

2.1.3 Utilities/Public & Emergency Services

The CEQA environmental checklist (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines) requires agencies to address impacts to public services and utilities and service systems. CEQA requires the assessment of whether the project would result in significant adverse impacts to acceptable maintenance ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any public services, specifically on fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, and other public facilities. The CEQA environmental checklist also requires agencies to address a project's impacts on recreational facilities; CEQA requires an assessment of whether the project would increase the use of existing recreational areas such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur. Chapter 3 (CEQA Evaluation) provides additional discussion of the specific CEQA evaluation criteria related to utilities, public services, and recreation.

2.1.3.1 Affected Environment

Information from this section is based on the City of San Juan Capistrano General Plan (San Juan Capistrano, 2002). In addition, agencies providing these public services were contacted to obtain information regarding available service levels and current or anticipated constraints to serving the proposed development.

A Fire Protection Services

The proposed project site would be served by the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA). The Operations Department of the OCFA is divided into five geographical operational divisions, each under the command of a division chief. Most of the divisions are divided into two battalions, which are under the command of field battalion chiefs. Within these battalions are 60 fire stations (i.e., 5 to 9 stations per battalion) that provide regional emergency response. Station 7, which is located at 31865 Del Obispo, San Juan Capistrano, serves the project area, and it is approximately 0.25 mile (0.4 kilometer [km]) south of the project site. In addition to Station 7, nine OCFA fire stations located outside of the City provide fire protection and emergency response to San Juan Capistrano (OCFA, 2007).

OCFA has adopted the following service standards for the provision of fire protection within the City:

- First-in fire engine should arrive on scene to both medical aids and fires within 5 minutes, 80 percent of the time;
- First-in truck company should arrive on scene to fires within 10 minutes, 80 percent of the time; and
- First-in paramedic companies should arrive on scene at all medical aids within 8 minutes, 90 percent of the time.

B Police Protection Services

The City currently contracts with the Orange County Sheriff's Department to provide law enforcement service within the City. The Aliso Viejo Station, which is located at

11 Journey, Aliso Viejo, California, serves the City. The station is located approximately 9 miles from the proposed project area. An additional police services office is located behind City Hall (32400 Paseo Adelanto, San Juan Capistrano). The Associated Senior Action Program (ASAP) is a senior volunteer group that assists the Sheriff with policing activities within San Juan Capistrano. The City has adopted the following service standards for the provision of sufficient law enforcement within the City. Sheriff deputies should:

- Arrive at the scene of an emergency within 5 minutes, 50 percent of the time;
- Arrive at all emergencies within 8 minutes; and
- Arrive at all non-emergencies within 15 minutes or less, 75 percent of the time; and arrive at all non-emergencies within 30 minutes.

The Orange County Sheriff’s Department San Juan Capistrano response team is staffed with 28 deputies. At a population of more than 36,000 residents, the City maintains a deputy-to-population ratio of approximately 1:1,289.

Deputies are dispatched to calls for response from their assigned patrol routes; therefore, response times vary depending on the responding officers’ distance to the call when it arrives. Statistics for 2003 show that response times for emergency calls were 6 minutes, 14 seconds (OC Register, 2007).

The City’s property crime levels tend to be lower than California's average level, but they have slightly increased from 1999 to 2003. Violent crime levels in the City tend to be much lower than California's average level as well, and they have decreased within the City from 1999. Table 2.1.3-1 presents the 2003 through 2005 data for crimes reported in the City.

**Table 2.1.3-1
 Crime Statistics – San Juan Capistrano**

	2003	2004	2005
Homicide	1	0	0
Rape	0	3	2
Robbery	13	13	21
Felony Assault	36	45	36
Burglary	81	119	105
Vehicle Theft	70	69	57
Arson	10	4	9
Total	211	253	230

Source: IDcide, 2007.

A California Highway Patrol (CHP) office is also located approximately 1.4 miles (2.25 km) south of the project site along Camino Capistrano; the CHP would have enforcement jurisdiction on the state highway system, which includes I-5 and SR-74.

