CHAPTER ONE MASTER PLAN INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER ONE: MASTER PLAN INTRODUCTION

1.1 MASTER PLAN PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

1.1.1 Purpose of the Master Plan

The Master Plan for Mountain House presents policies and standards for development of the new community. It contains comprehensive plans for land use, infrastructure and implementation. The Master Plan is intended to serve as the overall community-wide policy document guiding subsequent Specific Plans, Tentative Maps, development projects, Development Agreements, and other approvals required to implement the proposed project. All subsequent development approvals must be consistent with the Master Plan.

The Master Plan includes the following:

- a. The community concept, land use program, standards, and assumptions for the new community;
- b. Objectives and policies for the development of the community;
- Overall design and development standards for community elements including the Town Center, Neighborhoods, roadways, parks and other open space uses, and utilities;
- d. Facility needs for roads, water, sewer drainage and flood control facilities, and other infrastructure or services:
- e. The backbone infrastructure systems and service areas required to support the community, and minimize future reconstruction;
- f. Environmental protection measures;
- g. Implementation measures including additional studies/plans, phasing, maintenance, financing and reimbursement for infrastructure and services;
- h. The public services and governance systems proposed for the new community;
- i. Costs of infrastructure and public facilities, and operating and capital costs for use in the financing plan;
- j. Requirements and procedures for successive Specific Plans, zoning, Subdivision Maps, development projects, other permits, design review, environmental review, and Development Agreements;

k. Appendix material on definitions, the Habitat Management Plan (HMP), comprehensive technical regulations and other resources.

1.1.2 Relationship to the Public Financing Plan

The Public Financing Plan (PFP) is a separate document identifying needed public services, facilities, and funding alternatives to implement the Master Plan. The PFP incorporates applicable Goals and Policies from the County General Plan, and is based upon the policies, land use data, public facility and service standards, cost estimates and phasing plans identified in this Master Plan.

The Public Financing Plan establishes fiscal and financial objectives, policies and guidelines. It identifies funding programs for community-wide costs for facilities and services. It also provides a fiscal analysis to ensure that the community can be feasibly developed without negative fiscal impacts on the County.

Due to the volatile nature of fiscal and financial issues, many changes may be needed to the Public Financing Plan through the buildout of the community. An annual report will evaluate the success of the fiscal and financial programs.

The Public Financing Plan prepared in association with this Master Plan addresses the entire Mountain House community in one comprehensive analysis. Each Specific Plan will be accompanied by a fiscal and financial analysis. All subsequent Development Permits must be consistent with the Public Financing Plan.

1.1.3 Relationship to Future Specific Plans

While the Master Plan is the community-wide plan for development, subsequent Specific Plans will cover smaller areas. Specific Plans will be required to provide additional provisions on land use, design, infrastructure, and implementation that have not been included in the Master Plan and are necessary before specific developments are designed. Each Specific Plan must be consistent with the land use assumptions, requirements and policies laid out in the Master Plan.

Chapter Seventeen: Implementation describes the requirements and criteria for Specific Plans at Mountain House. Contents required to be included in Specific Plans are listed at the end of each chapter of this Master Plan.

1.1.4 How to Use the Master Plan

Chapter Two: Community Vision, presents the overall goals and objectives for the new community. Subsequent chapters are divided into sections and subsections which address the various issues. Most sections begin with a brief discussion, including cross-references to the other chapters and appendices, and a statement of assumptions used in the formation of the specific topic. Regulatory provisions are presented as one of the following:

Objectives: An objective describes a specific end condition that represents an intermediate step to achieving a goal stated in Chapter Two. Each section begins with one or more objective, which are to be accomplished by the policies and implementation measures that follow.

Policies: A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making to assure attainment of stated objectives. It is effectuated by implementation measures.

Implementation Measures: An implementation measure is an action, procedure, program or technique that carries out a policy. Implementation measures typically spell out required actions or approvals, programs, timing, or similar requirements.

