

### **3.13 PUBLIC SERVICES**

This section describes the existing physical and regulatory setting related to fire protection/emergency medical services, law enforcement services, and parks and recreation and discusses the potential effects of the EA Alternatives related to these resources.

#### **3.13.1 Regulatory Framework**

##### **National Fire Protection Association Fire Code**

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Fire Code provides the requirements to establish a reasonable level of fire safety and property protection in new and existing buildings. Any new development would meet the requirements of the NFPA Fire Code.

##### **Alameda Fire Code**

The Alameda Fire Code is based on the 2010 California Fire Code and includes portions of the 2009 International Fire Code, together with Alameda amendments. The Alameda Fire Code is enforced by the Alameda Fire Department's (AFD's) Fire Marshal, who operates under the supervision of the Chief of the Fire Department.

The AFD currently serves the VA Transfer Parcel. Because the VA Transfer Parcel is a Federal property that receives fire and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) protection services from the AFD, any new development would meet the requirements of the of the Alameda Fire Code to satisfy the AFD's needs to service the site.

#### **3.13.2 Affected Environment**

This section describes conditions related to fire protection, law enforcement, and parks and recreation in the immediate vicinity of the VA Transfer Parcel. Other public services, including solid waste disposal, are discussed in Section 3.11 (Utilities).

##### **Fire and Emergency Medical Services**

The AFD provides emergency fire and medical response, emergency planning, and preventive services for the City of Alameda, including Alameda Point and the VA Transfer Parcel. The AFD is an all-risk public safety agency, meaning that it responds to all emergencies and hazards (not including law enforcement) that occur within the City of Alameda. The AFD operates four fire stations<sup>1</sup> situated throughout Alameda, staffed with a total of approximately 25 personnel each day (AFD, 2011). The fire station closest to the VA Transfer Parcel is Alameda Fire Station 2, located at 635 Pacific Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles from the VA Transfer Parcel. The VA Transfer Parcel is located within Fire District 5. Services provided by AFD include fire suppression on land and water; advanced life support (ALS), including ambulance transport services; fire prevention, consulting, and investigative services; community disaster preparedness, including Community Emergency Response Teams; hazardous materials response and mitigation; confined-space rescue services; and water rescue (AFD, 2011).

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<sup>1</sup> AFD's Station 5, located on 950 W. Ranger Road, is closed until further notice (Alameda, 2011).

In 2011, AFD responded to a total of 335 calls for service in District 5; of these calls, eight were fire-related, 242 were EMS-related, and 85 were considered “other” calls for service. In the event of an emergency, Alameda Fire Station 2 would provide the primary response to the VA Transfer Parcel (Olson, pers. comm., 2012). Table 3.13-1 displays the average response times per vehicle deployed out of Fire Station 2 in 2011.

**Table 3.13-1: Alameda Fire Department Station 2: Average Response Times for All Emergency Calls, per Emergency Vehicle**

Emergency Vehicle	Destination	Average Response Time (minutes)
Engine 2	Citywide	5:02
Truck 2	Citywide	5:54
Ambulance 2	Citywide	5:35

Source: Olson, pers. comm., 2012

The AFD indicates that since the closure of Fire Station 5 in 2009, located on West Ranger Road 0.5 mile from the VA Transfer Parcel, the average response times of Fire Station 2 and other stations have increased (Olson, pers. comm., 2012). At this time there is no plan to reopen Station 5 and the facility is being used for vehicle storage (Ott, pers. comm., 2012).

The primary entrance for fire and emergency medical vehicles is on the north side of Alameda Point at the Main Street Gate. Public access to the VA Transfer Parcel is restricted by an existing chain-link fence. However, in the event of a fire or other emergency, AFD can access the property through the locked gate, which is secured with a key box (Alameda, 2012).

Water for fire suppression is provided by East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), which operates and maintains the existing water systems at Alameda Point through an agreement with the City of Alameda. Two distinct water systems serve Alameda Point; one provides potable and non-potable water to fire hydrants, while the other serves fire protection sprinkler systems inside industrial buildings (ARRA, 2005). Alameda Point historically received water from EBMUD via three existing metering stations located on Main Street. The existing potable-water system remains functional; however, there are service concerns in some places, and most of the existing system is not built to City of Alameda or EBMUD standards (Alameda, n.d.), see Section 3.11 (Utilities).

**Police Services**

The Alameda Police Department (APD) provides law enforcement services within the City of Alameda, including the VA Transfer Parcel. The majority of the VA Transfer Parcel is located in Alameda County and a smaller portion of the parcel (southwest corner) is located within San Francisco County. Concurrent jurisdiction has been established between the San Francisco Police Department and APD to provide a legal basis for law enforcement (Alameda, 1998). The APD divides Alameda into a five-sector system that is patrolled by one to four officers 24 hours a day. The sectors are further divided into 25 beats, each assigned to individual officers (Alameda, 2011). The APD currently serves Federal property at Alameda Point. Alameda Point is patrolled exclusively by one uniformed APD rotating officer, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (APD, 2011).

