

CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY

This is an Initial Study format used to determine, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15177, whether a project 1) is within the scope of a Master EIR (MEIR), 2) may result in additional significant environmental effects not previously examined in the MEIR, or 3) requires new, additional mitigation measures or alternatives.

1. PROJECT SUMMARY DATA

Project Title: Mountain House Neighborhoods I and J Project

Lead Agency Name and Address:

San Joaquin County Community Development Department
1810 East Hazelton Ave.
Stockton, CA 95205

Contact Person and Phone Number: Mr. Chandler Martin, Deputy Director of Planning (209) 468-3144.

Project Location: Neighborhoods I and J are two (of 12 total) neighborhoods within the Mountain House community located in the southwestern portion of San Joaquin County (see Figures 2-1 and 2-2). Mountain House is located north of the City of Tracy. General boundaries of the project site include the Alameda County/San Joaquin County line to the west, Old River to the north, and other neighborhoods of the Mountain House community to the south and west. The only neighborhoods currently developed or under construction are Neighborhoods E, F and G, which are south of the project site.

Project Sponsor's Name and Address:

Shea Mountain House, LLC
2580 Shea Center Drive
Livermore, CA 94551
Contact Person: Mr. Kevin Peters, Senior Vice President

General Plan and Master Plan Designations: Very Low Density Residential (R/VL); Low and Medium Density Residential (R/L, R/M); Medium-High Density Residential (R/MH); Neighborhood Park; Community Park; Regional Park; Other Open Space (OS/O); Resource Conservation (OS/RC); Public; Recreation Commercial (R/C).

N
 Not to Scale



LEGEND


-  Mountain House New Community
-  Specific Plan II Area (approximate)

Figure 2-1

SOURCE: Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc.

