

## 4.15 Public Services

### 4.15.1 Introduction

This section describes the setting and potential impacts on public services that could occur from the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives. Impacts to public services under CEQA are generally related to increased demand for, or use of, public services (e.g., fire protection, police protection, schools, or parks), such as to require construction of new or expanded facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives.

### 4.15.2 Regulatory Setting

#### **Federal Laws, Regulations, and Policies**

No federal laws, regulations, or policies are applicable to public services in relation to the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, or alternatives.

#### **State Laws, Regulations, and Policies**

No state laws, regulations, or policies relate directly to public services and the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, or alternatives. Refer to Section 4.9, “Hazards and Hazardous Materials,” and Section 4.20, “Wildfire,” for discussion of state laws, regulations, and policies related to wildfire prevention.

### 4.15.3 Environmental Setting

#### **Fire Protection and Emergency Services**

Fire protection and emergency services in the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives areas are provided primarily by CAL FIRE (operating as the San Luis Obispo County Fire Department [County Fire Department]) and the Paso Robles Department of Emergency Services. Private ambulance and hospital services also operate in the area. The relative resources, capabilities, and capacity of these respective agencies and service providers are described further below.

#### ***California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection / San Luis Obispo County Fire Department***

CAL FIRE operates as the County Fire Department through a contract with San Luis Obispo County, and has operated as such since 1930. The County Fire Department responds to emergencies and other requests for assistance, plans for and takes action to prevent emergencies and reduce their impact, coordinates regional emergency response efforts, and provides education to the communities it serves. Approximately 180 full-time state employees operate the County Fire Department, supplemented by as many as 100 state seasonal fire fighters, 300 county paid-call and reserve fire fighters, and 120 state inmate fire fighters (NEET West and PG&E 2017).

The County Fire Department Operations Division provides fire control and suppression, rescue, advanced life support/emergency medical assistance, and hazardous materials mitigation services. Operations Division personnel and equipment are shown in Table 4.15-1.

**Table 4.15-1. San Luis Obispo County Fire Department Personnel and Equipment Summary**

Personnel	Unit	Equipment	Unit
Unit Chief	1	Staffed Incident Command System (ICS) Type II Engines	14
Deputy Chief	1	Staffed ICS Type III Engines	12
Division Chiefs	5	Medium Rescue Vehicles	2
Battalion Chiefs	12	Squad Vehicles	4
Fire Captains (Medics)	50 (7)	Hazardous Materials Units	1
Engineers (Medics)	34 (8)	Breathing Support Unit	1
Firefighter II (Medics)	5 (3)	Boats	2
Peak Staffing Firefighter I	108	Rescue Water Crafts	3
Off-Peak Firefighter I	15	Staffed ICS Type II Dozers	3
Paid-Call Firefighters	275	Hand Crew Vehicles	12
Reserve Firefighters	20	Staffed Air Attack Plane	1
Lifeguards	25	Staffed ICS Type III Air Tankers	2
Administrative Staff	25	-	-

Notes: ICS = Incident Command System

Source: CAL FIRE 2020

Several County Fire Department stations are located near Paso Robles, each of which could potentially respond to a fire emergency at the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, or alternatives sites. These fire stations are described below (NEET West and PG&E 2017) and shown in Figure 4.15-1 (with the exception of Station 35):

- **Meridian Fire Station (Station 52)**, located at 4050 Branch Road, on the north side of SR 46 and approximately 2 miles northeast of the Estrella Substation site, was built by the County to meet the rising demand for fire protection services in the rural Paso Robles area. The Meridian fire station operates an incident command system (ICS) Type I fire apparatus staffed with a fire captain and a fire apparatus engineer. The Meridian station is currently supplemented with paid-call firefighters.
- **Paso Robles Fire Station (Station 30)**, located at 2510 Ramada Drive, is situated between Paso Robles and Templeton. The station has a large and varied response area that generally stretches from the northern San Luis Obispo County line to Atascadero. Traditionally, the Paso Robles Fire Station is one of the busiest in the county, covering areas that include both commercial and residential structures, wineries, and large open

spaces. The Paso Robles Fire Station houses two state-owned Type III wildland fire engines, as well as a County-owned Type I fire engine. Located along U.S. Highway 101 (US 101), units from the Paso Robles fire station respond with automatic aid to incidents in Paso Robles, Templeton, and Atascadero.

- **Las Tablas Fire Station (Station 35)**, located at 275 Cypress Mountain Drive, on the southern edge of Lake Nacimiento, approximately 13 miles west of the City of Paso Robles, only operates each summer during declared fire season. The Las Tablas fire station response area is considered “high risk,” with a combination of thick brush, steep mountains, and little fire history. The Las Tablas fire station staff currently includes a fire captain/operator and two or three firefighters. Fire station equipment includes a CAL FIRE ICS Type III four-wheel drive fire engine.

CAL FIRE also operates the Paso Robles Air Attack Base at Paso Robles Municipal Airport. The air base is approximately 3.5 miles northwest of Estrella Substation (it is also adjacent to the example FTM Site 5). CAL FIRE’s air base emergency response air program includes two Grumman S-2T 1,200-gallon airtankers and two OV-10A airtactical aircraft that can reach most fires within 20 minutes from one of CAL FIRE’s air bases or helicopter bases throughout the state. The airtactical planes fly overhead during a fire, directing the airtankers and helicopters to critical areas of the fire for retardant and water drops (NEET West and PG&E 2017).

While both CAL FIRE airtankers and helicopters are equipped to carry fire retardant or water, the helicopters can also transport firefighters, equipment, and injured personnel. All CAL FIRE aircraft are strategically located throughout the state at airbases and helicopter bases. During high fire activity, CAL FIRE may move aircraft to better provide statewide air support (San Luis Obispo County Fire Department 2016).