C Schools

The project study area is served by the Capistrano Unified School District (CUSD). Four public elementary schools, one junior high school, a new high school (opening September 2007), and an adult continuation school under the CUSD are located in the vicinity of the project area. The existing operational schools are: San Juan Elementary, Del Obispo Elementary, Ambuehl Elementary, Kinoshita Elementary, Marco Forster Junior High, and the Junipero Serra continuation school. Currently, high school students attend one of three CUSD high schools that are located outside the City. The new San Juan Hills High School will open in September 2007 for grade 9 and full attendance at this school is expected in 2009 (CUSD 2007).

In addition to the CUSD public schools, there are also three private schools in the vicinity of the project area. These are described below.

- San Juan Capistrano Mission Parish School is a private Catholic school located less than 0.22 mile (0.35 km) northwest of the interchange. This school serves grades K-8, and it provides morning and afternoon preschool programs, along with after-school care.
- St. Margaret's Episcopal School is a private Christian school located approximately 0.60 mile (0.97 km) from the proposed project. The school serves children ranging from preschool through grade 12.
- J Serra Catholic High School is a private Catholic school located approximately 1.35 miles (2.17 km) from the proposed project. The school serves grades 8 through 12.

Out of the schools described above, only the San Juan Elementary School is located in the potential direct impact area of the project (under Alternative 5). The San Juan Elementary School encompasses approximately 10 acres of land and includes 39,035 square feet of school building space. With a design capacity of 656 students, this grade K-5 school was at 96 percent capacity during the 2003/04 school year (CUSD, 2006). The YMCA, which is located within the San Juan Elementary School grounds, also provides child-care services at a building located on the school site at the terminus of Spring Street.

D Recreation Facilities

The City of San Juan Capistrano Public Works department oversees the operation and maintenance of parks, open space, and recreational facilities in the City. The City has 162.6 acres of existing parks and recreational facilities within its jurisdiction.

Many park and recreation facilities are located near the project. These facilities are listed in Table 2.1.3-2. The San Juan Elementary School playground and sports field (called Buchheim Field) are located immediately adjacent to the I-5/Ortega Highway southbound off-ramp. A portion of the San Juan Elementary School playground would need to be removed and replaced if proposed Alternative 5 of the project is implemented; however, the school playground is not considered a public recreation area for the purposes of this

analysis due to the fact that the school operates as a closed campus and the playground area is not open for general public recreation use. Alternatively, Buchheim Field on the San Juan Elementary School site is considered a public recreation area because there is a joint use agreement in place between CUSD and the City to allow for public use of Buchheim Field. Buchheim Field does not fall within the project footprint and would not be affected by the project’s property acquisition needs.

**Table 2.1.3-2
Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities in the Project Vicinity**

Name	Size (Acres)	Location	Amenities
Arce Park	0.2	Northwest corner of Alipaz and Del Obispo Street	Grassy area with automatic irrigation and signage.
Buchheim Field ¹	17.7	North of Spring Street, east of El Camino Real and west of I-5, on the grounds of San Juan Elementary School	Food concessions, unlighted Little League and softball fields, unlighted soccer fields, and parking.
Cook Park (La Novia)	6.5	East side of Calle Arroyo between La Novia and Paseo Tirador	Automatic irrigation, BBQs and fire rings, basketball courts, bike paths, children’s play area, drinking fountains, equestrian/hiking trails, grassy area, multipurpose fields, parking, picnic areas, restrooms, and volleyball courts.
Good Neighbors Park	0.2	West of Trabuco Creek between Calle Lucana and Calle Delphina	Biking, equestrian/hiking trail, grassy area, picnic area, and restrooms.
Los Rios Historic Park	8.0	East of Trabuco Creek between Ramos Street and Historic River Street	Bike paths, buildings of distinction, historical sites, and parking.
Notes: ¹ This facility is owned by CUSD. There is a joint use agreement with the City.			

Source: Adapted from San Juan Capistrano Recreation Element Table PR-2, (San Juan Capistrano, 2002)

Figure 2.1.3-1 displays the locations of the fire station, police station, schools, and public parks in the project vicinity.

E Utilities

The City of San Juan Capistrano Public Works Department oversees the maintenance and improvements for all publicly owned streets, parks, parkways, medians, and facilities.

