

1.1 TRANSPORTATION

1.1.1 Environmental Setting

This section summarizes the results of a traffic/transportation analysis that was conducted for the proposed baseball field lighting and improvements project at El Rancho High School in Pico Rivera. The high school campus is bounded by Parsons Boulevard on the east, Homebrook Street on the south, Loch Alene Avenue on the west, and a row of single-family residences on the north that front onto Balfour Street. The field lighting and improvement project is being proposed by El Rancho Unified School District.

El Rancho High School has an existing baseball field located south of the football stadium in the center of the campus. As it does not have field lights, it is usable only during the daylight hours for baseball games and practice. The proposed baseball field would be located east of the football stadium and would be equipped with lights, which would provide the opportunity for baseball games and practice to occur in the evening hours.

The following paragraphs provide a brief description of the streets that provide access to the high school campus, the existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the existing transit service in the area.

Street Network, Sidewalks, Crosswalks, and Bike Lanes

Parsons Boulevard

Parsons Boulevard is a two lane north-south street that abuts the east side of the school campus. It has sidewalks and parking on both sides of the street, except that the segment of Parsons Boulevard adjacent to the school has a No Stopping Any Time restriction on the west side of the street and a No Stopping - 7 to 10 AM - 3 to 6 PM restriction on the east side of the street. There are several driveways on the west side of Parsons Boulevard that provide access to school parking lots and student drop-off/pick-up areas. The speed limit on Parsons Boulevard is 25 miles per hour (mph).

Homebrook Street

Homebrook Street is a narrow two lane east-west street that abuts the south side of the school campus. It has a sidewalk on the south side of the street and an intermittent sidewalk on the north side of the street. Parking is prohibited on Homebrook Street and the speed limit is 15 mph.

Loch Alene Avenue

Loch Alene Avenue is a two lane north-south street that abuts the west side of the school campus. It has sidewalks and parking on both sides of the street. The speed limit on Loch Alene Avenue is 25 mph.

Balfour Street

Balfour Street is a two lane east-west street that runs along the row of single-family homes on the north side of the school site and then provides a link between the northwest corner of the school site and Rosemead Boulevard to the west. It has parking and sidewalks on both sides of the street on the segment adjacent to the residences north of the school. On the segment between the school and Rosemead Boulevard, it has parking on both sides of the street, a sidewalk on the south side of the street, and an intermittent sidewalk on the north side of the street. The speed limit on Balfour Street is 25 mph.

Rosemead Boulevard

Rosemead Boulevard (State Route 19) is a four lane north-south highway located approximately one-quarter mile west of the school campus. It is a major arterial route with a center divider and an elevated pedestrian overpass north of the intersection of Rosemead Boulevard and Balfour Street. It has parking on both sides of the street north of Balfour Street and parking is prohibited south of Balfour Street. There are sidewalks on both sides of the street and the speed limit is 40 mph.

Washington Boulevard

Washington Boulevard is a six lane east-west highway located approximately one-quarter mile south of the school campus. It is a major arterial route with a continuous left turn lane in the center. There are sidewalks on both sides of the street and parking is prohibited. The speed limit on Washington Boulevard is 40 mph.

Intersections Adjacent to the School Campus

The intersections that are adjacent to the school campus and the types of traffic control at each intersection are shown in Table T-1. The locations of the existing yellow school crosswalks are also shown.

Table T-1 Intersections Adjacent to the School Campus

Intersection	Traffic Control	School Crosswalks (Yellow)
Passons Boulevard at Balfour Street	4-Way Stop Signs	On All Four Legs
Passons Boulevard at Marjorie Street	Stop Sign on Marjorie Street	On Marjorie Street
Passons Boulevard at Haney Street	Traffic Signal	On All Three Legs
Passons Boulevard at Homebrook Street	Stop Signs on Homebrook Street	On Both Legs of Homebrook Street
Homebrook Street at Loch Alene Avenue	Stop Sign on Homebrook Street	On Homebrook Street
Loch Alene Avenue at Homebrook Street (west leg)	Stop Sign on Homebrook Street	On Homebrook St & Loch Alene Ave (north leg)
Loch Alene Avenue at Balfour Street	3-Way Stop Signs	On South & East Legs

Bike Lanes

There are no marked bike lanes on the streets in the immediate vicinity of the school site.

