
11. FIRE/EMERGENCY SERVICES AND CHILD CARE

This SEIR chapter addresses the potential fire protection/emergency medical service and child care implications of the proposed Stanford Outpatient Center, focusing on the project aspects that differ from those addressed in the 1996 Midpoint Technology Park Final EIR and 1998 SEIR, for informational purposes at the request of Redwood City officials and staff.

11.1 FIRE/EMERGENCY SERVICES

11.1.1 Setting

(a) Existing Fire Protection Service in Project Vicinity. The Redwood City Fire Department (RCFD) provides fire protection and suppression, and emergency medical services (EMS), in the project vicinity. The RCFD is currently staffed by 60 emergency personnel (including 18 captains, 18 firefighter-paramedics, and 24 firefighters) and 8 administrative staff located at five stations.¹

Redwood City Fire Station #11, located at 1091 Second Avenue (at Broadway), is less than one-tenth of a mile from the proposed Stanford Outpatient Center project site. Actual travel time from this station to the project site is less than one minute. Station #11 currently provides first response with a 1,500-gallons-per-minute (gpm) pumper staffed by three firefighters.

Redwood City Fire Station #9, located at 755 Marshall Street (between Jefferson Avenue and Main Street), is located approximately 1.4 miles from the project site. Actual travel time is approximately four minutes. Response from this station can currently be provided with a 1,500-gpm pumper staffed by three firefighters, a 100-foot aerial ladder truck with four firefighters, and a battalion chief for incident command.

The actual time from the receipt of a fire alarm to the time of dispatch and response will vary (fire alarms are relayed through a private central station alarm company before receipt at the San Mateo County 911 Public Safety Communications Center.² Nevertheless, the overall Fire Department response time to the proposed project is well within goals established by the RCFD.³

¹Redwood City Fire Department website [www.ci.redwood-city.ca.us/fire], accessed February 10, 2006.

²Jamie Lee, Fire Prevention Officer, Redwood City Fire Department; written communication, January 27, 2006.

³Lee.

11.1.2 Pertinent Plans and Policies

The Redwood City Strategic General Plan Safety Element contains the following relevant policies regarding fire services:

- *Alternative water resources for firefighting purposes should be identified for use during a disaster.* (Policy S-6, page 12-3)
- *New development should provide adequate access for emergency vehicles, particularly firefighting equipment, as well as provide secure evacuation routes for the inhabitants of the area.* (Policy S-7, page 12-3)

11.1.3 Supplemental Analysis Scope

The scope of this supplemental fire protection and emergency medical services impact analysis is limited to identification of the mitigating (beneficial) effects of, and any additional adverse fire/emergency services impacts associated with, the proposed project changes.

11.1.4 Significance Criteria

Based on the CEQA Guidelines, the project would be expected to have a significant impact on fire protection and emergency medical services if it would:

- (a) Result in a need for new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection or emergency medical services¹; or
- (b) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

11.1.5 Pertinent Project Changes

All four project buildings would ultimately be occupied with outpatient medical clinics, including clinical research functions related to outpatient health care functions. Urgent care, emergency room, and in-patient hospital services would not be provided. The project changes would also introduce the use, handling, storage, generation, transport, and disposal of a range of medically related hazardous materials. Chapter 7 (Hazards and Hazardous Materials) of this SEIR describes these anticipated conditions in more detail, and associated implications for the Redwood City Fire Department. Project impacts on the Fire Department fire protection and emergency response demands are described below.

¹CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, items XIII(a) and VII(g). In 1996, when the Midpoint Technology Park EIR was prepared, the CEQA Initial Study Checklist included the question, "Will the proposal have an effect upon [emphasis added], or result in a need for a new or altered governmental service in...fire protection?". The 2005 CEQA Environmental Checklist Form, which has been applied in scoping this SEIR, asks a similar, but more restrictive, question related to the provision of or the "need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts," thereby limiting potential impacts on fire protection services to those resulting from the need and construction of new physical facilities (e.g., a new fire station).