Water service is provided to the City through the Capistrano Valley Water District. The City’s Sewer Department manages the maintenance, operation, and engineering of the wastewater system within the City. Wastewater generated in the City is conveyed west for treatment at the JB Latham Plant, which is located approximately 4 miles from the proposed project site off of Del Obispo Street in Dana Point, California. The South Orange County Wastewater Authority operates this 49,210-cubic-meter-per-day (m³/day) (13-million-gallons-per-day [mgd]) capacity wastewater treatment plant (SOCWA, 2007). Figure 2.1.3-2 displays the South Orange County Wastewater Authority Regional Locations Map.

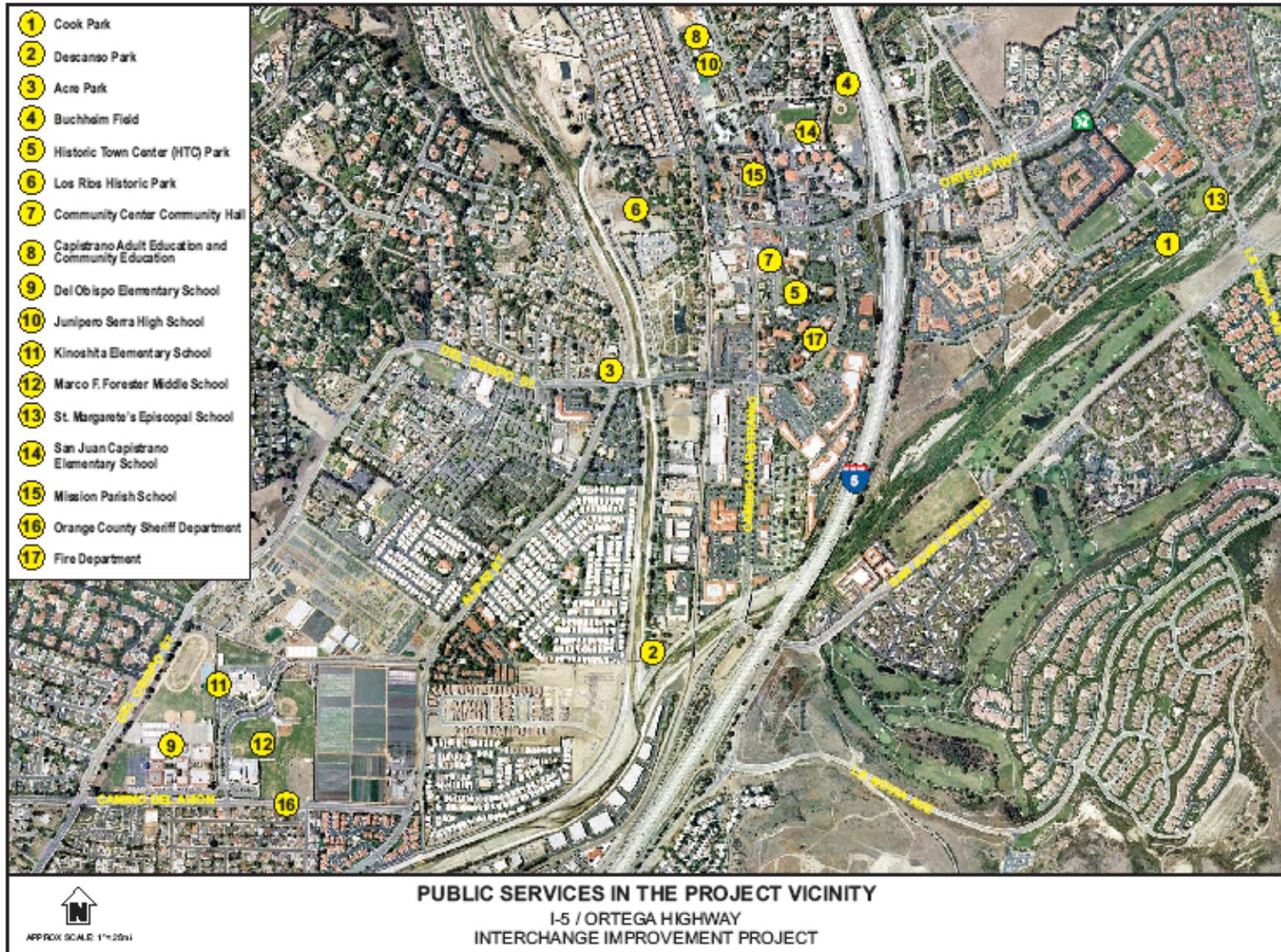