Public Transportation

Montebello Bus Lines (MBL) operates two bus lines in the vicinity of El Rancho High School. Line 60 runs along Passons Boulevard and has northbound and southbound bus stops adjacent to the school campus. Line 50 runs along Washington Boulevard one-quarter mile south of the school campus and has bus stops at Passon Boulevard and Loch Alene Avenue. In addition, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) operates Line 266 along Rosemead Boulevard approximately one-quarter mile west of the school campus. These bus lines offer a convenient public transportation option for patrons of the ballfield.

1.1.2 Impacts Associated with the Proposed Project

The proposed project involves the construction of a new baseball field on the El Rancho High School campus and the installation of lighting at the field. The new field will replace an existing baseball field at the campus and baseball activities will be relocated to the new facility.

For the transportation analysis, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?				X
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?				X
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X

The table indicates that the project would have no significant adverse impacts for any of the four environmental issue areas for the transportation category. Details regarding these findings are provided below.

Comments:

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed baseball field with lighting would provide the opportunity for the school to extend the baseball-related activities into the evening hours. The existing baseball field is currently being used for games and practice from 3:00 p.m. till dusk (5:00 to 8:00 p.m., depending on the time of year). The proposed project would extend the duration of these activities until 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. Baseball season for the high school typically extends from February to May.

The proposed project is not anticipated to change the number of practices and games at the school and the total number of participants and spectators on any given day is not anticipated to change. Table T-2 shows the estimated number of participants and the traffic volumes generated by the baseball field during practices and games. These numbers represent existing conditions as well as the “with project” scenario as there would be no change in the participation levels. The primary impact is that the hours of traffic activity would be later in the day for the “with project” scenario.

Table T-2 indicates that the baseball field (existing and proposed) generates an estimated 76 vehicle trips for practices and 192 vehicle trips for games. These traffic volumes represent players driving alone, players that are dropped off and picked up by parents, coaches, and spectators (on game days only).

The traffic volumes shown in Table T-2 are based on the worst-case scenario that each of the baseball players would travel to and from the school campus in a single vehicle. It is highly likely that there would be multiple people traveling in many of the vehicles, which would reduce the traffic volumes shown in the table. Also, many of the student participants would already be at the school and would walk across campus to the field, which would further reduce the number of arrivals shown in the table. The traffic volumes shown in the table, therefore, represent a conservative (high end) worst-case scenario.

Table T-2 Traffic Volumes at the Baseball Field

Number of People - Category	Traffic Volumes – Pre-Game		Traffic Volumes – End of Game		Total Daily Traffic
	Inbound	Outbound	Inbound	Outbound	
PRACTICE DAYS					
20 Players					
5 Drive Alone	5	0	0	5	10
15 Dropped Off/Picked Up by Parents	15	15	15	15	60
3 Coaches	3	0	0	3	6
TOTAL	23	15	15	23	76
GAME DAYS					
40 Players					
10 Drive Alone	10	0	0	10	20
30 Dropped Off/Picked Up by Parents	30	30	30	30	120
6 Coaches	6	0	0	6	12
40 Spectators (2 per car)	20	0	0	20	40
TOTAL	66	30	30	66	192

NOTE: These traffic volumes represent the “without project” (no field lights) and the “with project” (with field lights) scenarios.

As the new baseball field and lighting project would not result in an overall increase in the number of participants, practices, or games at the school but would instead just shift the hours of use at the baseball field, the project would not result in an increase in daily traffic volumes. The existing parking lots that are accessed from Passons Boulevard, Homebrook Street, and Loch Alene Avenue would continue to be used by participants of the proposed baseball field except that the parking lot at the northeast corner of the school site that is currently accessed from Passons Boulevard would be relocated to the south in conjunction with another school facilities renovation project. This would not result in a substantial change in traffic patterns.

The games and practices at the proposed baseball field would generate a demand for non-motorized travel as some event patrons would travel to and from the school as pedestrians or on bicycles. The streets adjacent to the school have sidewalks on one or both sides of the street and there are numerous school area (yellow) crosswalks in the area. In addition to the crosswalks shown in Table T-1 that are adjacent to the school, the signalized intersections of Washington Boulevard at Passons Boulevard and Washington Boulevard at Loch Alene Avenue south of the campus have pedestrian WALK signals with pedestrian push buttons and painted crosswalks. The intersection of Passons Boulevard and Mines Avenue north of the school is a four-way stop with yellow crosswalks on all four legs of the intersection. In addition, there is a pedestrian bridge on Rosemead Boulevard north of Balfour Street. Although the proposed project would not result in an increase in the level of pedestrian activity, there are numerous pedestrian amenities in the area that would accommodate pedestrian travel to and from the new baseball field.