## Parks and Recreation

The Alameda Recreation and Park Department administers an extensive system of local parks, athletic fields, dog parks, skate parks, historical museums, gymnasiums, a model airplane field, a community center, and a senior center. The city has 150 acres of municipal parkland and an overall park acreage ratio of about 2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Given the distribution of Alameda’s parks and flat topography, most of the city’s population is within easy walking distance of a park or open space facility (Gates and Associates, 2011). Recreational resources within 0.5 mile of the VA Transfer Parcel are shown in Table 3.13-2.

**Table 3.13-2 Existing Alameda Recreation and Park Department Facilities within 0.5 Mile of the VA Transfer Parcel**

Facility	Acres
Alameda Point Gym	0.20
City View Skatepark	0.55
Alameda Point Multi-Purpose Field	4.80
Main Street Dog Park	1.30
Albert H. DeWitt Officers Club	3.40

Sources: ARPD, 2010; ARPD, 2012

### 3.13.3 Environmental Consequences

#### Assessment Methods

Evaluation of potential public service impacts was based on a review of documents pertaining to the Proposed Action; coordination with appropriate agencies and City of Alameda staff members; and review of the VA Development Area and surroundings. The Proposed Action does not involve proposals for new residential structures. As it would not directly generate new residents in Alameda, the Proposed Action would not substantially increase citywide demand on public services. However, localized impacts resulting from increases in daily population (staff, patients, visitors) may occur and are analyzed below.

#### Alternative 1

##### *Construction*

##### *Fire and Emergency Medical Services*

During construction, access by fire trucks and emergency vehicles to the VA Transfer Parcel would be maintained at the current level. Given that construction-related traffic would not substantially affect the traffic flows in the area, it is unlikely that emergency vehicles traveling through the area would be delayed as a result. Construction-related traffic impacts would be temporary and any temporary traffic lane closures would be coordinated with the City of Alameda to minimize potential impacts on traffic and would be subject to NFPA and Alameda Fire Code emergency-access standards and requirements. Construction activities would not be expected to generate demand for additional AFD fire and emergency services that would exceed the capacity of existing services or result in an

adverse impact to current service levels. Construction activities, including construction related traffic, would not have a significant adverse impact on fire and EMS services, including response times and site access. See Section 3.3 (Transportation, Traffic, Circulation, and Parking) for more information traffic.

### **Police Services**

The APD currently serves Federal property at Alameda Point, including the VA Transfer Parcel. Upon transfer of the VA Transfer Parcel from the Navy to VA, VA would augment the local police coverage of the site with VA Police and other law enforcement entities. During construction, staffing for police services would be provided by VA to properly secure the site. Although the VA Transfer Parcel is considered Federal property, it is anticipated that there would be a mutual-aid agreement with APD, in which each party helps one another when needed. This arrangement is standard procedure at other VA campus locations. Construction activities would not be expected to generate demand for additional APD police services that would exceed the capacity of existing services or result in an adverse impact to current service levels. Therefore, construction activities would not have a significant impact on police services.

### **Parks and Recreation**

There are approximately five City of Alameda–owned parks and recreational facilities within 0.5 mile of the VA Transfer Parcel. Access to these facilities would not be disrupted during construction because construction activities would occur entirely within the VA Development Area. Construction under Alternative 1 would be performed by a temporary workforce consisting of approximately 20 to 56 persons derived from the local labor pool. As stated in Section 3.9 (Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice) the addition of 20 to 56 construction jobs that could be filled by Bay Area and/or Alameda residents is not anticipated to result in an adverse growth-inducement impact. Although construction workers would be within walking distance (0.5 mile) of nearby park and recreational facilities the increase in park usage would be minimal. For these reasons, construction-related impacts on parks and recreational amenities would not be significant.

### **Operation**

#### **Fire and Emergency Medical Services**

Operation of Alternative 1 would result in approximately 250 employees, 540 patients, and numerous visitors utilizing the proposed facilities within the VA Development Area on an average weekday (smaller number expected during weekends). However, based on similar VA facilities, the development and use of the property would not be expected to generate demand for additional AFD fire and emergency services that would exceed the capacity of existing services or result in an adverse impact to current service levels or require the need for an expansion of services.

Access to the VA Transfer Parcel, including emergency access, would be improved with the construction of a new primary access point (i.e., on- and off-site improvements) and a secondary emergency access point. As identified by AFD, the current emergency route to the VA Transfer Parcel is not the most direct route to the site. A shorter route that accesses the VA Transfer Parcel from the east would improve response times. As part of Alternative 1, secondary emergency access (from West Redline Avenue) would be provided along the east boundary of the VA

Transfer Parcel (Figure 2-2 in Chapter 2.0 [Alternatives]). Adding a secondary emergency entrance would alleviate AFD's concerns about current access to the VA Transfer Parcel.