Figure 2.1.3-1
Public Services in the Project Vicinity

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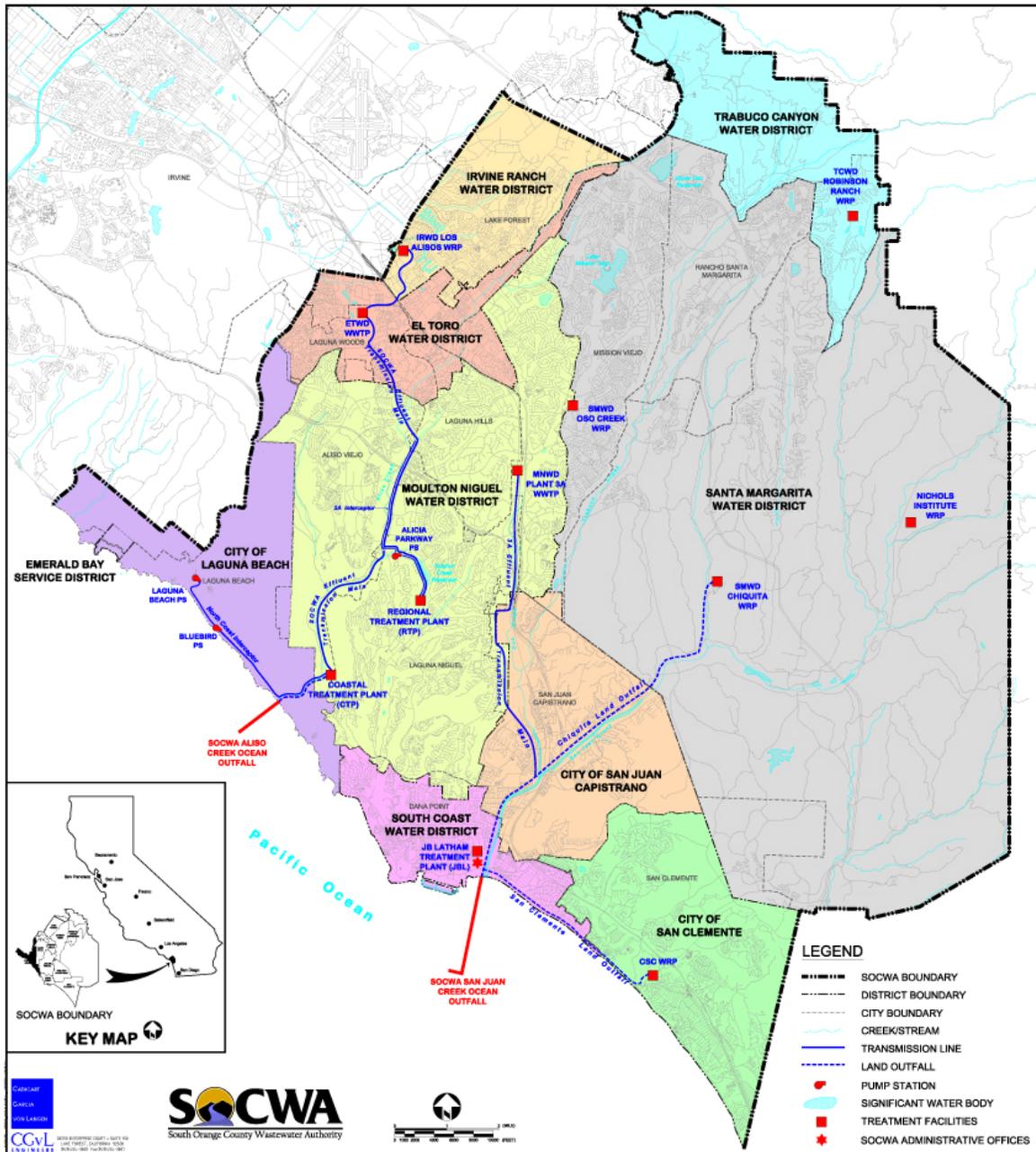


Figure 2.1.3-2
South Orange County Wastewater Authority Regional Locations Map

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San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) provides electricity for the City. The Gas Company provides natural gas service to the City. Southwester Bell/Pacific Bell (SBC/Pac Bell) and Cox Telecom provide telephone service to the City. Cox Communications provides cable television service for the City. Telephone, cable television, gas, and electric utility lines are present underground and overhead in the project area.

