practices.

c. Operational Impacts

The County of Los Angeles Fire Department will be responsible for fire protection and emergency medical service. It is anticipated that demands for fire protection service will not substantially increase above current levels with the project given that the anticipated population generated by the project is estimated to be relatively small at 59 persons.[3] The project population represents only .16 percent of the City's year 2000 population of 34,980.[4] In addition, calls for service created by the project is expected to be those typical of residential uses. Such calls include kitchen/house fires, garbage bin fires, car fires, electrical fires, emergency medical, etc. All such fires and medical emergencies can be adequately addressed with the types of equipment typically found at County fire stations.

1. Staffing Needs

The project proposal does not include uses which would use or generate large quantities of hazardous and/or toxic materials, or which could have a greater potential to cause fires or result in serious accidents than other similar developments found elsewhere in the City of San Dimas, Los Angeles County, or the State. The proposed residential development is expected to create the typical range of fire service calls that other such uses create. Moreover, the project site is not located in proximity to uses that represent a dangerous fire hazard, such as a refinery.

Natural vegetative cover will be removed from those portions of the project site, which have been proposed for development and replaced with urban uses and urban landscaping. Portions of the development area would, however, remain adjacent to natural areas, which will continue to have wildfire potential, particularly along the northeastern edge of the project site. The project applicant is required to prepare a Fire/Vegetation Management Plan pursuant to Section 1117.2 of the *Fire Code* that would retard the spread of wildfire into the development area until Fire Department arrival at the site. Given that the applicant is required to prepare a fuel modification plan and comply with all development standards, and based on the nature of the proposed use, the potential for a significant demand for new staffing is considered to be less than significant.

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3 Assumes 3.1 persons per household and 19 dwelling units

4 U.S. Census 2000

2. *Response Times*

The site is located adjacent to an existing service area and the Department estimates the response time to the project at 6.8 minutes for primary response. This equals the Department's goal in response to a primary call for service. The Fire Department indicates their ability to provide emergency fire suppression and medical service to residences without adverse impact to their existing service obligations. Thus, no significant impact upon response times in the City is expected with project construction.

3. *Site Access /Emergency Plans /Evacuation Routes*

A driveway that serves a single residential dwelling provides existing access to the site interior. This driveway is to be removed and replaced with a new private drive that will take access of Gainsborough Road approximately 1,100 feet west of the intersection with Valley Center Avenue. Gainsborough Drive is estimated to carry about 1,670 trips per day and is a fully improved public street with a 50-foot right-of-way.

The proposed on-site drive has been designed with a narrower pavement cross section than is typical of a standard subdivision. The purpose is limit the overall volume of grading, maximize the preservation of mature trees, and provide a rural feel. As indicated in **Figure 4.6.1-2**, the proposed roadway provides two travel lanes within a 28-foot wide pavement envelope. On one side of the road is a 4 foot wide parkway consisting of compacted gravel that is separated from the pavement by concrete rolled curb. This provides space for a parking lane on the shoulder of the road. The other side of the roadway contains a 6-foot wide equestrian trail composed of compacted gravel that is also separated from the travel lanes by a concrete rolled curb. When taken as a whole, the roadway cross section effectively provides 38-feet of all-weather access throughout the project. This configuration will allow adequate drive lanes for a rural road, parking on one side of the street and an equestrian trail on the other side of the street.

Los Angeles County Fire Department standards typically require a 36 foot-wide roadway width for collector roads on cul-de-sacs ranging from 701 to 1,000 feet in length.[5] This configuration accommodates parking on both sides of the street. Roadway widths can be reduced to 34 feet if parking is allowed on only one side of the street. The purpose of the standard is to ensure that emergency vehicles have adequate access and can maneuver on the street in the event of an emergency. Provision is made under

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5 Refer to §21.24.090 of the Los Angeles County Subdivision Code for information.