Additional emergency services in the county generally include ambulance and hospital service. Private companies based throughout San Luis Obispo County provide ambulance service. Response times are generally good with the exception of the more rural portions of the county where the large area being served and the distances involved lend to poorer levels of service. The nearest hospital services are provided by Twin Cities Community Hospital in Templeton, approximately 4.7 miles southwest of Paso Robles Substation and 8.5 miles southwest of Estrella Substation (refer to Figure 4.15-1).

### ***City of Paso Robles Department of Fire and Emergency Services***

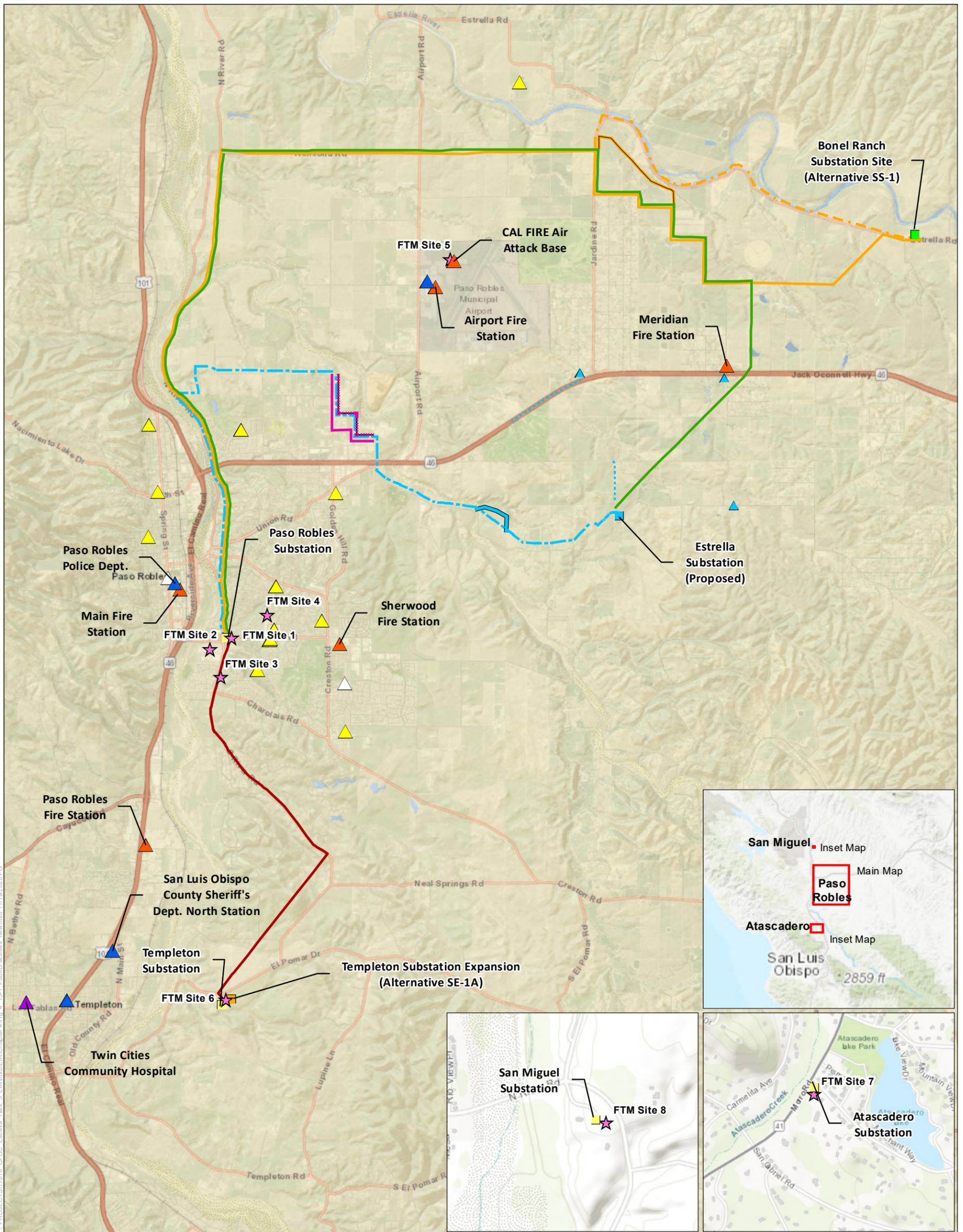
The City of Paso Robles Department of Fire and Emergency Services provides a variety of services, including fire suppression, emergency medical services, rescue, hazardous materials, and other emergency response services within Paso Robles. The department has automatic and mutual aid contractual agreements with CAL FIRE and other surrounding municipal departments for emergency response to the areas in the county that they service (City of Paso Robles Department of Fire and Emergency Services 2020). The department is currently staffed by 21 shift personnel (6 captains and 15 firefighters), 1 fire chief, 2 battalion chiefs, and 1 secretary (NEET West and PG&E 2017), and consists of three fire stations (refer to Figure 4.15-1):

- **Main Fire Station (Fire Station 1)** is located at 900 Park Street in downtown Paso Robles, west of US 101 and approximately 0.5 mile west of the Proposed Project reconductoring segment.

- **Sherwood Fire Station (Fire Station 2)** is located at 235 Santa Fe Avenue, southeast of the Niblick Road/Creston Road intersection, and approximately 1.3 miles east of Paso Robles Substation and 3.5 miles southwest of Estrella Substation.
- **Airport Fire Station (Fire Station 3)** is located at 3125 Buena Vista Drive, at the Paso Robles Municipal Airport, approximately 3.5 miles northwest of Estrella Substation and 1.5 mile northeast of the northernmost portion of the new 70 kV power line segment.