REGIONAL AND PROJECT LOCATION

N
Not to Scale

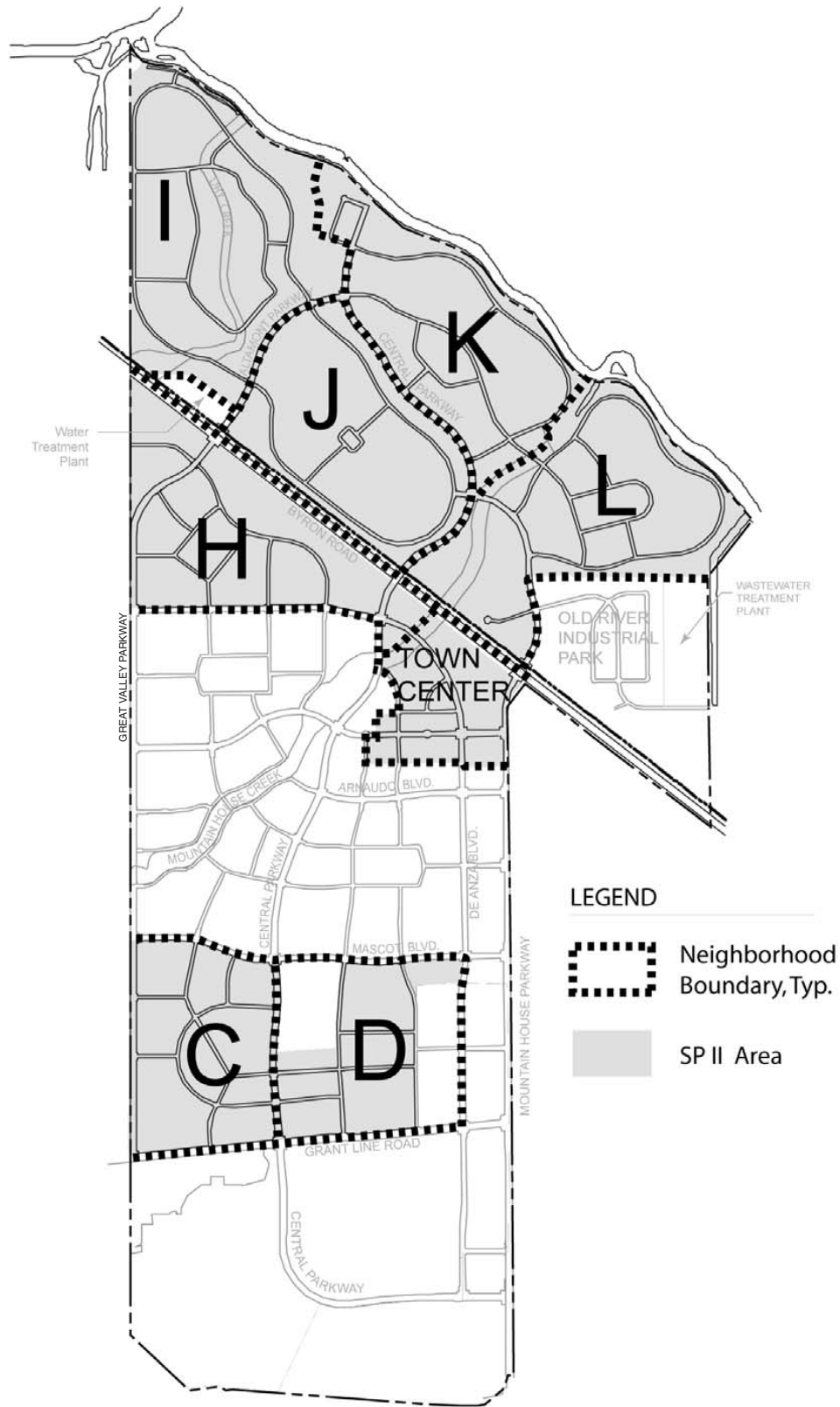


Figure 2-2

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

SOURCE: SWA



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Zoning: Very Low Density Residential (R-VL); Low Density Residential (R-L); Medium Density Residential (R-M); Medium-High Density Residential (R-MH); Recreation Commercial (C-R); Public Facilities (P-F).

2. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Tentative Subdivision Maps for Neighborhoods I and J were approved in July 2005 by the San Joaquin County Planning Commission after the February 2005 approval of Specific Plan II (SP II) (see Figure 2-3) for the Mountain House community by the County Board of Supervisors. However, some changes have been proposed to the overall plan to improve circulation and access, to provide recreational and visual amenities, and to alter storm water drainage. The Revised I and J Map project includes the following components:

- San Joaquin County Community Development Department (SJCCDD) planning applications;
- Tentative Subdivision Maps for Neighborhoods I and J within the Specific Plan II area (Application No. PA-0600327);
- Amendments to Specific Plan II (text and land use maps that can be viewed at the County Community Development Department, 1810 E. Hazelton Avenue, Stockton) which would include: 1) rezoning of some parcels (2) the removal of the age restriction for Medium-High Density housing in Neighborhood H; and 3) changes to Neighborhood K that include a minor relocation of land uses to accommodate a road alignment to serve the existing home sites on Old River (Application No. PA-0600337);
- Amendments to the Mountain House Master Plan (Application No. PA-0600335);
- Section 1602 agreements with the California Department of Fish and Game for road crossings of Dry Creek; and
- An Addendum to the Mountain House Storm Water Master Plan Update.

The proposed project would allow development of 797 acres (17 percent) of the approximately 4,780 acres of Mountain House. A summary of the proposed uses and acreages for Neighborhoods I and J is provided in Table 2-1. A comparison with what was already approved for Neighborhoods I and J as part of the SP II and Tentative Map approvals is provided in Table 2-2. Infrastructure associated with Neighborhoods I and J would include water distribution lines, wastewater distribution lines, electrical and gas lines, roads, telephone lines, and drainage improvements. The water and wastewater facilities to serve this development would be located within Mountain House and would be maintained and operated by the Mountain House Community Services District (MHCSD). A more detailed description of the project can be found in Chapter 3 of this Initial Study.



