

CHAPTER TWO: PLANNING CONCEPTS

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CHAPTER TWO: PLANNING CONCEPTS

2.1 MASTER PLAN SUMMARY

Mountain House is planned as a comprehensive new community that provides a balance of housing and employment and a diversity of housing types, employment opportunities and recreational amenities for its residents. In the tradition of California Central Valley towns, Mountain House is planned to develop as a community of pedestrian-scaled, tree-shrouded neighborhoods, each focused on the neighborhood school and park and linked to nearby shopping and employment areas.

2.1.1 Master Plan Land Use

Neighborhood Structure

The Master Plan proposes that Mountain House be developed with a neighborhood structure that permits easy access to schools, open space, commercial services, and transit. Residential development is contained in 12 neighborhoods, including ten family neighborhoods and two mixed active adult and family neighborhoods (Neighborhood J and Neighborhood K). Each of the ten family neighborhoods, and the Neighborhood K mixed active adult and family neighborhood, contains a Neighborhood Center that includes a K-8 school, a Neighborhood Park, a Neighborhood Commercial area, and a transit stop. The Neighborhood J mixed active adult and family neighborhood does not contain a Neighborhood Center but will feature one component of a Neighborhood Center, a Neighborhood Park located on the east side of Neighborhood J. Each neighborhood is sized to provide convenient walking access to the neighborhood facilities, with the majority of residential units will be located within one-half mile of a Neighborhood Center. Each neighborhood is also to include a mix of residential housing types for residents with a variety of income levels, providing diversity and choice for residents.

The majority of neighborhoods are separated by Arterial streets with only Local or Collector streets occurring within the neighborhood. Generally, neighborhood boundaries also delineate the attendance boundaries K-8 schools, thereby minimizing the need to cross Arterial streets to gain access to the school serving that neighborhood. Each family neighborhood, and the Neighborhood K mixed active adult and family neighborhood, supports one K-8 school and includes a mix of residential housing types. The K-8 school in Neighborhood K will also serve the area designated for families in the Neighborhood J mixed active adult and family neighborhood. Higher density housing is concentrated within and near the Town Center and near commercial centers, transit facilities, and open space amenities such as the Mountain House Creek corridor. Lower density housing is generally located near the western edge of the community closer to agricultural areas or in areas of existing residential development and away from the Town Center, commercial uses and Central Parkway. Within neighborhoods, R/M uses are located nearest the Town Center, Central Parkway, and Village Commercial Centers, as applicable. Lower density R/L uses are located nearest the western community boundary, Old River, and the nature preserves of Neighborhoods I and J.

Town Center

The Master Plan proposes the Town Center as an active, mixed use “downtown” that will create a sense of focus for the Mountain House community, provide a location for higher

intensity job generation and housing. The Town Center will support opportunities for specialty shopping, entertainment, office, and civic functions, all located in close proximity within a pedestrian-scaled urban setting.

Commercial Land Uses

The Master Plan proposes a variety of commercial areas with a full range of commercial uses to serve the residents of the community, thereby minimizing the need for shopping trips outside the community.

Neighborhood Commercial uses are centrally located on a Collector roadway within each of the nine family neighborhoods and the Neighborhood K mixed active adult and family neighborhood, close to the Neighborhood Park and school. The Neighborhood Commercial area of Neighborhood K will also serve the Neighborhood Commercial needs of Neighborhood J.

One "Central Commercial Center" and three Community Commercial "village" shopping centers of 10-20 acres each (Village Centers) will provide multiple neighborhoods with daily and weekly shopping needs. The three Village Centers are located to evenly serve the 12 residential neighborhoods, with each Village Center serving approximately 5,000 homes and providing a location for a major anchor grocery store, drugstore and supporting small stores, services, offices and recreation uses.

Mixed use development at the Old River Center will provide for a diverse commercial/residential/recreational development at the terminus of Central Parkway. General Commercial areas offer specialized commercial establishments such as home supplies, building supplies, or other establishments.

Commercial Recreation development in Neighborhoods I and J will provide areas for commercial/public recreationally-oriented activities and supportive, associated facilities. In the Neighborhood I active adult neighborhood, the area designated for Commercial Recreation will provide sites for a clubhouse, Recreation Center, Restaurant, and other supportive commercial uses that will also be available and accessible to the active adult residents of the Neighborhood J mixed active adult and family neighborhood.