11.1.6 Supplemental Impact and Mitigation Findings

Project-Related and Cumulative Increases in Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Service Demands. The 1996 Midpoint Technology Park EIR (p. V.107) and 1998 SEIR (Summary of Impacts and Mitigation) noted that the proposed 14 Technology Park buildings and one parking structure would "generate some demands on the existing fire protection services," and concluded, "Although the project may generate some additional demands, it should not have any significant impacts on the existing fire services." Certified Mitigation 7-6 (p. V.108) stated, "The project sponsor shall conform to all the applicable fire codes and ordinances." The proposed project land use changes would not change these 1996 EIR findings; however, depending on the occupancy classification designated for the specific new medical clinic uses on the site, the proposed Stanford Outpatient Center could be subject to additional on-site physical and operational fire protection requirements, including:¹

- smoke barriers (Uniform Building Code [UBC] section 308);
- a manual fire alarm system (Uniform Fire Code [UFC] section 1006.27);
- an automatic fire sprinkler system (UFC section 1006.2.7) (including for the proposed covered walkway and new lobbies);
- occupancy separations (UBC section 302) (including in the new lobbies);
- more restrictive requirements for the fire protection of exterior walls (UBC section 503); and
- restrictions on basic allowable floor space (UBC section 504).

The main concern of the RCFD for the previous project building occupants (@Home) was the potential for a spill or release of the fuel stored for the two existing emergency generators on-site.² These generators and associated base (above-ground) fuel storage tanks would remain on-site for the proposed project, and another two generators and associated base fuel storage tanks would be added. In addition, the proposed change from office/R&D to medical clinic use would result in an increased potential for hazardous material spills or releases posing immediate health or life safety impacts.

Remediation of any hazardous materials spill or release would require use of RCFD personnel and resources for a relatively long duration. During the remediation period, RCFD apparatus and personnel would be less available to respond to other emergencies and calls for service within the city.

Chapter 7 (Hazards and Hazardous Materials) of this SEIR describes in more detail the anticipated use, handling, storage, generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials

¹Maureen Riordan, Senior Planner, City of Redwood City; written communication, May 10, 2005; based on communications with the Redwood City Fire Department.

²Jamie Lee, Fire Prevention Officer, Redwood City Fire Department; written communication, January 27, 2006.

resulting from the proposed project. Fire Department permits would be required to store, dispense, use, or handle hazardous materials in excess of quantities specified within Section 105 of the Uniform Fire Code (UFC). These individual quantities could be increased if they are segregated within control areas separated by not less than a one-hour fire-resistive occupancy separation. The number of required control areas within a building may be as high as four.

Where the maximum quantities of hazardous materials are expected to exceed the exempt amounts per control area, buildings or structures, or portions thereof, would be classified as Group H Occupancies by the Uniform Building Code (UBC). H Occupancies may require superior building construction, decreased allowable floor areas, decreased allowable building heights, increased distances between buildings, spill control and secondary containment, fire extinguishing systems, and other measures. Implementation of some of these measures may not be practical with the existing project buildings.

As also described in chapter 7 herein, the San Mateo County Environmental Health Services Division would require a hazardous materials business plan and inventory statement for the project. As the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for the County of San Mateo, Health Services is responsible for regulating medical waste and hazardous waste generation at the proposed project site.

Currently, hazardous materials spills and releases posing immediate life threatening or property damage are mitigated through an agreement with the San Mateo County Environmental Health Services Division, the South County Fire Authority Hazardous Materials Response Team, and the RCFD. These entities provide a unified response to such hazardous materials emergencies.¹

The RCFD has **not** concluded that the proposed project would require a new or expanded fire station (significance criterion [a] above), nor has the Department concluded that the project would impair or interfere with any emergency plan (significance criterion [b] above). Therefore, potential project impacts on fire protection and emergency medical service demands are considered ***less-than-significant***.