### ***Additional Emergency Services***

As noted above, additional emergency services are provided to the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives areas by ambulance and hospital service providers. Private companies based throughout San Luis Obispo County provide ambulance service. Response times are generally good with the exception of the more rural portions of the county where the large area being served and the distances involved lend to poorer levels of service (NEET West and PG&E 2017). The nearest hospital services are provided by Twin Cities Community Hospital in Templeton, which is located approximately 8.5 miles southwest of the proposed Estrella Substation site.



**Proposed Project**

- Estrella Substation
- 70kV Route
- 70 kV Minor Route Variation 1
- ... New Distribution Line Segments
- ▲ Additional 21/12 kV Pad-Mounted Transformer

**Reasonably Forseeable Distribution Components**

- Existing Substations

**Existing Infrastructure**

- Existing Substations

**Project Alternatives**

- ★ Front-of-the-Meter (FTM) Battery Storage Sites (Alternative BS-2)
- Alternative SS-1: Bonel Ranch Substation Site
- Alternative SE-1A: Templeton Substation Expansion - 230/70 kV Substation
- Alternative PLR-1A: Estrella Route to Estrella Substation
- Alternative PLR-1C: Estrella Route to Bonel Ranch, Option 1
- Alternative PLR-1C: Minor Route Variation 1
- Alternative PLR-1C: Minor Route Variation 2
- Alternative PLR-3A: Strategic Undergrounding, Option 1
- Alternative PLR-3B: Strategic Undergrounding, Option 2
- Alternative SE-PLR-2: Templeton-Paso South River Road Route

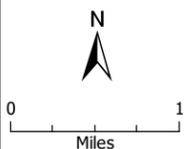
**Public Facilities**

- ▲ Hospital
- ▲ Public School
- ▲ Law Enforcement Station
- ▲ Library or Senior Center
- ▲ Fire Station

**Figure 4.15-1**  
Public Facilities

Source: Paso Robles General Plan 2018, PG&E 2019, SCWA 2017

Note: The route variations shown are offset and simplified in order to display the alignments of the alternative routes that may overlap in places



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## Police Protection

Police protection or law enforcement services are provided to the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives areas by several state and local agencies. On the state level, the CHP provides traffic law enforcement in the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County and on all freeways within the county. CHP has stations in Templeton and San Luis Obispo. The CHP also provides general law enforcement services and security on all state property and facilities. They are available to respond in emergency situations, but generally do not respond to residential calls (NEET West and PG&E 2017).

At the local level, the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement and emergency services in unincorporated areas of the county. The nearest County Sheriff's Department station to the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives sites is the North Station, which is located at 356 Main Street in Templeton, adjacent to US 101. The North Station serves an area of more than 1,900 square miles and is staffed by 30 personnel, including a commander, two sergeants, four senior deputies, a deputy K-9 team, four school resource deputies, a rural crime deputy, two area resident deputies, and two legal clerks (San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Department 2019). Over the course of 2019, North Station deputies responded to approximately 22,000 calls for service, which was an increase of approximately 700 calls for service in comparison to 2018 (San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Department 2019).

Within the City of Paso Robles, police protection and law enforcement services are provided by the Paso Robles Police Department, whose headquarters is located at 900 Park Street, on the west side of US 101 near downtown Paso Robles.

## Schools

There are 12 school districts serving San Luis Obispo County. Countywide, several school districts have been experiencing significant enrollment declines over the past several years, particularly in elementary schools. The decline may be attributed to high housing costs in some areas of the county, which deter families with young children from locating there (County of San Luis Obispo 2017).

The Paso Robles Joint Unified School District (PRJUSD) serves the Paso Robles area, including the area where the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and the majority of the alternatives are located. The PRJUSD serves students in kindergarten through 12th grade and has three high schools, two middle schools, six elementary schools, and various other programs, including a Culinary Arts Academy, K–8 home school program, before and after school programs, preschools, and an after-school education and safety program. Enrollment in PRJUSD schools generally shows the declining trend in recent years noted above and no capacity issues have been identified for PRJUSD schools (County of San Luis Obispo 2017).

Alternative SE-1A and a portion of the power line alignment under Alternative SE-PLR-2 are located within the Templeton Unified School District (TUSD) service area. TUSD elementary school enrollment has grown gradually over the last 10 years, but remains below the practical capacity of facilities (County of San Luis Obispo 2017). A similar situation exists for Atascadero

Unified School District and San Miguel Joint Union School District, which serve the areas where the example FTM Site 7 and 8 are located, respectively.

## Parks

Two primary parks departments or districts manage public parks in the vicinity of the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives: San Luis Obispo County Parks and Recreation and the City of Paso Robles Department of Recreation Services.

The San Luis Obispo County Parks and Recreation Department provides roughly 23 parks, three golf courses, and eight Special Places (e.g., natural areas, coastal access and historic facilities) located throughout the county (County of San Luis Obispo 2006). As of 2016, the County provided a total of 12,248 acres of parks, the vast majority of which was made up of regional parks (County of San Luis Obispo 2017). For regional parks, the county provides more than 10 to 15 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is considered adequate. Community parkland is less available on a population-adjusted basis for certain communities (e.g., Templeton, San Miguel), and some capacity issues are noted (County of San Luis Obispo 2017).

The City of Paso Robles Department of Recreation Services manages six neighborhood parks, nine larger parks or recreational facilities, and 12 trails or walking paths located throughout the city (City of Paso Robles Department of Recreation Services 2020). Many of these facilities are located in proximity to the Proposed Project components, although none are located on or adjacent to the Estrella Substation site. For additional information about recreational resources and facilities, including parks, in the vicinity of the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and the alternatives, refer to Section 4.16, "Recreation."