Not to Scale

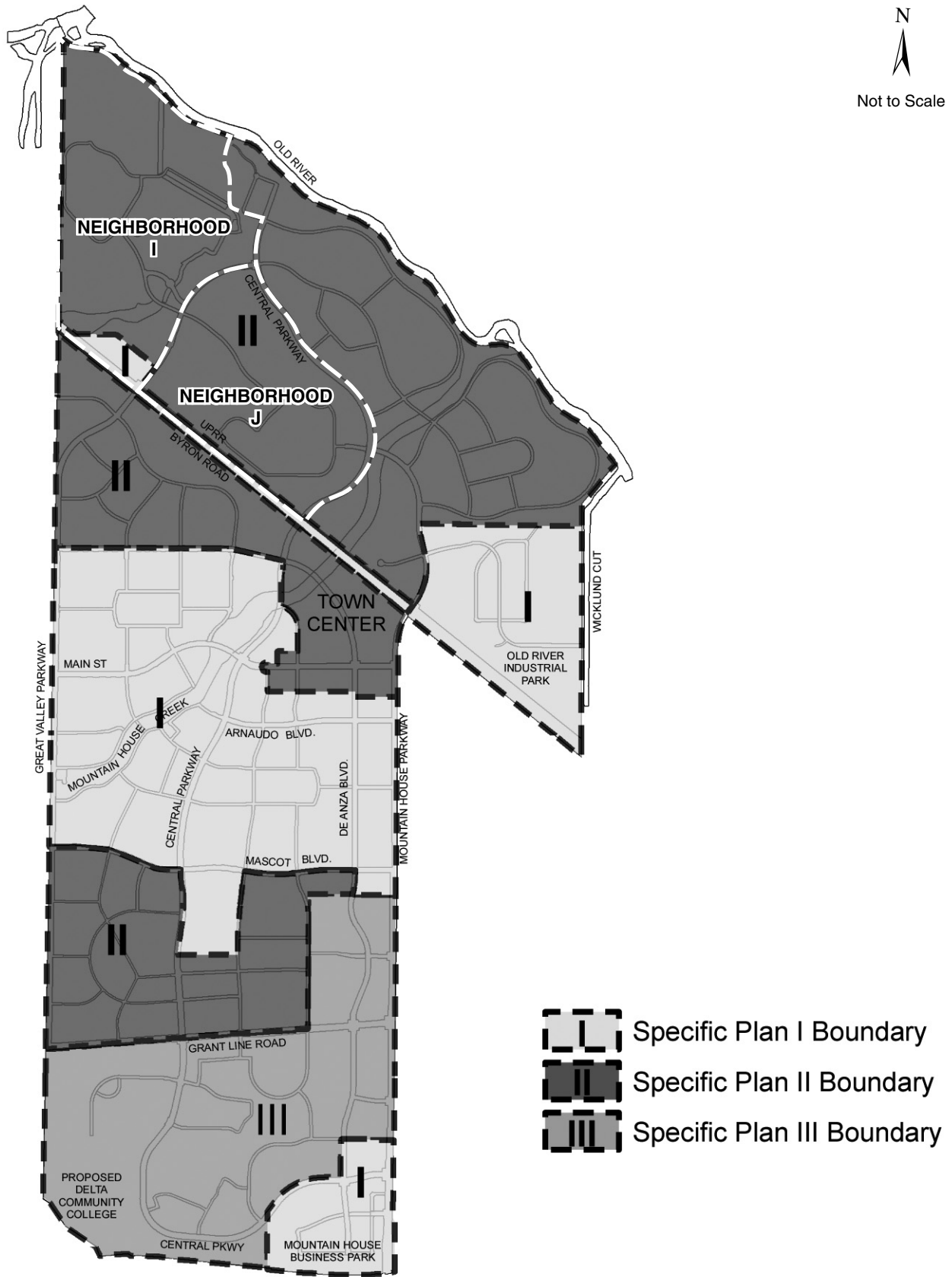


Figure 2-3

SPECIFIC PLAN BOUNDARIES

SOURCE: SWA



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**Table 2-1
PROPOSED ACREAGES BY LAND USE FOR NEIGHBORHOODS I AND J**

