

## 4.19 Community Facilities

Community facilities are public or publicly-funded facilities, such as police and fire protection, emergency medical response, hospitals, schools, and libraries, as well as private facilities such as hospitals and schools. This section looks at the proposed Meadowlands Railroad and Roadway Improvement Project's potential effect on the services provided by these facilities. This generally occurs when a project either physically displaces or alters a community facility, or causes a change in population that could affect the service delivery of a community facility.

As the proposed project would not introduce a new residential population to the municipalities where the proposed project is located, it would not increase the demand for community services. Existing community facilities that serve the study area have been identified and potential impacts are described as follows.

### 4.19.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.19.1.1 *Police*

Three police forces supply police coverage for the study area. The forces provide emergency assistance, investigative services and general protective services, as discussed below.

##### *New Jersey State Police*

The New Jersey State Police Sports Complex Unit provides police coverage for the Meadowlands Sports Complex. The Unit operates out of three substations within the Meadowlands Sports Complex. The Unit maintains close liaison with New Jersey State Police Troop B and Troop D in the coordination of traffic in and around the Meadowlands Sports Complex. Additionally the Unit is responsible for the investigation of criminal activity at the Meadowlands Sports Complex.

##### *Bergen County Police*

The Bergen County Police Department provides police coverage for the residents of Bergen County. The Department is located at 66 Zabriskie Street in the City of Hackensack, over five miles north of the study area. The Department's 80 officers patrol all Bergen County roadways, institutions, and property as well as providing support services for municipal police departments.

##### *Borough of East Rutherford*

The East Rutherford Police Department provides police coverage within Borough of East Rutherford. The Department is headquartered at 312 Grove Street, approximately one-half mile west of the study area. The department has a staff of 34 members.

#### **4.19.1.2 Fire**

The study area falls under the jurisdiction of two fire departments, which operate a total of four fire stations. Associated with both fire departments are engine companies, truck companies and emergency response and rescue squads.

##### **New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority**

The NJSEA Fire Department provides first response fire protection services for the Meadowlands Sports Complex. The Department operates one station, which is situated slightly west of the intersection of NJ Route 120 and Paterson Plank Road. The station has two pump trucks with 750-gallon water capacity, one truck with 500-gallon capacity and one truck with 90-gallon capacity. The trucks also have foam capacity. The station has eight full time and nine part time fire fighters and operates on 24 hours per day, seven days per week basis with a two-person crew per shift that is expanded during events.

As a security precaution, during events at the Meadowlands Sports Complex, the Department lines up its fire protection vehicles along the southern edge of the Meadowlands Racetrack so that swift and unproblematic access to the various facilities is available.

##### **Borough of East Rutherford**

The East Rutherford Fire Department provides fire protection services for the Borough of East Rutherford. The Department operates three stations and is comprised of three engine companies, one truck company, one rescue company, and one emergency medical services squad. A staff of 80 men and women volunteer their services to the Department. All of the fire stations are situated at least one-half mile from the study area.

#### **4.19.1.3 Emergency Medical Response**

In addition to the emergency response and rescue services supplied by the above-mentioned fire departments, there are additional response units that provide emergency medical response services to the study area.

##### **New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority**

The NJSEA provides first response emergency medical service (EMS) from facilities within the Sports Complex. The facilities have four ambulances, three carts and two scooters. The facilities are staffed by licensed nurses and operate from 10:00 AM to midnight on weekdays and are also open during events. A doctor is also present during events.

##### **Borough of East Rutherford**

The East Rutherford Volunteer Ambulance Corps provides emergency medical response to the Borough of East Rutherford, where the study area is located. Vehicles are dispatched from a facility, which is located at 312 Grove Street and is situated at least one-half mile from the study area.

#### **4.19.1.4 Hospitals**

There are no hospitals within the study area, however the following three hospitals, which provide emergency, inpatient, and outpatient medical care, are proximate to the study area.

Hackensack University Medical Center, which is located at 30 Prospect Avenue in the City of Hackensack, is situated over four miles north of the study area. Positioned approximately two miles southwest of the study area, the Meadowlands Hospital Medical Center, is located at 55 Meadowlands Parkway in the Township of Secaucus. Clara Maass Medical Center – West Hudson Division, which is located at 206 Bergen Avenue in the Township of Kearny, is situated over five miles southeast of the study area.

#### **4.19.1.5 Schools**

The study area is located within two public school districts, which include a total of five schools.

##### **East Rutherford School District**

The East Rutherford District, which enrolls approximately 764 students, is comprised of four schools, none of which are in close proximity to the study area.

##### **Carlstadt-East Rutherford Regional School District**

The Carlstadt-East Rutherford Regional School District consists of one school, which is located one-quarter mile from the study area. Henry P. Becton Regional High School is located approximately one-quarter mile from the northwest corner of the study area. The school, which is located at the intersection of Paterson Avenue and Cornelia Street, provides educational services for the students grades nine through twelve. Enrollment is approximately 512 students.

#### **4.19.1.6 Libraries**

There are no public libraries located within the study area. However, the Bergen County Cooperative Library System operates a branch in the Borough of East Rutherford. The East Rutherford Memorial Library is located at 143 Boiling Springs Avenue, which is approximately one-half mile west of the study area.