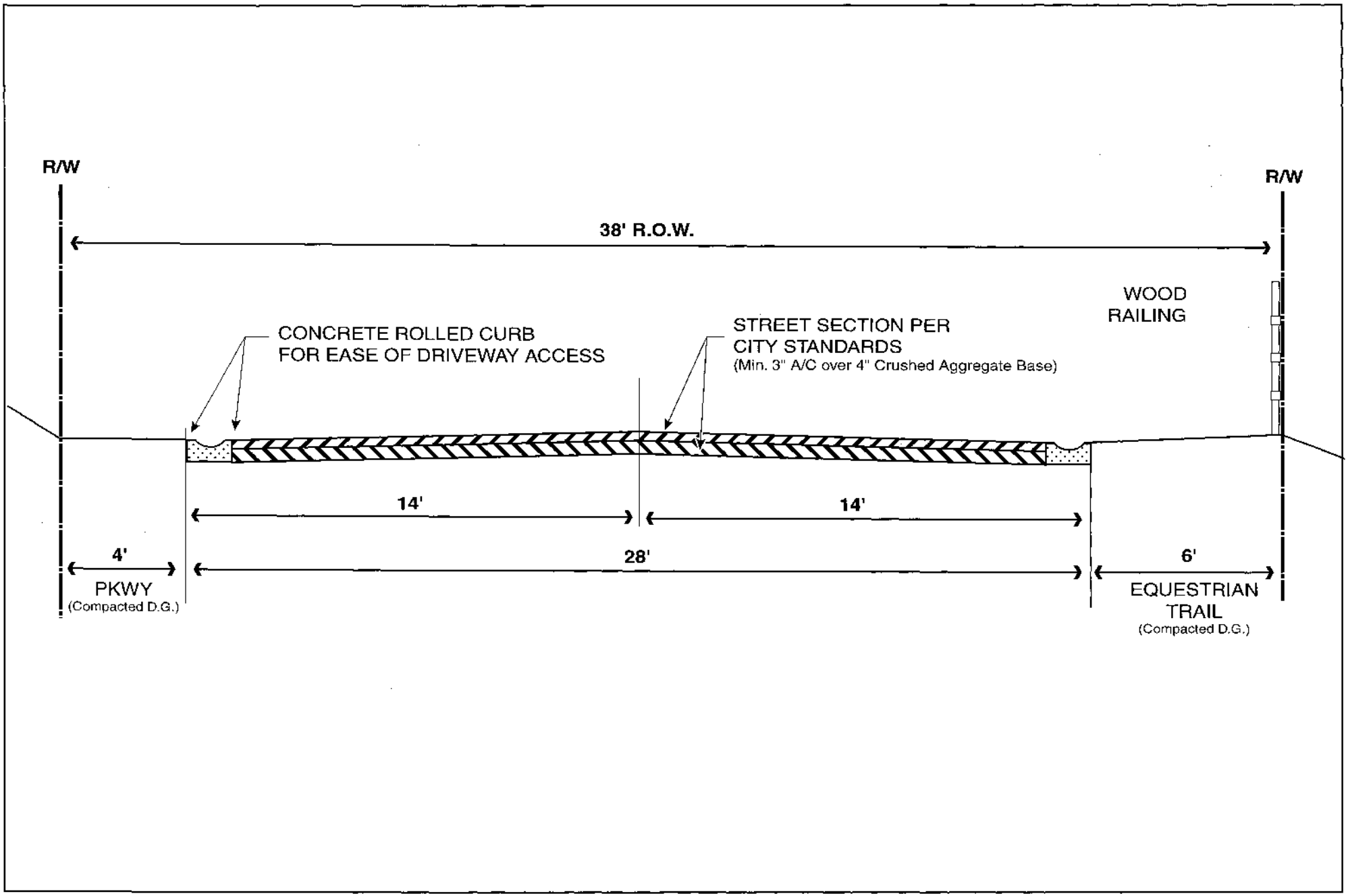

FIGURE **4.6.1-2**

Typical Road Cross Section

§21.24.090 of the County Code for modification to the requirements if "topographic features, title limitations, the general plan, community standards districts, the pattern of existing neighborhood development, or existing improvements, or safety considerations make such dedications impossible, unnecessary, or impractical."