Land Use – General	Land Use – Specific (Dwelling Units/Acre)	Acres
Residential	Residential – High Density (18-20)	0
	Residential – Medium-High Density (12-14)	28.0
	Residential – Medium Density (5.7-7.0)	177.7
	Residential - Low Density (3.75-4.5)	257.4
	Residential - Very Low Density (1-2)	5.0
	Residential - Senior Housing High Density (18-20)	0
	Residential - Senior Housing Medium High Density (12-14)	0
Subtotal		468.1
Commercial	Neighborhood Commercial	0
	Community Commercial	0
	General Commercial	0
	Office Commercial	0
Subtotal		0
Recreation	Recreation (Golf, Club, Rec. Ctr.)	222.2
Subtotal		222.2
Industrial	Limited Industrial	0
Open Space	Neighborhood Park	12.8
	Community Park	0
	Creek Community Park	0
	Regional Park	5.2
	Dry Creek/Detention Basins	25.7
	Wetland/Resource Conservation	15.4
Subtotal		59.1
Schools	K-8 Schools	0
Public	Public Facilities – Public Lands Equity Program Streets	36.4
	Public Facilities -Water Treatment Plant	11.1
	Public Facilities – Institutional	0
Subtotal		47.5
TOTAL		796.9

Source: Shea Mountain House, 2006.

The following is a summary of the proposed land uses:

Housing

- Two age-restricted, active adult neighborhoods;
- 2,070 detached homes and 336 attached homes (total of 2,406 dwelling units);¹ and

¹ This does not include a potential second unit for Neighborhoods I and J. Assumes 28 acres of Residential Medium High Density is developed with 336 dwelling units, or an average density of 12.0 dwelling units per acre.

**Table 2-2
PROPOSED VS. APPROVED RESIDENTIAL USES FOR NEIGHBORHOODS I AND J**

	SP II			Existing TM (Approved 7/05)			Proposed		
	AC	DU	DU/AC	AC	DU	DU/AC	AC	DU	DU/AC
Neighborhood "I"									
R-VLO	5.2	10	1.9	2.80	6	2.1	5.10	5	1.0
R-L	164	738	4.5	154.86	665	4.3	141.3	551	3.9
R-M	125	750	6.0	123.38	706	5.7	95.9	566	5.9
R-MH							15.5	186	12.0
Subtotal	294.2	1,494		281.04	1,377		257.71	1,308	
Neighborhood "J"									
R-L	117	527	4.5	122.18	469	3.8	116.1	453	3.9
R-M	98.3	590	6.0	97.00	560	5.8	81.8	491	6.0
R-MH							12.5	150	12.0
Subtotal	215.3	1,117		219.18	1,029		210.4	1,094	
Total	507.1	2,615	NA	500.22	2,406	NA	468.1	2,402	NA

Notes: NA = Not applicable.
 Total units vary slightly from 2,406 due to rounding.
 SP II: Specific Plan II R-VL: Very Low Density Residential
 TM: Tentative Map R-L: Low Density Residential
 AC: Acres R-M: Medium Density Residential
 DU: Dwelling Units R-MH: Medium-High Density Residential
 Source: Shea Mountain House, 2006.

- Projected population of 4,338 persons.

Jobs

- Estimated 168 jobs associated with recreational and other uses.

Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities

- 18 acres of regional and neighborhood parks, including a linear park/trail system through Neighborhoods I and J connecting the North Community Park located southeast of Neighborhood J to Old River Regional Park located east of Neighborhood I;
- 41.1 acres of preserved wetlands, jurisdictional waterways and storm water detention/open space; and
- One 18-hole golf course and clubhouse/recreation center totaling 222 acres, including storm water quality features.

Transportation and Infrastructure

- Landscaped roadways to interconnect community;
- Extensions of bicycle/pedestrian trails; and

- Expansions of all required infrastructure and utilities (e.g., water and wastewater lines, etc.).

Description of Project Changes as Compared to Approved Tentative Maps

Shea Mountain House, LLC is proposing a new land plan for Neighborhoods I and J that maintains the types of land uses approved with the Tentative Maps for Neighborhoods I and J on July 7, 2005, but rearranges them in a manner intended to enhance the living experience, both within the neighborhoods and as viewed from the overall Mountain House community.

The new land plan includes the same number of dwelling units as the existing Tentative Map while shifting some density from Residential Low and Residential Medium to the Residential Medium High zoning designation in order to increase product diversity and provide the land necessary to accommodate the neighborhood enhancements.