Regarding potential cumulative impacts, as development increases throughout Redwood City, the RCFD will require additional personnel, facilities, and equipment (especially for emergency medical purposes), in order to maintain and continue delivery of an acceptable level of service, including adequate response times. Until specific RCFD facilities expansion needs are identified in terms of size, staffing, equipment, and location, assessment of associated environmental impacts would be highly speculative (see CEQA Guidelines section 15145, Speculation). As a result, cumulative effects on RCFD fire protection and emergency medical services do not represent an additional (supplemental) significant "environmental" impact under CEQA.

Supplemental Mitigation. No additional significant project or cumulative impact has been identified; no additional mitigation is required.

¹Lee (previous five paragraphs).

11.2 CHILD CARE

Child care was not discussed in the 1996 EIR or 1998 SEIR. For informational purposes, the following section has been included in this SEIR at the request of City officials and staff.

11.2.1 Setting

(a) Child Care Facilities, Enrollment, and Capacity in Redwood City. Redwood City has 60 center-based child care programs (including full- and part-day facilities) and 120 licensed family child care homes. The types of child care offered in the city include care for infants (up to 2 or 2.5 years); preschool age children (2.5 to 5 years); kindergarten children (after school only); and first through sixth grade children (after school only). The majority of this care is provided by a combination of not-for-profit and for-profit, private sources. The Redwood City School District operates some state-funded programs on school sites, but these programs are restricted by stringent income guidelines.¹

According to the most recent child care needs assessment survey, child care programs in Redwood City (including adjacent unincorporated County areas) have a total licensed capacity in centers and family child care homes of 3,361 children. Total estimated child care need in Redwood City (ages 0 to 13 years) is 11,937 spaces for children in all age groups.² Therefore, the current need for child care in Redwood City is estimated to exceed the amount of available licensed space by more than three times.

The estimated need by income-eligible, working families for state-subsidized child care in Redwood City is 5,761 spaces; the actual estimated total of existing subsidized, licensed space (including all types of funding) is approximately 839 spaces.³ Therefore, the current need for subsidized child care in Redwood City is estimated to exceed the amount of available licensed space by approximately seven times.

(b) Availability of Child Care in the Project Vicinity. Due to the primarily non-residential land use/zoning and the relatively lower income levels of residents in the area, parent fee-based child care centers (i.e., open to the public without eligibility requirements) have not been developed in the project vicinity. Center-based child care and part-day (3-hour) preschool at school sites and community facilities in the vicinity are almost all publicly funded for income-eligible families living in Redwood City.

Child care centers in the generally "southeast" quadrant of Redwood City, including the vicinity of the proposed project site, are:

- Fair Oaks Child Development Center,
- Garfield Child Development Center,
- Taft Child Development Center,

¹Kristen Anderson, Redwood City Child Care Coordinator, written communication, February 3, 2006.

²Anderson.

³San Mateo County, 2000. *Redwood City Child Care Need and Availability*, summary of data from Redwood City section of *Childcare Needs Assessment, San Mateo County, 1999-2000*.

- Hoover Child Development Center,
- Redwood City Child Development Program,
- Fair Oaks Head Start,
- Menlo Park Head Start, and
- Community Education Center at Taft and Hoover Schools (48/44 3-hour slots).

All of the above are state- or federally-funded for very low-income populations. A few of the programs have 1 to 3 full-fee spaces for non-eligible children. Many of the classrooms hold only part-day preschool (3 hours) or after school care for elementary school children.

The nearest "parent fee-based" child care centers are:

- Kiddie Garden/Peninsula Christian School at 1305 Middlefield Road near Main Street/downtown (36 children, ages 3 to 5 yrs), and
- Redwood Children's Center, 1445 Hudson Street (45 children, ages 2.5 to 5 years).

There are also approximately 25 licensed family child care homes in this quadrant of Redwood City that can serve an estimated 216 children ages birth to 12 years (including the providers' own children 10 years and younger).