The design of the proposed project provides adequate access for emergency vehicles. The total amount of room available within the proposed roadway cross section is 38 feet when one considers the 4-foot parkway and 6 foot equestrian trail within the right of way. These areas are to be constructed of compacted gravel and are separated from the paved surface by a rolled curb that allows emergency equipment to cross these areas if needed. Implementation of mitigation measure 4.7-3 contained in the Hydrology and Water Quality section of this Draft EIR would prohibit horsekeeping within Planning Area II of the Specific Plan to avoid introduction of nitrates and ammonia from horse manure. Consequently, the project applicant may decide to remove the equestrian trail component from the proposed project, in which case the roadway cross section becomes 32 feet available for use by an emergency vehicle. Even with removal of the horse trail from the proposed roadway cross section, sufficient width is available to provide adequate emergency access.

The narrower 32 feet of roadway width would exceed the development standards of the Specific Plan which are being modified to allow a minimum street width of 28 feet curb to curb to promote a rural setting similar to other locations in the City of San Dimas. Additionally, the project design incorporates a second means of access in the event of an emergency. This second access point is provided via a crash gate at the end of the proposed cul-de-sac. It connects with an existing private drive that borders the northern project boundary. When consideration is given to the design of the roadway cross section plus the presence of a second all weather means of access, it can be concluded that the project design meets the Fire Department requirements and no significant impact is expected.

There are several cases in the last few years where the City has permitted narrowed streets with Fire Department approval. The Gables (SWC San Dimas Ave. & Bonita Ave.), the condominiums on Bonita Ave. at Pony Express Court and the condominiums on Wild Road Lane (SEC Foothill Blvd. & Amelia Ave.). Specific Plan No. 25 (Northern Foothills) also calls for narrowed streets (26′ for standard streets and reduced widths permitted on a case by case basis). Several other streets in the area also have reduced street width: Liverpool Court & Hampshire Court each have 28′ curb to curb width with parking on each side; Edinburgh Drive and Scarborough Road each have 34′ curb to curb width with parking on each side. Hence, the proposed modification to reduce the street width from the standard requirement is consistent with the provisions of §21.24.090 of the County Code that provides for modifications when the pattern of existing neighborhood development, or community standards make such standards unnecessary and impractical.

With regard to emergency plans and evacuation routes, the proposed project complies with all City standards and policies contained in the City's Safety Element of the *General Plan* and appropriate sections of the City's Zoning Code. These standards were enforced during the review of the project tract map by City staff. Furthermore, the proposed project will generate only approximately 120 trips per day assuming approximately 9.9 average daily vehicle trips per dwelling unit.[6] It is likely that nearly all of the traffic will use travel east on Gainsborough then north on Valley Center for travel outside the project area. Development of the project would not adversely hinder the performance of evacuation routes in the area because the local network presently operates adequately and the additional vehicle trips traveling on the local roadway network would not significantly effect local roadway conditions. During construction, the local circulation network would continue to operate adequately through use of short-term construction traffic control procedures such as the use of flagmen. Thus, no significant impacts to emergency plans or evacuation routes are expected.

4. *Unusual Number or Unique Calls for Service*

None of the uses proposed by the project are considered to be unusual in nature or to have the potential to generate an unusual number or type of calls for service. Rather, service calls from these uses would be similar to those from other residential and recreational uses within the City of San Dimas. The proposed project is anticipated to comply with all applicable Fire Department codes and regulations for residential and related developments. The project would, therefore, not generate service calls that are "out of the ordinary" so no significant impact is expected.

d. Wildland Fire Hazard Potential

Based upon statewide criteria and on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in the area, the Acting Chief of the Los Angeles County Forestry Division has determined that the project is within a VHFHSZ[7] under the requirements of California Government Code Section 51178. Because the site is within a VHFHSZ, all applicable fire code and ordinance requirements for construction, access, water mains, fire hydrants, fire flows, brush clearance and fuel modification plans, would be met. Specific fire and life safety requirements for the construction phase will be addressed at the building fire plan check. There may be additional fire and life safety requirements during this time including, but not limited to annual brush clearing and fuel modification plans. With implementation of the fuel modification plans

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6 Institute of Transportation Engineers *Trip Generation Manual*, 5th ed. 1991

7 Conversation with David Leininger, Acting Chief, County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division, telephone conversation July 25, 2002.

and compliance with fire code and ordinance requirements outlined above, no significant impact associated with wild land fire hazard is anticipated.