### **4.19.2 Impacts**

#### **4.19.2.1 No-Action Alternative**

Under the No-Action Alternative, it is assumed that no rail service or roadway improvements would occur in the study area. Therefore, significant adverse impacts to police, fire, medical response, schools and libraries are not anticipated.

#### **4.19.2.2 Preferred Alternative**

##### **Police**

Police protection for the proposed station would be provided by the New Jersey State Police unit with assistance provided by the NJ TRANSIT Police Department. The New Jersey State Police Sports Complex Unit as well as the Borough of East Rutherford Police Department would continue to patrol and service the study area. The Bergen County Police Department would maintain police coverage for main thoroughfares and county properties and, along with New Jersey State Police Troops B and D, provide special assistance as needed. Additionally, NJSEA and NJ TRANSIT would develop a security coordination plan with local and state police departments prior to the initiation of passenger rail service in the study area. Security would be accommodated through a combination of NJSEA security personnel, NJ TRANSIT police and New Jersey State Police.

Since the Preferred Alternative would not require any permanent changes in emergency access routes, it is not anticipated that there would be an increase in response time due to the implementation of rail service. Also, it is expected that these police resources would be sufficient to safely and efficiently provide protection within the study area. As the build year approaches, potential changes to staffing levels would be considered.

Short-term impacts due to roadway closings and construction activities could be expected. Temporary roadway closings to perform necessary roadway improvements, lay trackage, construct the proposed viaducts, bridge, and station site could alter travel patterns for emergency response providers.

##### **Fire and Emergency Medical Response**

The NJSEA Fire Department, the East Rutherford Fire Department and the East Rutherford Volunteer Ambulance Corps provide emergency response services for the study area. As the build year approaches, appropriate staffing levels for the fire and emergency response providers would be evaluated. Any changes required to service the new station site would also be determined at that time.

The right-of-way of the Preferred Alternative is located just west of the NJSEA fire station creating a barrier between the fire station and the Meadowland Sports Complex. A gated grade crossing is proposed for this area. This would ensure adequate access for emergency equipment. No private vehicles would be permitted to use this grade crossing. Additionally, a secondary access route via Paterson Plank Road is located northeast of the fire station.

Short-term impacts due to roadway closings and construction activities could be expected. Temporary roadway closings to complete necessary roadway improvements, lay trackage, construct the proposed viaducts, bridge, and station site could shift travel patterns for the fire departments and the emergency medical service providers.

### **Hospitals**

The proposed project would not directly nor indirectly introduce a residential population to the study area. The proposed project would not affect access to hospitals. Therefore, impacts to hospitals are not anticipated.

### **Schools**

The proposed project would not directly nor indirectly introduce a residential population to the study area. Therefore, the project would not increase school enrollment or the need for additional bus service.

The existing Pascack Valley Line right-of-way and Route 17 are located between Henry P. Becton Regional High School, which is one-quarter mile from the study area, and the proposed project. This existing passenger rail line and six-lane roadway serve as a boundary between the light industrial and sports and entertainment uses that generally characterize the study area and the neighborhood commercial and residential uses to the west. Therefore, despite its proximity to the study area, the proposed project would not affect access to Henry P. Becton Regional High School. Impacts to the school are therefore not anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

### **Libraries**

The proposed commuter rail line would not involve the introduction of a new residential population. The proposed project would not affect access to libraries. Therefore, this project is not expected to significantly impact library service.

## **4.19.3 Mitigation**

### **4.19.3.1 Police**

To alleviate the potential short-term construction impacts, NJSEA and NJ TRANSIT would coordinate temporary roadway closing with municipalities and notify the local, county, and state police departments of restrictions in order to mitigate possible construction induced impacts. A Maintenance and Protection of Traffic (MPT) plan would be developed and implemented by NJ TRANSIT through considerable consultation with NJDOT, the NJSEA and the municipalities that are to be impacted. The action plan would list measures that would be utilized during the construction stages of the proposed project expected to result in temporary roadway lane closures. These measures include, but would not be limited to construction during off-peak hours, when viable, public notification of future closures and detour routes, the use of well-positioned closure and detour warning signs and the appropriate scheduling and coordination of all construction activities that would occur within the area.

#### **4.19.3.2      *Fire and Emergency Medical Response***

Protective devices would be installed at the proposed gated grade crossing. These devices include visual and audible warnings announcing approaching trains, consisting of flashing lights, warning bells, and mechanical gates activated automatically by an approaching train.

To lessen the potential short-term construction impacts, NJSEA and NJ TRANSIT would coordinate temporary roadway closings with municipalities and notify emergency service providers of restrictions in order to mitigate possible construction induced impacts. A Maintenance of Traffic Plan, as discussed above, would be developed through consultation among NJ TRANSIT, NJDOT, the NJSEA and the local government to assure access to all areas of the study area and its surrounding municipalities is maintained.

#### **4.19.3.3      *Hospitals***

As the proposed project would not adversely impact hospitals or affect hospital access, no mitigation is warranted.

#### **4.19.3.4      *Schools***

As the proposed project would not adversely impact schools or affect school access, no mitigation is warranted.

#### **4.19.3.5      *Libraries***

As the proposed project would not adversely impact library service or affect library access, no mitigation is warranted.