11.2.2 Pertinent Plans and Policies

The Redwood City Strategic General Plan Land Use Element and Human Services Element contain the following relevant policy and proposal regarding child care services:

- *Development of child care facilities should be encouraged in both residential and non-residential areas in ways that are compatible with existing uses, in order to promote availability and accessibility of services.* (Policy L-12, page 6-5)
- *The Committee should encourage the provision of child care facilities to meet Redwood City residents' needs.* (Social Environment Proposal c, page 15-12)

The City of Redwood City does not provide child care as a public service and does not impose any development fees on new development for the funding of child care. The City does offer density bonuses to developers as incentive to provide facilities for child care in new development; a density bonus ordinance was recently passed and applied to the Abbott Labs R&D project. In addition, child care is considered an accessory use when serving an employment site, so no additional use permit is required.¹

¹Anderson.

11.2.3 Significance Criteria

The CEQA Guidelines do not outline any significance criteria specific to provision of child care services; for example, child care in Redwood City is not considered a "public service" requiring "government facilities" as described in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, item XIII.

11.2.4 Supplemental Impact and Mitigation Findings

Supplemental Child Care Impacts. The proposed project would contribute to the existing child care shortage in Redwood City. This non-physical impact is considered ***less-than-significant*** from an "environmental" CEQA perspective. The City has no adopted policy *requiring* provisions for child care in new development.

Due to the existing shortage of child care facilities in Redwood City, every substantial addition to the population of children in the City exacerbates existing unmet needs for such services. The primary variables that contribute to the existing shortage of locally available child care services include the shortage of affordable, available space for such facilities and the relatively low average wage for child care workers, which, when combined with the high cost of living in the Redwood City area, contribute to low recruitment and high turnover.

As noted in subsection 11.2.2, above, the City's General Plan *encourages*, but does not require, new development to provide for child care. According to the Redwood City Child Care Coordinator, in order for provision of child care to be feasible, facility costs need to be low enough to cover the costs of the child care operator. In a large residential or commercial project, this outcome can be achieved through developer provision of dedicated, rent-free, or low-rent physical space to house the child care facility which, in turn, can be operated by the contracted provider. Therefore, any potential child care impacts from new development could be mitigated through the voluntary provision of on-site space where a private or non-profit operator could set up child care facilities, consistent with state space requirements.¹ To encourage on-site provision of child care, the City has passed a density bonus ordinance (for both residential and non-residential development). Also, the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG), as the Congestion Management Agency for San Mateo County, grants traffic "trip credits" to developments that offer child care provisions (e.g., on-site child care, shuttle service to nearby child care facilities) to help mitigate traffic impacts of the development,² including trips resulting from employees driving between work and off-site child care facilities.

The Stanford Medical Center and Stanford University include the following child care centers on the Palo Alto campus for employees and students:

- The Arboretum Child Care Center serves the Medical Center community, as well as other Stanford-affiliated groups. The center is licensed for 125 children (infant through 5 years) and has a waiting list of approximately 380
- Two other full-day child care centers, as well as two part-day preschools, are located on campus.

¹Anderson.

²*Guidelines for Implementing the Land Use Component of the Congestion Management Program*; C/CAG; September 21, 2004.

Due to the full occupancy of on-campus facilities, another child care center has been planned.¹

The proposed Stanford Outpatient Center project would not include any residential uses; therefore, a substantial increase in local population resulting from the project would not be expected. Also, as described in chapter 10 (Housing) of this SEIR, the proposed project would employ approximately 538 **fewer** employees than anticipated in the 1996 EIR, resulting in a **reduced impact** on citywide demands for new housing. Any increase in local population due to Outpatient Center employees requiring child care relocating to Redwood City would not be considered a substantial addition to the population of children, and any such increase in local population would be less than anticipated in the 1996 EIR.

Supplemental Mitigation. No significant additional environmental impact has been identified, and no mitigation is required under CEQA. Child care services in Redwood City are currently private or non-profit rather than public. The City has no General Plan policy or municipal regulation *requiring* provisions for child care in new development. Under its current policies, the City may consider granting a density bonus to the project, in return for applicant provision of adequate (i.e., consistent with state space requirements) child care space or facilities on the project site; however, the proposed Stanford Outpatient Center project does not require a density bonus because the project involves the renovation of four *existing* buildings. Also, C/CAG may grant trip credits for child care provisions.

¹Anderson.