Caltrans owns and maintains a portion of the storm drain system along I-5 within the project limits. The City owns and maintains a portion of the storm drain system along Camino Capistrano. Storm water runoff at the project is directed by sheet flow to storm drain systems along Ortega Highway, Del Obispo Street, and I-5 that outlet into Horno Creek. The northern portion of Horno Creek, which bisects the San Juan Elementary School playground, is not channelized; however, Horno Creek is channelized just south of the San Juan Elementary School playground, where it flows into a box culvert under Ortega Highway. The creek continues southeast, where it flows underground beneath I-5 and the business complex east of the freeway. Horno Creek eventually discharges its flows into the lower reaches of San Juan Creek just beyond the business complex. Horno Creek and San Juan Creek are part of Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA) 901.27 within the San Juan Creek Watershed.

Figure 2.1.3-3 displays the locations of public utilities (i.e., water supply, gas, electricity, wastewater, storm drains, and telephone lines) in the project area.

The City contracts with CR&R, a private company, for residential and commercial solid waste and refuse disposal services. All residential and commercial solid waste is transported to the Prima Deshecha Landfill, which is a Class III landfill that accepts only nonhazardous municipal solid waste for disposal. The Prima Deshecha Landfill is permitted to accept up to 3,628 metric tons (4,000 US tons) of waste per day. In addition, the Prima Deshecha Landfill has approximately 405 hectares (1,000 acres) permitted for refuse disposal and is scheduled to close in approximately 2067 (Integrated Waste Management District, 2007).

2.1.3.2 Environmental Consequences

The project could potentially result in short-term impacts on emergency response times during construction. Coordination with emergency services providers and the development of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) would minimize this impact. In the long term, the project would have beneficial effects on response times because the traffic level of service (LOS) and access would improve, which would minimize delays associated with traffic congestion.

A Temporary Impacts

Alternative 3. The proposed project would cause temporary construction-related traffic impacts. During construction, temporary traffic impacts may be experienced in the proposed project vicinity. Delays in traffic can be expected during construction. These delays could affect motorist travel times and the response time of emergency service vehicles. The construction-related traffic impacts would be temporary and a required

Traffic Management Plan (TMP) would be prepared to minimize effects during the construction period. Therefore, construction-related traffic impacts would not cause an adverse effect to public and emergency services. Minimization measures MM PS-1, MM PS-2, and MM PS-3 are included to further minimize impacts.

The proposed project would temporarily affect gas lines (the Gas Company) in the project area. A 6-inch gas line runs along the north side of Ortega Highway extending from west of Los Cerritos Avenue through the existing bridge superstructure to El Camino Real. The gas line transitions to the south side of Ortega Highway for the portion extending through the bridge. Another 3-inch gas line runs along the west side of Del Obispo Street and terminates at the above 6-inch gas line. These utility lines would require relocation under Alternative 3.

The proposed project would temporarily affect water lines (Capistrano Valley Water District). An 8-inch water line runs along Ortega Highway immediately north of the centerline, extending from west of Los Cerritos Avenue through the existing bridge superstructure to El Camino Real. In addition, an 8-inch water line runs along the west side of Del Obispo Street and terminates at the above 8-inch water line, which runs along Ortega Highway, and a 12- to 14-inch water line runs along the east side of the I-5 northbound off-ramp and continues eastward along the south side curb line along Ortega Highway past Los Cerritos Avenue. These pipelines would require relocation within the proposed project area under Alternative 3.