Water system improvements would involve installing new water mains that provide potable water and fire suppression water to new buildings and irrigated areas. Because the Proposed Action would be required to meet standard fire code requirements for fire hydrant systems administered in accordance with the NFPA, water capacity and service that may be needed for fire suppression actions would be improved.

Operational activities, including daily occupation of the property by employees, patients, and visitors would not have a significant impact on fire and EMS services, including response times, site access, water supplies for fire suppression, or require an expansion of existing services.

### **Police Services**

As mentioned above, operation of Alternative 1 would result in approximately 250 employees, 540 patients, and numerous visitors utilizing the proposed facilities within the VA Development Area on an average weekday (smaller number expected during weekends). The VA Transfer Parcel would continue being served by the local APD together with augmented law enforcement support from VA. Although property owned by VA is considered Federal property, it is anticipated that there would be a mutual-aid agreement with APD, in which each party helps one another when needed. Because primary police and security services will be provided by VA, the development and use of the property would not be expected to generate demand for additional APD police services that would exceed the capacity of existing services or result in an adverse impact to current service levels or require the need for an expansion of services. Therefore, operational activities would not have a significant impact on police services.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Although the Proposed Action would not contribute to the City of Alameda's designated public parklands, at the request of BCDC, Alternative 1 includes an access roadway with a bicycle lane in both directions and a Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) -compliant pedestrian pathway along the northern VA Development Area allowing bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers to travel to a location approximately 100 feet from the western shoreline of the VA Development Area at the street-level. The on-site pedestrian pathway and roadway with bicycle lanes would provide public access and would be located within VA property. The pathway would be constructed using existing paving to the extent possible, in combination with filling in non-paved areas using decomposed granite. The roadway would terminate in a turnaround area that would restripe an existing paved area to allow for eight vehicle parking spaces. An ADA-compliant viewing area with benches will be located adjacent to the parking area, just before the 100-foot-wide shoreline band, which is under BCDC jurisdiction. No development is proposed within the 100 foot band by VA and would remain as open space.

The publically accessible road and pathway would allow limited access to open space and the shoreline. These publically accessible areas would be separated from the entire VA Development Area by a security fence that would be controlled with gate access and patrolled by security personnel. Public entry/exit points will not be provided between the VA Development Area and 100-foot setback area or other adjacent lands. The remaining 438 acres of the VA Transfer Parcel, including the existing California least tern (CLT) colony, would remain undeveloped. The undeveloped portion of the VA Transfer Parcel would be managed for the long-term persistence and

sustainability of the CLT colony and access would be restricted during the CLT breeding/nesting season (April 1 through August 15). The undeveloped area would add to the cumulative open space within the City of Alameda, a beneficial impact.

Some of the employees, patients, and visitors who would utilize the proposed facilities within the VA Development Area may also use the pedestrian pathway and bicycle lanes and the City of Alameda park and recreational facilities (e.g., personnel visiting a local park on their lunch break), but this additional usage is not expected to result in a substantial increase in demand for nearby park and recreational facilities. The on-site pedestrian pathway and roadway with bicycle lanes would provide public access to the shoreline at the west end of the site is anticipated to have approximately 30 daily users on an average day. The additional usage of this pathway and nearby park and recreational facilities would not be such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated, nor would the construction or expansion of park and recreational facilities be required. For the reasons stated above, operational impacts of Alternative 1 on park and recreational usage would not be significant.

## **Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative)**

### ***Construction***

The construction of VA facilities under Alternative 2 would be similar to that under Alternative 1. Therefore, impacts of construction under Alternative 2 on fire protection/emergency medical services, law enforcement services, and parks and recreation would be the same as those described for Alternative 1. Construction-related impacts of Alternative 2 would not be significant.

### ***Operation***

The operation of VA facilities under Alternative 2 would be similar to that under Alternative 1. Therefore, impacts of facility operation under Alternative 2 on fire protection/emergency medical services, law enforcement services, and parks and recreation would be the same as those described for Alternative 1. Operation-related impacts of Alternative 2 would not be significant.

## **No Action Alternative**

### ***Construction***

Under the No Action Alternative, construction of new buildings and the cemetery would not take place. Therefore, no significant construction-related impacts on fire protection/emergency medical services, law enforcement services, or parks and recreation would occur.

### ***Operation***

Under the No Action Alternative, no VA facilities would be implemented on the VA Transfer Parcel. The property would be retained by the Navy in caretaker status until another action on the property is taken. Therefore, no significant impacts on fire protection/emergency medical services, law enforcement, or parks and recreation would occur.

### 3.13.4 References

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