While there are no bike lanes on the streets in the vicinity of the school, bike racks are available for use on the school campus. The project would not, however, result in an increase in the number of bicycle trips to and from the school. There are several bus lines in the vicinity of the school that could potentially be used by participants and spectators of the proposed baseball field. The project would not, however, result in an increase in ridership as compared to existing conditions.

In summary, the proposed project would not adversely affect traffic conditions on the study area street network or the performance of any transit or non-motorized transportation facilities. The project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and no mitigation measures would be required.

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

No Impact. Vehicle delays and levels of service (LOS) have historically been used as the basis for determining the significance of traffic impacts as standard practice in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents. On September 27, 2013, SB 743 was signed into law, starting a process that fundamentally changed transportation impact analyses as part of CEQA compliance. SB 743 eliminates auto delay, LOS, and other similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as the sole basis for determining significant impacts under CEQA. As part of the new CEQA Guidelines, the new criteria “shall promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses” (Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1)). Pursuant to SB 743, the California Natural Resources Agency adopted revisions to the CEQA Guidelines on December 28, 2018, to implement SB 743. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 describes how transportation impacts are to be analyzed after SB 743. Under the new Guidelines, metrics related to “vehicle miles traveled” (VMT) are required beginning July 1, 2020, to evaluate the significance of transportation impacts under CEQA for development projects, land use plans, and transportation infrastructure projects. The State provided an “opt-in period” and did not require lead agencies to apply a VMT metric until July 1, 2020. However, in January 2020, State courts stated that under the Public Resources Code Section 21099, subdivision (b)(2), “automobile delay, as described solely by level of service or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment” under CEQA, except for roadway capacity projects.

As stated in the “Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA” (California Office of Planning and Research, December 2018) and the “Vehicle Miles Traveled – Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide” (Caltrans, May 20, 2020), projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact and can be screened from a CEQA VMT analysis because they fall into the small project category. The proposed project would not result in an increase in traffic volumes because the traffic associated with the proposed baseball field is already being generated by the existing baseball field and motorists would be traveling on the area’s roadway network regardless of the status of this project. As there would be no increase in traffic volumes and as the project is well below the CEQA VMT threshold of 110 trips per day, this project can be screened from any further CEQA VMT analysis and would not result in a significant impact relative to VMT.

In addition to the State of California screening methodology outlined above, the “Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines” prepared by the Los Angeles County Public Works Department (July 23, 2020) state that a project can be screened from requiring a CEQA VMT analysis if the project would generate less than 110 daily vehicle trips. As this project falls into that category, it can be screened from any further VMT analysis in accordance with the Los Angeles County criteria.

It is concluded, therefore, that the project would have no VMT impacts and no mitigation measures would be required.

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No Impact. The proposed project would not provide any on- or off-site access or circulation features that would create or increase any design hazards or incompatible uses. Access to the school site for vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians would continue to occur via properly designed driveways, sidewalks, and on-site pedestrian pathways. Appropriate pathways, signs, and gates would be provided from the parking lots to the

field for convenient access by the public. The streets, intersections, driveways, and on-site circulation system are designed to accommodate the anticipated levels of vehicular and pedestrian activity and have historically been accommodating school-related traffic on a daily basis as well as traffic generated by the existing baseball field. These facilities would continue to be compatible with the design and operation of a high school and its athletics fields.

As the proposed project would not result in any adverse changes to the access or circulation features at the school or on the surrounding streets, there would be no impacts involving increased hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

No Impact. The existing and proposed access and circulation features at the school, including the driveways, on-site circulation roads, parking lots, and fire lanes, would continue to accommodate emergency ingress and egress by fire trucks, police units, and ambulance/paramedic vehicles. The proposed baseball field and lights would not alter any emergency access features at the school. Emergency vehicles could easily access the baseball field and all other areas of the school via on-site travel corridors. The proposed project would not, therefore, result in inadequate emergency access.

1.1.3 Mitigation Measures Applicable to the Proposed Project

No mitigation measures related to transportation would be required of the proposed project.