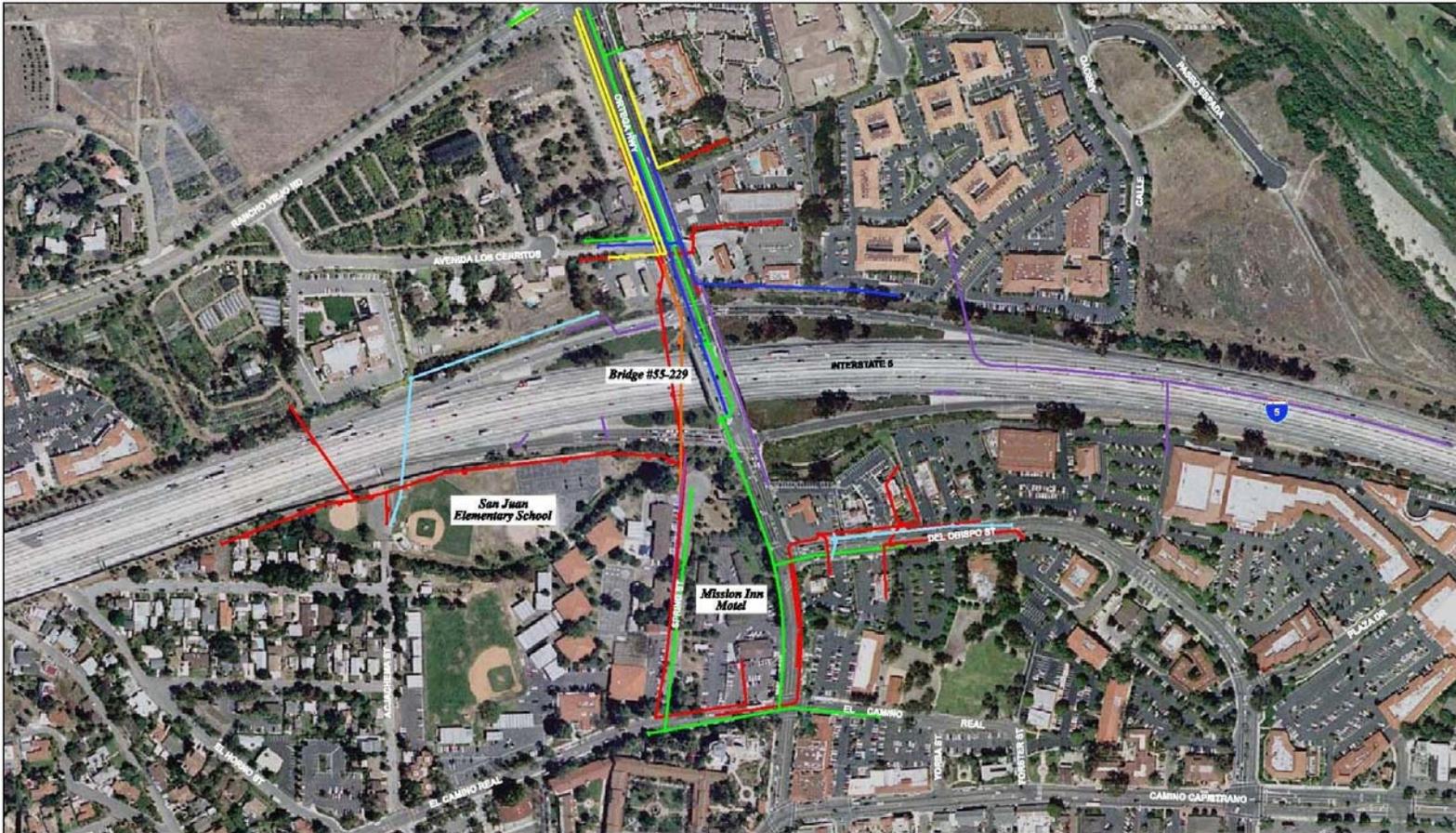
Alternative 3 would also temporarily affect other overhead electrical, cable, and telephone lines (SDG&E, SBC/Pac Bell, and Cox Telecom) that are located on both sides of Ortega Highway between the northbound on-ramp entrance and Los Cerritos Avenue, and they would require relocation within the limits of the proposed construction under Alternative 3.

An SBC/Pac Bell conduit line runs along the north side of Ortega Highway to the east of the bridge and crosses I-5 along the old Spring Street alignment beginning at the east bridge abutment and extending beneath the freeway to a manhole at the end of the Spring Street cul-de-sac. This facility may require relocation within the proposed project area under Alternative 3 due to physical space required for the construction of the east bridge abutment.