## Other Public Facilities

Other public facilities in the vicinity of the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives include:

- Paso Robles City Library, located at 1000 Spring Street, west of Salinas River and US 101, near downtown Paso Robles, approximately 0.5 mile west of the Proposed Project's 70 kV power line reconductoring segment (and the reconductoring segment for Alternatives PLR-1A and PLR-1C);
- Paso Robles Senior Center, located at 270 Scott Street, approximately 1.5 mile southeast of Paso Robles Substation;
- Paso Robles Municipal Pool, located at 534 28th Street, approximately 0.7 mile west of where the reconductoring segment would cross SR 46; and
- George Stephan Community Center, located at 3050 Park Street, approximately 0.5 mile west of reconductoring segment, west of US 101.

The Paso Robles City Library, Paso Robles Senior Center, Paso Robles Municipal Pool, and George Stephan Community Center are maintained and operated by the Paso Robles Department of Recreation Services.

## 4.15.4 Impact Analysis

### Methodology

Potential impacts on public services were evaluated qualitatively by considering aspects of the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives in light of the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G significance criteria (see below) and the existing regulatory and environmental settings.

### Criteria for Determining Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeably distribution components, and alternatives would result in a significant impact on public services if they would:

- A. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:
  - i. Fire protection
  - ii. Police protection
  - iii. Schools
  - iv. Parks
  - v. Other public facilities

### Environmental Impacts

#### *Proposed Project*

**Impact PUB-1: Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for:**

- i. Fire protection? – Less than Significant*

As described in Section 4.9, “Hazards and Hazardous Materials,” and Section 4.20, “Wildfire,” the Proposed Project could increase risk of wildfire ignition. Specifically, construction activities involving use of combustion-engine equipment in areas where vegetation is present could provide a spark and potentially ignite a fire. While the Proposed Project components are not located within a VHFHSZ, and the proposed substation and much of the length of the proposed 70 kV power line would be located within irrigated agricultural areas of little fire risk, some portions of the 70 kV power line would pass through areas of ruderal grassland and oak woodland, which could increase fire hazards. Compliance with PRC requirements related to

wildfire safety, as well as California Fire Code requirements, would reduce the wildfire risk from the Proposed Project during construction to a level that is less than significant.

During operation, the new 70 kV power line segment would increase fire risk above baseline conditions, as the electrified power line could potentially ignite nearby vegetation if adequate precautions are not taken. This risk is reduced by the fact that the power line would not pass through a mapped VHFHSZ or HFHSZ. Additionally, compliance with CPUC G.O. 95 requirements related to vegetation clearances for transmission lines would substantially reduce the risk of accidental ignition. PG&E and HWT would also implement their wildfire mitigation plans.<sup>1</sup> The reconductoring segment of the Proposed Project would not meaningfully change fire risk relative to baseline conditions given that there is already an existing 70 kV line in this location. Additionally, the substation site is located within an irrigated agricultural area that would not be considered high fire risk.

Given the above, construction and operation of the Proposed Project is not expected to generate substantial additional calls for service from the County Fire Department or Paso Robles Department of Fire and Emergency Services. Any fire-related call for service generated by the Proposed Project would likely be a one-time event and a continual strain would not be placed on the existing fire protection resources in the area such that there would be a need to construct new facilities. As discussed in Section 4.14, "Population and Housing," the Proposed Project would not directly increase population in the area, as it would not include any housing and no permanent staff would be needed on-site at the Estrella Substation (all Proposed Project components would operate remotely). The Proposed Project would accommodate future anticipated growth, but it would not cause this growth.

Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in the need for new or altered fire protection facilities, the construction of which could result in adverse physical environmental effects. This impact would be **less than significant**.

*ii. Police protection? – Less than Significant with Mitigation*

As discussed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the Estrella Substation site would be located off of Union Road in a relatively rural area of San Luis Obispo County. The 70 kV power line route would traverse rural, agricultural areas of San Luis Obispo County, as well as residential areas of Paso Robles. Operation of heavy equipment on public roadways would be required and crossing structure work areas could cause some disturbance to traffic on roadways. If no traffic control measures were implemented during Proposed Project construction, this could potentially result in calls for service from local law enforcement, which could thereby adversely affect the availability of police resources and response times, a significant impact. However, **Mitigation Measure TR-1** would be implemented, which would reduce potential effects on transportation of traffic, including risk of accidents. With implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-1, there is no reason to believe that Proposed Project construction activities would generate substantial traffic-related calls for service from law enforcement. Therefore, impacts on police protection resources and response times would be less than significant.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Section 4.20, "Wildfire," for further information about the wildfire mitigation plans.

The Proposed Project would not directly or indirectly result in substantial unplanned population growth. Therefore, a substantial increase in demand for police protection services in the Paso Robles area would not occur as a result of the Proposed Project.

As a result, the Proposed Project would not require the construction of new or expanded police protection facilities such as to result in adverse physical environmental effects. This impact would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

*iii. Schools? – Less than Significant*

Construction and operation of the Proposed Project would not result in any adverse effects on existing schools and no schools would require removal, modification, or closure to accommodate the Proposed Project components. The Proposed Project would not directly or indirectly result in substantial unplanned population growth such as to place increased demand on school resources. Enrollment in PRJUSD schools has declined in recent years and there are no existing capacity constraints at PRJUSD facilities (County of San Luis Obispo 2017). Therefore, the Proposed Project would not require the construction of new or expanded school facilities, which could result in substantial adverse physical environmental effects. This impact would be **less than significant**.