Freeway Service Commercial uses are proposed for development within the Specific Plan III area, south of Grant Line Road.

Office and Industrial Land Uses

Office and industrial uses are concentrated along Mountain House Parkway and in the Mountain House and Old River business parks, with smaller office sites at Village Centers. Office Commercial areas provide locations for a variety of public and private office uses, including medical offices, library, civic center, fire stations, police station, communication centers, and business offices.

Public and Institutional Land Uses

The Master Plan provides public and institutional uses as needed to serve the community, including schools within the neighborhoods, public safety facilities in or near commercial areas or adjacent to public parks, and sites for religious institutions. A main transit center is designated in the Town Center to provide convenient access to local and regional bus transportation.

A community college is proposed for development within the Specific Plan III area, south of Grant Line Road.

Parks and Open Space Land Uses

The Master Plan provides for a comprehensive network of attractive and accessible (both visually and physically) public open spaces within Mountain House. These will include neighborhood, community, and regional parks; resource conservation areas for wetland habitat preservation; dual-purpose areas for recreational amenities and water quality management; and private recreation uses such as golf.

2.1.2 Master Plan Goals and Objectives

The Master Plan established the following set of goals and objectives for the Mountain House community, to be implemented over the years through the development of each specific plan area.

Overall Goals and Objectives

Create a high quality environment where people of all economic levels can live and work.

- Develop a distinct and unique new community that is separate from existing communities.
- Develop Mountain House as a full service community that will accommodate a portion of the growth projected by the County's General Plan 2010 in an orderly, well-organized development pattern.
- Provide for a lifestyle that is less reliant on the automobile, more involved with activities within the local community and neighborhoods, and more oriented to use of transit, bicycle and pedestrian transport.

Community Character

Create attractive and diverse environments for living, working and playing.

- To develop ten pedestrian-oriented residential family neighborhoods, each organized around a Neighborhood Center consisting of a K-8 school, a Neighborhood Park, and a Neighborhood Commercial area; two pedestrian-oriented mixed active adult and family neighborhoods (Neighborhood J and Neighborhood K).
- To develop three Village Centers that will provide shopping centers, transit, and other services with easy access from the 12 residential neighborhoods;
- To develop the mixed use Town Center as an urban center for community activities that will support high-density retail, civic, and office and residential development;
- To use roadway landscaping as a primary method of establishing community character and of distinguishing between neighborhoods;
- To establish Neighborhood and Community parks, and support regional recreation for Mountain House residents;
- To develop recreation needs unique and specific to Mountain House by creating two linked nature preserves, one in Neighborhood I and one in Neighborhood J; and
- To provide public access to the Delta waterways through a linear park within Old River Regional Park.

Provide for a pedestrian-oriented character within and between residential neighborhoods, village commercial centers, and the Town Center.

- To locate a Neighborhood Center within 2,000 feet of every residential unit in each of the nine family neighborhoods and in the Neighborhood K mixed active adult and family neighborhood;
- To locate Neighborhood Parks of approximately five acres adjacent to schools for joint use of park and school facilities;
- To utilize an interconnected network of relatively small-scale streets within neighborhoods in order to create a pleasant and safe street environment for pedestrian use;
- To orient important public buildings and land uses, including neighborhood commercial and appropriate buildings or building facades within Village Centers, toward the street;
- To connect the Town Center to the linear park and bikeway systems and provide pedestrian amenities within the Town Center;
- To design neighborhoods, village commercial centers and the Town Center to facilitate transit and bicycle use; and
- To optimize the ability of residences to use solar energy through layout of residential streets.

Land Use

Establish a balance of housing, employment, and a full range of services and infrastructure within the community, while encouraging interaction between land uses.

- To develop a new community with its own balanced mix of housing, public services, employment opportunities, parks, schools, and shopping facilities to serve the projected residential population.
- To create neighborhoods that provide for the daily commercial, educational, and recreational needs of the residents within walking distance.
- To provide light industrial and commercial office use areas suitable for the development of high quality business parks, allowing potential employers to relocate and expand in a strategic regional location with adequate transportation, services, moderate land costs, few site constraints and housing affordable to the jobs provided.
- To allow for a diversity of residential areas and a hierarchy of commercial areas.
- To provide sufficient employment areas to create a job for every resident of the community who is projected to be working.

Minimize impact on the County's agricultural resources.