4.6.1.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Development of the cumulative projects identified earlier would increase the demand for fire protection and emergency services throughout the City. The fire department has maintained a very respectable fire rating by conducting a pro-active approach to fire fighting. For example, the City of San Dimas and the County of Los Angeles have adopted strict fire prevention regulations on single family residential units to decrease the damage and danger incurred by a fire before the emergency crews can respond. The maintenance of the various programs that the department employs to achieve this rating would ensure the continued ability of the Department to meet the cumulative demand for fire protection service; therefore, no significant cumulative fire-related impacts are expected.

4.6.1.5 MITIGATION MEASURES

a. Legal/Regulatory Requirements

4.6.1-1 The development must comply with all applicable code and ordinance requirements for construction, access, water mains, fire flows and hydrants.

4.6.1-2 The applicant shall contract with a registered landscape architect to prepare a fuel modification plan, landscape plan, and irrigation plan for the proposed project. These plans shall be submitted for review and approval of the City of San Dimas Planning Department and the Forestry Division of the Los Angeles County Fire Department prior to the issuance of building permits.

4.6.1-3 The proposed internal collector road shall provide sufficient width within the right-of-way to provide a minimum of 28 feet of all-weather access throughout the project. This minimum cross section width may contain a trail and/or parking lane in addition to the two travel lanes when such pathways are separated from vehicle traffic by rolled concrete curbs.

b. Mitigation Measures Recommended by this EIR.

None required.

4.6.1.6 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

County Fire Department officials foresee no problems in providing adequate fire and rescue protection to residents of the proposed development. While the additional homes will increase the amount of service needed for adequate protection, the level of service will not suffer as a result of project development. Therefore, buildout of the project would not result in unavoidable significant fire protection impacts.

4.6.2.1 *INTRODUCTION*

The purpose of this section is to describe the City's existing police protection services and the potential impacts to said service with buildout of TTM 52717. Sources used in the preparation of this section include: the City of San Dimas General Plan, *the supplement to EIR on Specific Plan No. 4, and personal communication with County of Los Angeles law enforcement officials.*

4.6.2.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

a. Law Enforcement Provider

The City of San Dimas contracts with the County of Los Angeles Sheriffs Department for law enforcement protection. Service for the City is provided by the San Dimas Sheriff Station, which is located at 122 North San Dimas Avenue, approximately 2.7 miles from the project site (see **Figure 4.6.2-1**). The Station serves the City of San Dimas and the unincorporated communities of Covina, Azusa, Glendora, La Verne, and Claremont. The station also provides law enforcement for the Azusa Canyon and Mount Baldy areas of the Angeles National Forest (State Route 39).

b. Staffing Levels

The San Dimas station has a fully staffed Detective Bureau, which investigates burglaries, assaults, and many other crimes. Two crime prevention officers coordinate Business and Neighborhood Watch Programs, in addition to youth and local school programs. The city contracts for two Special Assignment Deputies who are also bike patrol certified. They provide specialized "problem-oriented" policing, which addresses quality of life issues within the City.

In addition, the Senior Volunteer Patrol Program supports sworn officers. This program involves senior citizen volunteers in non-hazardous tasks and patrol functions in support of the Sheriff's Department. Lastly, San Dimas is noted for its outstanding Mountain Rescue Team, established in 1995, which performs technical rescues and searches in the rugged terrain of the nearby Angeles National Forest. They currently respond to an average of seven rescue calls per month involving lost hiker searches and rescues of injured persons.

In total, the staff of the San Dimas station consists of 52 persons, 49 of whom are sworn personnel. The volunteer rescue team consisting of 29 persons. Patrol and posse reserve units also support the station. In April of 2001, the Sheriff's Department Aero Bureau added an additional helicopter, Air 24, greatly enhancing the patrol capabilities in the station area.

c. Response Times

The response time represents the range of time required to handle a call for service, which is measured from the time a call is received until the time a patrol car arrives at the scene. Response times are variable, particularly because the nearest responding patrol car may be located anywhere in the station's patrol area and may not necessarily respond from the station itself. The average response time used by the Sheriffs Department is three minutes or less for an emergency or immediate response incidents (a crime that is underway and/or an incident which is a life or death situation), nine minutes or less for priority calls (voice calls such as family disturbance), and eighteen minutes or less for routine responses (a crime that has already occurred and/or an incident that is not life threatening. The Sheriffs Department estimates that current response times to the site are approximately 3 minutes.[1]