*iv. Parks? – Less than Significant*

No parks are located on or immediately adjacent to the proposed Estrella Substation site. While there are several parks located in proximity to the 70 kV power line route, none of these facilities would be directly impacted by the construction activities for the Proposed Project and no parks would need to be temporarily closed during the construction period. Therefore, no parks or other recreational facilities would be impacted during Proposed Project construction. Over the long term, the Proposed Project would not result in substantial unplanned population growth, and therefore would not increase demand for parks such as to require or result in the need for new or expanded park facilities, the construction of which could cause substantial adverse physical environmental effects. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

*v. Other Public Facilities? – Less than Significant*

For similar reasons to those discussed under previous subsections, the Proposed Project would not require or result in the need to construct new or expanded other public facilities (e.g., hospitals, senior centers, libraries, etc.). The Proposed Project would not directly impact any of these facilities during construction and would not substantially increase unplanned population growth over the long term, such as to place increased demand on these facilities. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

***Reasonably Foreseeable Distribution Components and Ultimate Substation Buildout***

The reasonably foreseeable distribution components would involve similar construction processes to the Proposed Project, albeit on a much smaller scale. The two new distribution line segments would both be installed along existing roads and in areas with relatively minimal fire risk (not in a VHFHSZ or HFHSZ). Like the Proposed Project, installation of the reasonably foreseeable new distribution line segments and additional 21/12 kV pad-mounted transformers would require compliance with the PRC (for activities on brush-covered sites) and the California

Fire Code, which would reduce potential for accidental ignitions during construction and resultant calls for service from fire protection agencies. Once operational, the reasonably foreseeable distribution components would not substantially increase fire risk above baseline conditions and would not require construction of new or expanded fire protection facilities. As noted above, expansion of electric distribution capacity provided by the Proposed Project and reasonably foreseeable distribution components would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, such as to require new or expanded public services.

Components for ultimate substation buildout would be primarily installed within the already-built Estrella Substation fence line (routes for any additional distribution feeders and/or 70 kV power lines that could be established through ultimate substation buildout are unknown at this time and are not evaluated in this DEIR). Thus, ultimate buildout of the Estrella Substation would have limited potential to adversely affect public services or generate calls for services. While ultimate substation buildout could further accommodate future growth in the Paso Robles area, it would not cause this growth. As a result, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection i would be **less than significant**.

Construction of the reasonably foreseeable distribution components and ultimate substation buildout of Estrella Substation would be unlikely to substantially impact traffic flow or otherwise cause or result in conditions that could require a response from law enforcement. However, the northern new distribution line segment would be installed within the SR 46 median, which could result in temporary impacts to this highway. If no traffic control measures were implemented to mitigate these effects, it could cause or contribute to traffic incidents, including accidents, which could require responses from law enforcement personnel. This, in turn, could adversely affect availability of police resources for other service calls and affect response times, resulting in a significant impact. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure TR-1** would reduce potential traffic-related impacts from construction of the reasonably foreseeable distribution components, thereby reducing potential for impacts on police protection resources to a level that is less than significant. Given that ultimate substation buildout activities would take place within the Estrella Substation or immediate area, they would not substantially affect roadways or require implementation of mitigation measures to prevent impacts to public services. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection ii would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

The reasonably foreseeable distribution components and ultimate substation buildout would not be located in close proximity to any schools and no schools would be impacted during construction activities. For the reasons noted above, the reasonably foreseeable distribution components would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, which may require new or expanded public facilities, such as schools. Rather, anticipated growth would occur independently of the Proposed Project. Similarly, the reasonably foreseeable distribution components and ultimate buildout of Estrella Substation would not directly affect parks or other public facilities and would not cause substantial population growth such as to result in the need for new public facilities or otherwise affect performance objectives or service ratios for public services. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, subsections iii, iv, and v would be **less than significant**.

## ***Alternatives***

### **No Project Alternative**

Under the No Project Alternative, no new substation or new and reconducted 70 kV power line segments would be constructed. As such, there would be no potential for construction activities to result in a call for service from the fire department or law enforcement agencies (e.g., due to accidental fire ignition or construction-related traffic incidents). Additionally, the No Project Alternative would not directly or indirectly affect any other public service facilities or require the need for new or expanded public services due to unplanned population growth. Therefore, **no impact** would occur under any of the significance criteria.

### **Alternative SS-1: Bonel Ranch Substation Site**

The Alternative SS-1 site is located in an HFHSZ and thus construction activities for Alternative SS-1 would have elevated potential to cause an accidental ignition and require a response from fire protection agencies relative to the Proposed Project. This risk would be minimized through compliance with PRC and California Fire Code requirements, as well as through **Mitigation Measure HAZ-1**, which would require preparation of a fire prevention and management plan. With implementation of these measures, calls for fire protection service during construction would be unlikely and would not substantially affect public services. Once constructed, the presence of an electrified substation in an HFHSZ would increase fire risk over baseline conditions; however, this risk would be minimized through compliance with G.O. 95 requirements and implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1. Overall, with implementation of these measures, substantial volumes of fire protection service calls would not be expected during construction and operation of the substation at the Bonel Ranch Substation Site, and additional or expanded fire protection facilities would not be needed. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection i would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Construction of Alternative SS-1 would involve operation of some heavy construction equipment within the roadway (Estrella Road) and may require temporary lane or road closures in this area. If no traffic control measures were implemented during these activities, it could cause or contribute to traffic incidents, which could require responses from law enforcement personnel. This, in turn, could adversely affect availability of police resources for other service calls and affect response times, resulting in a significant impact. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure TR-1** would reduce potential traffic-related impacts from construction of Alternative SS-1, thereby reducing potential for impacts on police protection resources to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection ii would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Alternative SS-1 would not be located in close proximity to any schools and no schools would be impacted during construction activities. For the reasons noted above, the expanded electric distribution capacity provided by Alternative SS-1, which would be the same as the Proposed Project, would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, which may require new or expanded public facilities, such as schools. Rather, anticipated growth would occur independently of the Proposed Project or Alternative SS-1. Similarly, Alternative SS-1 would not directly affect parks or other public facilities and would not indirectly impact these facilities or services. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, subsection iii, iv, and v would be **less than significant**.