- To minimize impacts on County agricultural lands by developing the community in an orderly and efficient manner, at average residential densities of at least 6.5 units per acre.
- To establish strong community boundaries and reduce potential conflicts with adjacent agricultural lands by creating buffers along the western and eastern community boundaries.

Housing

Provide an adequate supply of housing for all income groups in the community.

- To establish neighborhoods with varying levels of amenities and a mixture of housing densities, ranging from golf course-related residential developments to entry-level neighborhoods.
- To designate an average density of between six and seven units per acre overall in order to achieve a higher density than is currently found in the County, thereby meeting market needs and achieving more affordability and entry-level housing opportunities.
- To establish a balance of jobs and housing by matching projected income levels of jobs provided within the community with the projected cost of housing.
- To ensure housing for a variety of income levels within each neighborhood.
- To provide multi-family housing within the community, to be concentrated adjacent to the Mountain House Creek corridor and Village Centers and in and adjacent to the Town Center.

Economic Development

Create a financially and fiscally viable community resulting in positive economic impact on the County.

- To ensure fiscal protection of the County and future community residents by creating an independent and self-sustaining community.
- To provide for efficient phasing in order to avoid potential fiscal impacts.
- To plan for the location of new, expanding or relocating businesses serving the Central Valley and the Bay Area by designating areas for industrial and office commercial use.
- To attract businesses to provide an economic base, provide jobs and serve residents.
- To provide employment areas with arterial roadway access, transit service, nearby housing, and state-of-the-art telecommunication services.
- To provide for efficient, cost effective community operations.

Circulation

Establish a safe and efficient circulation system to accommodate the movement of people and goods, reduce environmental impacts, and advance the quality of life in the community.

- To minimize impacts on regional roadways and air quality by providing a community design that emphasizes trip length reductions, reduced off-site trips, pedestrian and bicycle travel, and access to regional transit facilities.
- To provide a complete multi-modal transportation system, including on and off-site roadways, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- To minimize high-speed traffic through neighborhoods by establishing a network of arterial streets which are located between neighborhoods and effectively link residential, employment and commercial uses.

- To locate collector and local streets to allow low-speed, alternative routes through neighborhoods while linking school and other public destinations within the different neighborhoods.
- To provide major road access to trip generating uses such as commercial, employment, and recreational areas.

Public Services

Provide adequate public services and facilities to serve the new community.

- To provide on-site water treatment and sewage treatment systems at quality standards which meet or exceed standards of regulatory agencies, and to re-use treated wastewater either on-site or off-site for the most economical and beneficial use.
- To follow a pattern of contiguous residential growth that will provide each stage of development with adequate services and infrastructure, and to plan and construct infrastructure to avoid creation of excess capacity.
- To size public services and facilities to maintain the community's boundaries by serving only the Master Plan area.
- To minimize administrative impacts on the County by forming a self-sufficient Community Services District to provide on-site water, sewer, storm drainage, roads, parks and other necessary services.

Resource Conservation

Minimize impact on sensitive environmental resources.

- To preserve and enhance wetlands and riparian areas within the project, including wetlands along Mountain House Creek and Dry Creek.
- To incorporate effective and feasible energy and water conservation techniques and procedures into the development.
- To minimize and/or mitigate regional and site impacts to the extent possible by meeting the requirements of the Mitigation Monitoring Program.
- To protect sensitive environmental and visual resources at the community's edges by establishing effective buffers along the northern boundary with Old River, the southern boundary with I-205, and the eastern and western boundaries with agricultural lands.
- To maintain and enhance the habitat resources of Mountain House Creek as a park and wildlife corridor through the community.
- To minimize air quality impacts by providing for more efficient transportation systems and neighborhood design and services.

2.2 SPECIFIC PLAN II CONCEPT

2.2.1 SPII Land Use

Specific Plan II provides development plans, zoning, and phased infrastructure for 2,300 acres, or 48%, of Mountain House. South of Byron Road, the plan proposes the Town Center and three family neighborhoods, Neighborhood C, Neighborhood D, and Neighborhood H, contiguous to the Specific Plan I Area. North of Byron

Road, the plan proposes two family neighborhoods, Neighborhood I and L and two mixed active adult and family neighborhoods, Neighborhood J and Neighborhood K. Open space elements include linear parks along the Old River Regional Park and the Mountain House Creek Community Park; active sports parks, consisting of a Neighborhood Park in each Neighborhood, and the Town Center Community Park; and Commercial Recreation areas in Neighborhoods I & J.