4.6.2.3 IMPACT ANALYSIS

a. Thresholds of Significance

For the purposes of this analysis, ultimate development of the proposed project would have a significant impact upon law enforcement if the project results in:

- a potential for inadequate staffing;
- a substantial decline in response times to handle calls for services;
- special protection problems associated with the proposed project or general area; and/or,
- substantial interference with an evacuation plan.

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1 Communication with Capt. Russ Collins San Dimas Sheriffs Station January 8, 2002.

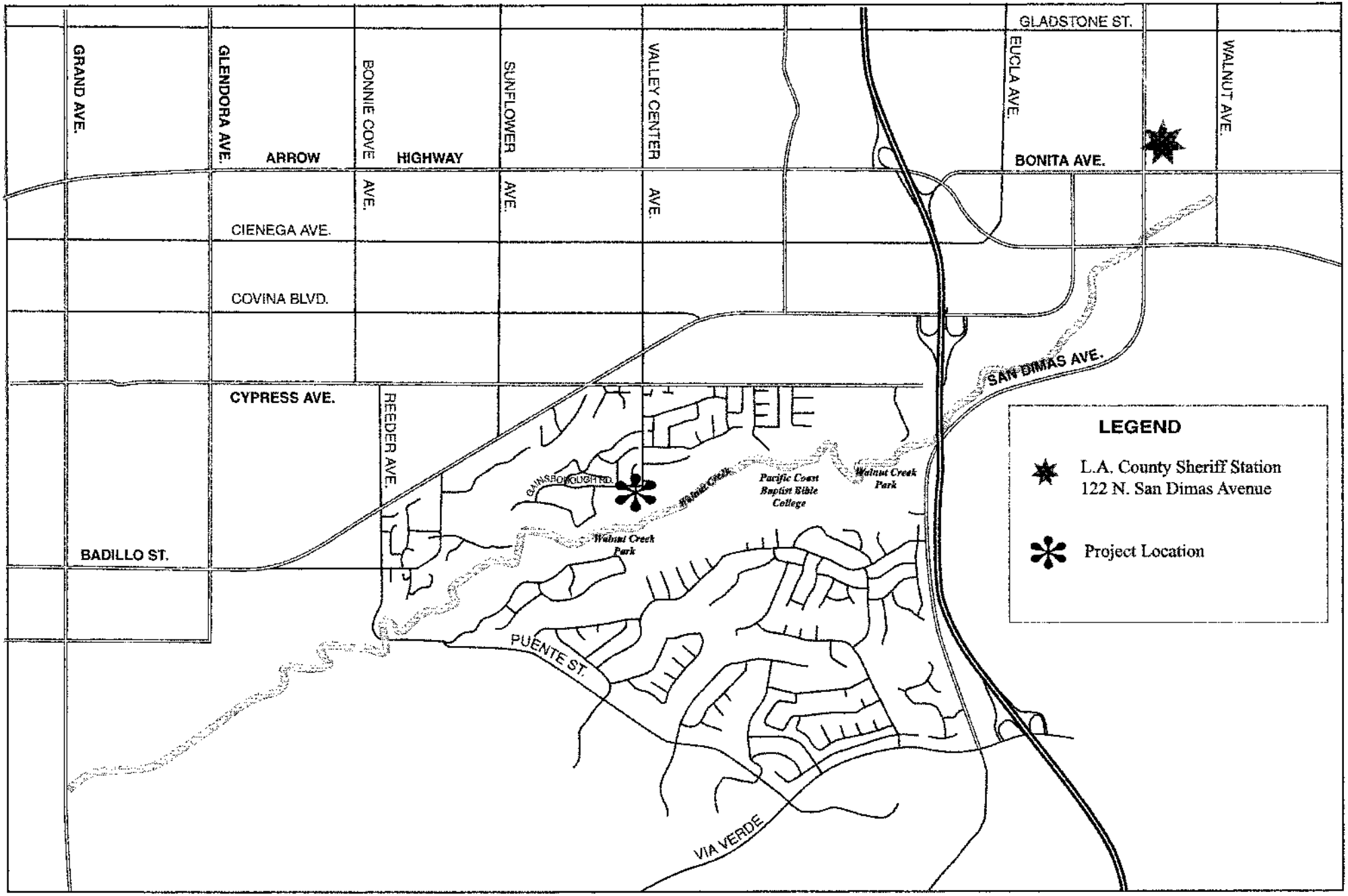

FIGURE **4.6.2-1**

Police Station Locations

b. Project Impacts

1. *Construction Impacts*

Site development and construction would not normally require services from the Sheriffs Department, except in the cases of trespassing, theft, and vandalism. Such activities at a construction site are not unusual, but are only occasional and do not typically place undue demands on law enforcement services. Construction activity would increase traffic both on and adjacent to the project site during working hours because commuting construction workers, trucks, and other large construction vehicles would be added to normal traffic during the buildout period. Slow moving construction-related traffic along local roadways may reduce optimal traffic flows on these roadways and could conceivably delay emergency vehicles or contribute to a vehicle accident. This potential is considered small given the periodic and short term nature of any construction related traffic and no significant impacts are expected with implementation of flagmen and other standard construction practices.

2. *Operational Impacts*

(a) Staffing

The Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department will have the responsibility for providing general law enforcement services to the project area from the San Dimas substation. It is anticipated that the increased human activity and presence created by project development would incrementally increase demands for law enforcement above current levels. However, the total population increase associated with this project represents a very small percentage of the current population within the City of San Dimas. Given that existing staffing is considered adequate to serve calls within the station's service area, and the project would only introduce an additional 19 residential units into the City's housing stock, no significant impacts to staffing levels are anticipated.

(b) Response Times

The project site is located within an existing patrol area and response times are presently considered adequate throughout the City based on communication with the Sheriffs Department. The proposed project would not introduce a large number of vehicle trips on the local circulation network, therefore, the project would not increase congestion that could slow emergency vehicles. Given that response times