### **Alternative PLR-1A: Estrella Route to Estrella Substation**

Due to the longer length of the Alternative PLR-1A 70 kV route and extended construction duration compared to the Proposed Project, there would be elevated potential for generation of calls for fire protection service during construction. The Alternative PLR-1A route also borders an HFHSZ in two northern locations (refer to Figure 4.9-2 in Section 4.9, “Hazards and Hazardous Materials”), which would increase fire risk during construction of this alternative. Compliance with PRC and California Fire Code requirements and implementation of **Mitigation Measure HAZ-1** would minimize the risk of fire during construction and reduce potential for calls for fire protection service from Alternative PLR-1A. Once constructed, the presence of a new 70 kV power line along the border of an HFHSZ would increase fire risk over baseline conditions; however, this risk would be minimized through compliance with G.O. 95 requirements and implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1. Overall, with implementation of these measures, substantial volumes of fire protection service calls would not be expected during construction or operation of the power line along the Alternative PLR-1A route, and additional or expanded fire protection facilities would not be needed. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection i would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Construction of Alternative PLR-1A would involve operation of some heavy construction equipment within roadways along the alignment and may require temporary lane or road closures in these areas. Construction activities also would involve heavy truck trips to and from the construction site(s), which could impact traffic flow. If no traffic control measures were implemented during these activities, it could cause or contribute to traffic incidents, including accidents, which could require responses from law enforcement personnel. This, in turn, could adversely affect availability of police resources for other service calls and affect response times, resulting in a significant impact. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure TR-1** would reduce potential traffic-related impacts from construction of Alternative PLR-1A, thereby reducing potential for impacts on police protection resources to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection ii would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Alternative PLR-1A would not be located in close proximity to any schools and no schools would be impacted during construction activities. For the reasons noted above, the expanded electric distribution capacity provided by Alternative PLR-1A, which would be the same as the Proposed Project, would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, which may require new or expanded public facilities, such as schools. Rather, anticipated growth would occur independently of the Proposed Project or Alternative PLR-1A. Similarly, Alternative PLR-1A would not directly affect parks or other public facilities and would not indirectly impact these facilities or services. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, subsections iii, iv, and v would be **less than significant**.

### **Alternative PLR-1C: Estrella Route to Bonel Ranch**

Alternative PLR-1C would be similar in length to Alternative PLR-1A and would require a similarly extended construction duration; therefore, it would have a similarly elevated potential for generation of calls for fire protection service during construction compared to the Proposed Project. The Alternative PLR-1C route passes through or borders an HFHSZ in multiple locations (refer to Figure 4.9-2 in Section 4.9, “Hazards and Hazardous Materials”), which could increase fire risk during construction of this alternative. In particular, Alternative PLR-1C Minor Route

Variation 1 would traverse the edge of an HFHSZ along the Estrella River corridor. Compliance with PRC and California Fire Code requirements and implementation of **Mitigation Measure HAZ-1** would minimize the risk of fire during construction and reduce potential for calls for fire protection service during construction of Alternative PLR-1C. Once constructed, the presence of a new 70 kV power line through an HFHSZ would increase fire risk over baseline conditions; however, this risk would be minimized through compliance with G.O. 95 requirements and implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1. With implementation of these measures, substantial volumes of fire protection service calls would not be expected during operation of the power line along the Alternative PLR-1C route and additional or expanded fire protection facilities would not be needed. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection i would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Construction of Alternative PLR-1C would involve operation of some heavy construction equipment within roadways along and adjacent to the alignment and may require temporary lane or road closures in these areas. Construction activities also would involve heavy truck trips to and from the construction site(s), which could impact traffic flow. If no traffic control measures were implemented during these activities, it could cause or contribute to traffic incidents, including accidents, which could require responses from law enforcement personnel. This, in turn, could adversely affect availability of police resources for other service calls and affect response times, resulting in a significant impact. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure TR-1** would reduce potential traffic-related impacts from construction of Alternative PLR-1C, thereby reducing potential for impacts on police protection resources to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection ii would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Alternative PLR-1C would not be located in close proximity to any schools and no schools would be impacted during construction activities. For the reasons noted above, the expanded electric distribution capacity provided by Alternative PLR-1C, which would be the same as the Proposed Project, would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, thereby requiring new or expanded public facilities, such as schools. Rather, anticipated growth would occur independently of the Proposed Project or Alternative PLR-1C. Similarly, Alternative PLR-1C would not directly affect parks or other public facilities and would not indirectly impact these facilities or services. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, subsections iii, iv, and v would be **less than significant**.

### **Alternative PLR-3: Strategic Undergrounding (Option 1 & 2)**

The risk of accidental fire ignition during construction of Alternative PLR-3 would be roughly similar or slightly elevated compared to the Proposed Project and would not have a significant effect on the need for new public facilities. The Alternative PLR-3 alignment is not located in a VHFHSZ or HFHSZ, although portions of the route include oak woodland and grassland that could be susceptible to fire. Construction of Alternative PLR-3 would involve many of the same activities as the Proposed Project, although trenching and excavation would be required for installation of the underground line. Compliance with PRC (for activities on brush-covered sites) and California Fire Code requirements would reduce the potential for accidental ignitions during construction activities for Alternative PLR-3. Once constructed, the undergrounded portion of the Alternative PLR-3 would pose minimal fire risk, while any fire risk associated with electrified equipment at the transition stations would be minimized through compliance with G.O. 95 vegetation clearance requirements. Given compliance with these existing laws and regulations,

the potential for Alternative PLR-3 to result in calls for fire protection service, thereby potentially adversely affecting resources and response times for other calls (significance criterion A, subsection i), would be **less than significant**.