The primary changes from the existing approved Tentative Map are:

- Creation of a new unloaded collector street (i.e., no driveway access onto the collector) linking the I and J neighborhoods that are bifurcated by the Great Valley arterial road. This new collector road would bridge Great Valley Parkway.
- Incorporation of resource agency preferences for "total avoidance" of discharges and fills within the jurisdictional "waters of the U.S." and the associated separation and treatment of urbanized storm water flows within the golf course area (versus the previous plan to restore Dry Creek and use it as a storm water treatment and conveyance facility).
- Re-arrangement of the golf course so that more holes front the exterior boundary of the neighborhoods, creating a visual amenity for the public.
- Enlargement of the recreation amenity area, which is operated by the homeowners association serving Neighborhoods I and J, to accommodate a broad range of amenities and activities.
- Development of a linear narrow park system through Neighborhoods I and J through Neighborhoods I and J that creates a single continuous public connection between the North Community Park (on the east side of Central Parkway) and Old River Regional Park. This park/trail system abuts the unloaded collector road right-of-way, minimizing street crossings. This predominantly linear feature also provides access to small parks and focal points along its alignment. The park system through the I and J neighborhoods would be maintained by the homeowners association (or a financing/maintenance entity acceptable to the Mountain House Community Services District), but would be accessible to the public via a dedicated easement, and would be owned by the Mountain House Community Services District.

3. SURROUNDING LAND USES AND SETTING

Currently, land uses surrounding the boundaries of Neighborhoods I and J include vacant lands under agricultural production for alfalfa, corn, and irrigated farmland to the east and west. Lands to the west are within Alameda County. Old River forms the northern boundary of Neighborhood I. Neighborhoods E, F and G (currently under construction and portions recently completed in the last five years) are located to the south of Byron Road, which forms the southern boundary of Neighborhoods I and J. The Mountain House Community Services District water treatment plant, located at the south end of Neighborhood I, has been completed and is currently operating to serve existing neighborhoods within Mountain House.

4. OTHER AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL MAY BE REQUIRED

The following is a list of federal, state, regional, and local agencies from whom permits may be required prior to construction and/or operation of the proposed project:

- Regional Water Quality Control Board: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District: applicable construction-related permits.
- California Department of Fish and Game: Section 1602 agreements for road crossings of Dry Creek.

5. INFORMATION SOURCES

The following are some of the information sources used to complete this Initial Study:

- *Final EIR (SCH# 90020776) Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plan I, Vols. I and II (1994).*
- *San Joaquin County General Plan (Volumes I – III) (1992).*
- *San Joaquin County Development Title (1992).*
- *Mountain House Master Plan (1994, amended 2000).*
- *Mountain House Specific Plan I (1994).*
- *Mountain House Specific Plan II, (February 2005).*
- *Mountain House Specific Plan II Initial Study (Draft), December 2004, approved February 2005.*
- Natural Diversity Data Base (California Department of Fish and Game).
- On-site visits by staff and consultants.

- Application submittal material provided with Tentative Map applications.
- *Mountain House Neighborhood F Project Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration* (SCH No. 900020776) (2000).
- *Mountain House Villages E and G Expanded Initial Study* (2003).
- California Energy Commission, *East Altamont Energy Center – Application for Certification* (2003).

A more detailed list of references can be found in Chapters 5 and 8.

6. PURPOSE OF INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study is intended to determine whether the proposed project 1) is within the scope of the Master EIR (MEIR) completed for the Mountain House New Community Master Plan and Specific Plan I in 1994, 2) may result in additional significant environmental effects not previously examined in the MEIR, or 3) requires new, additional mitigation measures or alternatives. The set of Environmental Checklist questions in Chapter 5 is intended to answer these questions. If the answer is “yes” to the first condition above, no Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required for the project. If the answer is “yes” to the second or third condition, the County would determine that an EIR should be prepared for the project. The conclusions are addressed below and findings can be found in Appendix C.

7. SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study is divided into the following chapters:

- *Chapter 1. Introduction:* This chapter provides an overview of the project and previous environmental documents completed for the Mountain House community.
- *Chapter 2. Summary:* A summary of the project contacts, lead agency, and project characteristics is provided. Background information on this Master EIR Initial Study is provided to clarify the type of findings that must be made in determining whether or not an Environmental Impact Report is necessary. A summary of the project description is provided. In addition, the discretionary actions and permits associated with the project are described.
- *Chapter 3. Project Description:* This chapter identifies all the land uses, acreages, and infrastructure associated with proposed plans for Neighborhoods I and J. Relevant graphics are included to identify proposed future development within the project area.
- *Chapter 4. Environmental Determination:* This chapter identifies all the environmental topics for which there would be a potentially significant impact. Also, a determination regarding the required documentation in

compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act is made at the conclusion of this chapter.

- *Chapter 5. Environmental Checklist:* This chapter includes all the topics required to be evaluated as per Section 15063 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Each topic (i.e., Air Quality, Hydrology, etc.) includes a specific set of questions relevant to evaluating a project for which a Master EIR has been prepared. The significant impacts identified in the 1994 MEIR and a summary of findings are provided for each topic.
- *Chapter 6. Mandatory Findings of Significance:* This chapter addresses the three mandatory findings of significance, which deal with 1) potential degradation of the environment as related to plants, animals, and historical resources; 2) cumulatively considerable impacts; and 3) substantial adverse effects on human beings.
- *Chapter 7. Bibliography:* This chapter identifies all references used in the Checklist analysis.
- *Chapter 8. Preparers of the Initial Study:* This chapter identifies the team of scientists and planners who completed the Initial Study.
- *Chapter 9. Glossary:* This chapter defines specific terms used in the Initial Study.
- *Chapter 10. List of Acronyms:* This chapter identifies acronyms used in the Initial Study and the full name for each acronym.

8. USE OF THE MEIR AND AUTHORITY FOR INITIAL STUDY

A Master EIR (San Joaquin County, 1994) was adopted in 1994 for the Mountain House New Community Master Plan and Specific Plan I. The area within Specific Plan II, which includes Neighborhoods I and J, is included within the Master Plan area, and thus many of the topics relevant to this Initial Study were evaluated in the Master EIR in 1994.

The Master EIR (hereinafter referred to as the "1994 MEIR") included a number of mitigation measures that were applicable to the Master Plan and thus would apply to Neighborhoods I and J. Some mitigation measures were incorporated into the adopted Master Plan and others applied to future stages of permitting and development. A copy of the 1994 MEIR Mitigation Monitoring Program is included in Appendix A. The 1994 MEIR is incorporated herein by reference. A full copy of the 1994 MEIR can be viewed at the San Joaquin County Community Development Department offices, 1810 East Hazelton Avenue, Stockton, California.

9. DETERMINATION OF CONTINUED APPLICABILITY OF THE MEIR AFTER THE FIVE-YEAR TIME PERIOD

The 1994 MEIR was certified in 1994, or about 12 years ago. Section 15177 of the CEQA Guidelines addresses subsequent projects within the scope of the MEIR and states that new environmental documentation (except as stated in “b” below) or findings are not required when specific requirements are met. These requirements include the following:

- a. The lead agency for the MEIR is the same as for the subsequent project;
- b. The lead agency prepares an Initial Study on the subsequent project to determine if any additional significant effect on the environment could occur that was not addressed in MEIR; and
- c. The lead agency determines, on basis of written findings, that no additional significant environmental effect would result, that no new mitigation measures are needed, and that the project is within the scope of the MEIR.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15179 states that the Initial Study done for a project that was the subject of a MEIR must make the following findings if more than five years have elapsed since certification of the MEIR:

1. There have been no substantial changes with respect to the circumstances under which the MEIR was certified; or
2. There is no new available information which was not known and could not have been known at the time the MEIR was certified.

If this determination cannot be made, the standard initial study process will be used to determine the scope of an EIR for the project.

The conclusion of this Initial Study is that all required findings can be made to determine that the MEIR adequately addresses all potentially significant impacts of the proposed project. No mitigation measures were found to be necessary because of measures incorporated into the text of Specific Plan II (of which Neighborhoods I and J are a part), or the fact that potential impacts were adequately addressed in the 1994 MEIR.