are expected to remain adequate throughout the City during and subsequent to buildout of the project, no significant impacts are expected.[2]

(c) Emergency Plans and Evacuation Routes

With regard to emergency plans and evacuation routes, the proposed project would be required to comply with all standards and policies contained in the City's Safety Element of the *General Plan* and appropriate sections of the City's Zoning Code. These standards are enforced during the review of the project tract map. Furthermore, development of the project would not adversely hinder the performance of evacuation routes in the area because the project would not significantly lower the level of service along local roadways and intersections. Thus, no significant impacts to emergency plans or evacuation routes are expected.

(d) Unusual Number or Unique Calls for Service

The project is typical of residential, developments throughout California and is not considered to be an exceptional generator of calls for service. In general, the types and number of calls for service would be consistent with those presently occurring in the area, including residential burglary, auto theft and auto burglary. The types of equipment and personnel commonly found at a Sheriff substation can handle such calls. Consequently, no significant impacts are expected.

4.6.2.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative development would increase the demand for law enforcement services throughout the City as the resident population increases. As officers are deployed in specific areas throughout the City, response times for calls would remain adequate as long as additional officers are provided proportionate with population increases to accommodate the corresponding increase in service calls. Funding for Sheriffs Department staffing is provided through a contract between the City of San Dimas and the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department and funding to meet these contractual obligations is allocated through the City's budget process. As long as the City allocates adequate funding so that the Sheriffs Department may meet its service obligations, no significant cumulative impacts would occur.

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2 Id.

4.6.2.5 MITIGATION MEASURES

a. Legal/Regulatory Requirements

4.6.2-1 The subdivision map for the project shall incorporate all Los Angeles County Sheriff Department's design requirements (such as those pertaining to site access, site security, lighting, etc.) which will reduce demands for law enforcement service to the site and which will help ensure adequate public safety. Cumulative development will be subject to the same review as the proposed project.

b. Mitigation Measures Recommended by this EIR

None Required

4.6.2.6 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Implementation of the project would not result in unavoidable significant impacts.