As described in Chapter 3, *Alternatives Description*, construction of Alternative PLR-3 (both Options 1 and 2) would require extended single lane closures on the roadways included in the alternative alignments (i.e., Germaine Way, Wisteria Lane, Golden Hill Road, Cava Robles RV Resort driveway, and Circle B HOA road). As such, this alternative would have increased potential for traffic-related incidents and associated calls for law enforcement service compared to the Proposed Project, particularly if traffic control measures were not implemented. If law enforcement were called to the Alternative PLR-3 construction site(s) due traffic incidents, this could adversely affect response times for other calls and reduce (temporarily) the police protection resources available in the area, a significant impact. However, **Mitigation Measure TR-1** would be implemented, which would reduce potential traffic impacts from construction activities. With implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-1, Alternative PLR-3 would not generate substantial calls for law enforcement service such as to adversely affect response times or require or result in the need for new police protection facilities. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection ii would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Alternative PLR-3 would not be located in close proximity to any schools and no schools would be impacted during construction activities. For the reasons noted above, the expanded electric distribution capacity provided by Alternative PLR-3, which would be the same as the Proposed Project, would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, thereby requiring new or expanded public facilities, such as schools. Rather, anticipated growth would occur independently of the Proposed Project or Alternative PLR-3. Similarly, Alternative PLR-3 would not directly affect parks or other public facilities and would not indirectly impact these facilities or services. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, subsection iii, iv, and v would be **less than significant**.

#### **Alternative SE-1A: Templeton Substation Expansion – New 230/70 kV Substation**

Construction of the new 230/70 kV substation under Alternative SE-1A would involve largely the same activities as the proposed Estrella Substation. Alternative SE-1A is located within a designated HFHSZ, so construction activities for Alternative SE-1A would have increased potential for accidental ignition and fire hazards relative to the Proposed Project. Compliance with PRC and California Fire Code requirements and implementation of **Mitigation Measure HAZ-1** would minimize the risk of fire, and associated calls for fire protection service, during construction. Once constructed, the presence of a new electrified substation in an HFHSZ would increase fire risk over baseline conditions. However, there already exists a 230/70 kV substation immediately adjacent to the Templeton Substation Expansion site, so the additional risk would be incremental. Further, the fire risk would be minimized through compliance with G.O. 95 requirements and implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1. With implementation of these measures, substantial volumes of fire protection service calls would not be expected during operation of the new substation under Alternative SE-1A, and additional or expanded fire protection facilities would not be needed. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection i would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Construction of Alternative SE-1A would involve operation of some heavy construction equipment within El Pomar Drive and may require temporary lane or road closures in this area.

Construction activities also would involve heavy truck trips to and from the construction site, which could impact traffic flow. If traffic control measures were not implemented during these activities, it could cause or contribute to traffic incidents, including accidents, which could require responses from law enforcement personnel. This, in turn, could adversely affect availability of police resources for other service calls and affect response times, resulting in a significant impact. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure TR-1** would reduce potential traffic-related impacts from construction of Alternative SE-1A, thereby reducing potential for impacts on police protection resources to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection ii would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Alternative SE-1A would not be located in close proximity to any schools and no schools would be impacted during construction activities. For the reasons noted above, the expanded electric distribution capacity provided by Alternative SE-1A, which would be essentially the same as the Proposed Project, would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, thereby requiring new or expanded public facilities, such as schools. Rather, anticipated growth would occur independently of the Proposed Project or Alternative SE-1A. Similarly, Alternative SE-1A would not directly affect parks or other public facilities and would not indirectly impact these facilities or services. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, subsections iii, iv, and v would be **less than significant**.

#### **Alternative SE-PLR-2: Templeton-Paso South River Road Route**

Alternative SE-PLR-2 is substantially shorter than the proposed 70 kV power line and would require a shorter construction duration; however, the Alternative SE-PLR-2 route passes through a higher fire risk area that is a designated HFHSZ. If construction activities were to result in an accidental ignition of materials along and adjacent to the Alternative SE-PLR-2, this could require a response from the County Fire Department, which would temporarily reduce the fire protection resources available for other calls and could affect response times, a significant impact. Compliance with PRC and California Fire Code requirements, as well as implementation of **Mitigation Measure HAZ-1**, would minimize fire risks during construction activities for Alternative SE-PLR-2 and thus would reduce potential for calls for fire protection service.

Over the long term, the presence of the new 70 kV line in the HFHSZ would increase fire risk over baseline conditions; however, this risk would be mitigated by compliance with CPUC G.O. 95 (vegetation clearance requirements) and implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1. With implementation of these measures, the power line would not be expected to generate substantial calls for service from the County Fire Department or other fire protection agencies and would not require construction of additional fire protection facilities. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection i would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Construction of Alternative SE-PLR-2 would involve operation of some heavy construction equipment within South River Road and other roads along or adjacent to the proposed alignment, and may require temporary lane or road closures in this area. Construction activities also would involve heavy truck trips to and from the construction site, which could impact traffic flow. If traffic control measures were not implemented during these activities, it could cause or contribute to traffic incidents, including accidents, which could require responses from law enforcement personnel. This, in turn, could adversely affect availability of police resources for other service calls and increase response times, resulting in a significant impact. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure TR-1** would reduce potential traffic-related impacts from construction of

Alternative SE-PLR-2, thereby reducing potential for impacts on police protection resources to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, impacts under significance criterion A, subsection ii would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

Alternative SE-PLR-2 would not be located in close proximity to any schools and no schools would be impacted during construction activities. For the reasons noted above, the expanded electric distribution capacity provided by Alternative SE-PLR-2, which would be essentially the same as the Proposed Project, would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, thereby requiring new or expanded public facilities, such as schools. Rather, anticipated growth would occur independently of the Proposed Project or Alternative SE-PLR-2. Similarly, Alternative SE-PLR-2 would not directly affect parks or other public facilities and would not indirectly impact these facilities or services. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, subsections iii, iv, and v would be **less than significant**.