Temporary impacts to utilities are not considered substantial due to standard project requirements that would be followed to avoid and minimize service disruptions during project construction. All utilities that require relocation as a result of this project would be relocated on site within the environmentally evaluated footprint of this project. Measure MM PS-4 is included to avoid and further reduce impacts.



NO SCALE



LEGEND

- | | |
|---|---|
|  GAS |  WATER |
|  ELECTRIC |  STORM DRAIN |
|  TELEPHONE |  SEWER |
|  COMMUNICATION | |

**Figure 2.1.3-3
Public Utilities in the Project Area**

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Alternative 5. Alternative 5 would share the same temporary impacts to utilities, public, and emergency services as mentioned under Alternative 3 above. The construction-related traffic impacts would be temporary and a required Traffic Management Plan (TMP) would be prepared to minimize effects during the construction period. Therefore, construction-related traffic impacts would not cause an adverse effect to public and emergency services. Minimization measures MM PS-1, MM PS-2, and MM PS-3 are included to further minimize impacts.

In addition, Alternative 5 would affect overhead electrical lines (SDG&E) that are located parallel to the existing soundwall along the west side of I-5 and the southbound I-5 off-ramp. These facilities, which are located immediately outside the existing Department ROW, stop prior to Ortega Highway and extend westward along the north side of Spring Street. These facilities may require relocation within the proposed project area under Alternative 5 due to physical space required for the proposed realignment of the southbound I-5 off-ramp and proposed southbound loop on-ramp.

Overhead electrical lines, located beyond the north side of the bridge, span I-5 and terminate at the end of the Spring Street cul-de-sac. These electrical lines would also require relocation under Alternative 5 due to the proposed realignment of the southbound I-5 off-ramp and proposed southbound loop on-ramp. Steel poles may be required to accommodate the increased span length.

Temporary impacts to utilities are not considered substantial due to standard project requirements that would be followed to avoid and minimize service disruptions during project construction. All utilities that require relocation as a result of this project would be relocated on site within the environmentally evaluated footprint of this project. Measure MM PS-4 is included to avoid and further reduce impacts.

B Permanent Impacts

No Build Alternative. The No Build Alternative would not change utilities or emergency services from the existing configurations. Traffic delays in emergency response situations may increase emergency response times under the No Build Alternative due to a projected increase in future traffic volumes (and associated increased traffic congestion) that the existing interchange configuration would not be able to adequately carry.

Alternative 3. No permanent impacts related to utilities, schools, recreation facilities, or emergency services would result from Alternative 3. All impacts to utilities, public, and emergency services would be temporary and would be rectified once relocation of certain utilities and project construction is complete. Operation of Alternative 3 would result in improved access for emergency response services and would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with any adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

Alternative 5. No permanent impacts related to utilities, schools, recreation facilities, or emergency services would result from Alternative 5. As with Alternative 3, all impacts to utilities, public, and emergency services would be temporary and would be rectified once relocation of certain utilities and project construction is complete. Operation of

Alternative 5 would result in improved access for emergency response services and would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with any adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

2.1.3.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measures apply to both Alternatives 3 and 5.

A Temporary Measures

MM PS-1 In accordance with standard project requirements, a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) shall be prepared for the project prior to construction. The TMP will include plans and requirements for the project area that must be implemented during project construction to ensure traffic safety, minimize construction-related traffic congestion, and minimize driver and pedestrian inconveniences.

MM PS-2 To ensure that emergency response times are not disrupted, the Orange County Sheriff and Fire Departments must be informed of the project construction schedule, lane closures (if any), and detour plans (if any) well in advance of any detour plan or lane closure being implemented throughout the construction period.

MM PS-3 Area residents and owners/managers of businesses and public facilities must be continually informed of the project development and construction plans prior to and during the construction period so that they are aware of the construction timing, traffic detour plans, lane/road closures, and transit detour plans.

MM PS-4 All public utility lines, pipes, and cables that are disturbed or removed to accommodate the proposed project must be replaced or relocated within the project limits to continue to meet the needs of residents and businesses in the community. During construction, arrangements must be made to avoid disruption in utility services. If interruption in service is unavoidable, then notice must be given and proper arrangements shall be made with residents and businesses.

B Permanent Measures

No permanent measures to minimize harm are required.