Two linked nature preserves, one in Neighborhood I and one in Neighborhood J, comprise the majority of the area of the Commercial Recreation areas. Although the Commercial Recreation area in Neighborhood J will be dominated by the nature preserve and an active community park, there will also be mini parks, or a series of parks placed throughout the Commercial Recreation area includes several lakes associated with the nature preserve, and supportive, associated recreational uses. These uses will develop on a phased basis, with housing and jobs served by schools, parks, commercial services, and infrastructure as they are built. With SPII, all Mountain House areas north of Grant Line Road will be zoned as part of the specific plan.

SPII land uses are designated in Figure 3.1 and Figures 3.4 to 3.7, and summarized in Table 3.1: SPII Land Use Summary, and in Table 3.2: SPII Land Use by Neighborhood. In addition to the above, the project will include the following:

- A K-8 school, a Neighborhood Park, and a Neighborhood Commercial area in each of the six family-oriented neighborhoods;
- A K-8 school, a Neighborhood Park, and a Neighborhood Commercial area in the Neighborhood K mixed active adult and family neighborhood;
- A Neighborhood Park located on the east side of the Neighborhood J mixed active adult and family neighborhood;
- Industrial, office and commercial employment uses;
- Mixed-use Town Center with major shopping, recreation, and higher density housing;
- A detention/open space system serving flood control and water quality purposes;
- Landscaped roadways to interconnect the community;
- Extensions of bicycle/pedestrian trails; and
- Expansions of all required infrastructure and utilities.

2.2.2 SPII Overall Goals and Objectives

SPII will implement the Master Plan's goals and objectives, as follows.

Overall Goals and Objectives: SPII will meet the requirements of the Master Plan for housing diversity, growth boundaries, orderly development, and non-vehicular modes of transportation.

Community Character: SPII will create diverse environments based on the neighborhood structure established by the Master Plan. It will include three "Village Centers", a Mixed-Use Town Center (see Chapter Four, Sections 4.4 and

4.5), and a Mixed Use “Old River Center” located at the northwest corner of Neighborhood K.

SP11 will provide roadway landscaping, parks, regional recreation, and access to Old River (see Chapter Seven, Section 7.2).

SP11 will provide a pedestrian-oriented character by providing Neighborhood Centers (four within the family neighborhoods of Neighborhoods C, D, H, and L, and one within the mixed active adult and family neighborhood of Neighborhood K), a clubhouse and a Recreational Center (in the active adult neighborhood of Neighborhood I), two linked nature preserves (one in Neighborhood I and one in Neighborhood J), Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks, and small-scale streets, and by orienting public uses toward streets, connecting the Town Center to open space, and facilitating transit and bicycle use (see Chapters Three and Four).

Land Use: SP11 will establish a balance of housing, employment, provide a range of services, and allow for diverse housing and commercial areas. It will provide for the needs of residents within walking distance and create opportunities for employment (see Chapter Three).

SP11 will develop in an orderly manner and incorporate buffers and the western and eastern boundaries (see Chapter Four, Section 4.3).

Housing: SP11 will provide a range of housing by establishing neighborhoods with differing characters and levels of amenities. Each neighborhood will include a variety of housing densities. Multi-family housing will occur adjacent to the creek and near mixed-use centers (see Figure 3.1: SP11 Land Use Summary and Figure 3.2: SP11 Zoning).

Economic Development: SP11 will contribute to the community's positive economic impact on the County by complying with public service provisions, providing efficient phasing, offering locations for employment uses with arterial and neighborhood access, and allowing for efficient community operations (see Chapters Three, Four, and Six).

Circulation: SP11 will provide a safe and efficient multi-modal circulation system that minimizes high-speed vehicular traffic through neighborhoods and links neighborhoods to public, job, school, and other destinations (see Chapter Three and Nine).

2.2.3 Compatibility with Approved Specific Plans for Adjacent Areas

SP11 will be developed in a manner consistent with the Master Plan and will therefore be compatible with Specific Plan I, the previously approved Specific Plan at Mountain House. Projects to be implemented as part of SP11 will be compatible with Specific Plan I in the following ways:

- Adherence to the policies and provision of the Master Plan, including land use, community character, and neighborhood structure.
- Alignment and coordination of roadways, trails, parks, transit routes, infrastructure facilities, and other community-wide elements.
- Compatible interface at streets and entries, consistent with the MHCS Design Manual and the Master Plan.