### **Alternative BS-2: Battery Storage to Address the Distribution Objective**

Construction of FTM BESSs under Alternative BS-2 would involve use of internal combustion engine equipment, which could potentially provide a spark for fire ignition. Potential for fire risks would be elevated in locations designated as HFHSZ, such as illustrative FTM Sites 6 and 8. Nevertheless, compliance with PRC and California Fire Code requirements would substantially reduce the risk of fire during construction activities, thus reducing potential for any adverse effects on fire protection services.

Once constructed, the presence of FTM BESSs would increase fire risk over baseline conditions. Lithium-ion BESSs, in particular, have elevated fire risk but, when installed properly, the risk can be greatly mitigated. It is assumed that adherence with applicable local laws and regulations for fire safety would reduce potential impacts from BESSs related to fire risk such that substantial volumes of calls for fire protection service during operation of the BESSs would not be expected.

Construction of FTM BESSs could involve operation of some heavy construction equipment within roads along or adjacent to FTM sites, although lane or road closures are not expected to be required for those illustrative FTM sites that were considered for this evaluation. Construction activities also would involve heavy truck trips to and from the construction sites, which could impact traffic flow and/or cause or contribute to traffic incidents. These traffic-related impacts could result in the need for response from law enforcement personnel and/or adversely affect the availability of police resources for other service calls. It is assumed, however, that encroachment permits would be obtained for any construction activities under Alternative BS-2 that may substantially impact roadways, thereby reducing potential traffic-related impacts and potential for impacts on police protection resources

Of the example FTM BESS sites that have been identified for analysis in the DEIR, FTM Site 4 is the only site located within close proximity to any schools; and generally, schools would not be impacted during construction activities. Illustrative FTM Site 4 is on property owned by the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District and is immediately adjacent to the baseball field at Paso Robles High School. However, construction activities for installation of the BESS on this site would be confined to the immediate site area and would not be expected to impact the school operations. The FTM BESSs under Alternative BS-2 would function to shave peak load in the Paso Robles DPA and along target feeders, thereby freeing up capacity to serve additional demand. In this way, the FTM BESSs would provide similar services as the Proposed Project and

reasonably foreseeable distribution components. The expanded electric distribution capacity provided by Alternative BS-2 would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, thereby requiring new or expanded public facilities, such as schools. Rather, anticipated growth would occur independently of the Proposed Project or Alternative BS-2. Similarly, Alternative BS-2 would not directly affect parks or other public facilities and would not indirectly impact these facilities or services.

Overall, FTM BESS sites were selected for illustrative purposes only, BESS installations have not been designed and technologies have not been selected, and the specifics of Alternative BS-2 are unknown. Thus, project-level determinations cannot be made as impacts are speculative. Therefore, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15145, no significance conclusion is provided for any of the significance criteria.

### **Alternative BS-3: Third Party, Behind-the-Meter Solar and Battery Storage**

Construction of BTM solar systems and BESSs would pose relatively minimal fire risk given that the majority of BTM facilities would be installed on or within existing buildings. Adherence to California Fire Code requirements for fire safety during construction activities would minimize potential fire risk, thereby reducing the potential for any calls for fire protection service to be placed during construction under Alternative BS-3. For the reasons discussed in Section 4.9, solar systems and BESSs (particularly lithium-ion BESSs) can pose a fire risk once operational, which could potentially result in calls for service from the local fire department(s) over the life of the BTM facilities. Fires caused by BTM solar systems and BESSs requiring responses from the County Fire Department or Paso Robles Department of Fire and Emergency Services could limit the availability of fire protection resources responding to other calls and temporarily impact response times. However, it is assumed that all local laws and regulations would followed in installing BTM facilities, thereby reducing potential impacts..

Given that BTM solar systems and BESSs would be installed on or within existing buildings and would be relatively small-scale (e.g., in comparison to FTM BESSs), their construction is unlikely to impact transportation and traffic, such as to potentially require a response from law enforcement. In particular, installation of residential solar and battery storage facilities would involve localized effects from delivery trucks and construction worker vehicles accessing the premises. Similarly, most commercial and industrial BTM solar and battery storage facilities would not substantially affect roadways or emergency vehicle movement due to deliveries of materials at the site, and none of these projects would require lane or road closures. No other characteristics of the BTM facilities construction or operation would be anticipated to require a response from law enforcement, such as to affect response times, performance objectives or other standards.

Since the locations of individual BTM facilities that may be installed under Alternative BS-3 are unknown, it is unknown whether BTM facilities would be installed at or near schools (although schools would make good candidates for BTM solar systems or BESSs). Regardless, construction/installation of BTM units would not substantially affect schools even if sited on or near school sites. As discussed above, the expanded electric distribution capacity provided cumulatively by BTM facilities under Alternative BS-3 would not cause or result in substantial unplanned population growth, thereby requiring new or expanded public facilities, such as schools. Rather, anticipated growth would occur independently of the Proposed Project or

Alternative BS-3. Similarly, Alternative BS-3 would not directly affect parks or other public facilities and would not indirectly impact these facilities or services.

Overall, due to the fact that specific locations and characteristics of BTM resources procured under Alternative BS-3 are unknown at this time, project-level impact determinations are not possible as the impacts are speculative. Therefore, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15145, no significance conclusion is reached under any of the significance criteria.