Where applicable, chapters contain a section on phasing and costs. These discussions represent summaries of material contained in the Public Financing Plan (PFP), a companion document to this Master Plan.

The Master Plan appendices consist of support reference documents such as a list of definitions, background information on the site, programs for affordable housing and job creation, a plan for habitat management, and other technical reports and programs. Appendices are organized to relate to chapters by numbering the appendices to correspond with the relevant chapter number (e.g. appendices for Chapter Fifteen are numbered 15-A, 15-B and 15-C). Appendix 1-A provides a list of definitions applicable to the Master Plan.

Applicants for approval of a subdivision or development within Mountain House are required to comply with the policies of this Master Plan and those contained within the Specific Plan in which the subject property is located. A description of the application process is contained in Chapter Seventeen: Implementation. Financial and fiscal requirements and procedures are contained in the Master Plan Public Financing Plan.

This Master Plan assigns preliminary names to streets and other features of the new community. These place names are for working purposes only. Final names will be determined at the appropriate point in the planning and review process.

1.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

1.2.1 Planning History and Environmental Review

This Master Plan is intended to implement the General Plan Amendment which added the new community of Mountain House to the San Joaquin County 2010 General Plan, as recommended by the County Planning Commission on February 4, 1993 and approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 25, 1993. At that time, the Board of Supervisors also certified the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) prepared for this project. The Master Plan was prepared in compliance with the "subsequent plans" process adopted by the Board of Supervisors for New Communities.

The San Joaquin County Community Development Department initiated review of the Mountain House General Plan Amendment in 1990, and the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) was published in March 1992, recommended for approval by the County Planning Commission on April 9. 1992. and certified by the Board of Supervisors on July 29, 1992. Since the FEIR addressed an amendment to the 1995 General Plan, the SEIR was prepared to review a revised application requesting amendment to the 2010 General Plan. The SEIR is one environmental review document in a tiered environmental review process established by the County for Mountain House. Prior to the current boundaries of the Master Plan area, previous proposals also addressed lands located in Alameda County. The area addressed by this Master Plan is entirely located within the unincorporated area of San Joaquin County (see Regional Vicinity Map and 1.2: Figures 1.1: Project Location). preparation of the Master Plan, the acreage of the project was determined to be 4,784 acres based upon field surveys and the inclusion of additional existing street rights of way and several small former out-parcels.

The Master Plan conforms to the provisions of the State Government Code relating to Specific Plans. This Plan, therefore, is correctly entitled the Mountain House Master Specific Plan. It is a community-wide Specific Plan as opposed to subsequent Specific Plans that will provide more detailed planning for portions of the community. For ease in distinguishing this community-wide Specific Plan from the Specific Plans covering smaller areas, the Master Specific Plan will be referred to throughout this document as the Mountain House Master Plan or simply the Master Plan.

1.2.2 Relationship to County Planning Documents

San Joaquin County General Plan

The San Joaquin General Plan 2035 policies require a Master Plan, a Public Financing Plan, and Specific Plans for a new community. All these plans, as well as Development Agreements for Mountain House must be consistent with the San Joaquin County General Plan as amended. As more detailed planning is done for Mountain House, the General Plan may need to be amended.

Development Title and other County Ordinances

Provisions of the San Joaquin County Development Title and other County ordinances and standards shall apply to Mountain House unless specifically excepted by the Master Plan, the Public Financing Plan, Specific Plans or Development Agreements.

Development Agreements

Development agreements are contracts established between the County and the master developer or other developers of Mountain House.

Development agreements may be used to implement the project by assuring such issues as land use designations and densities, construction of needed infrastructure, dedication of land for public open space and other public purposes, and establishment of the specific responsibilities of the contracting parties. Development agreements are generally long term in duration, and items

included in a Development Agreement may not be affected by future changes in County policies.

A Development Agreement is a discretionary, legislative act and subject to the approval of the County Board of Supervisors, and must be consistent with the County's General Plan, Master Plan, Public Financing Plan, and Specific Plan which it implements.

1.2.3 Controlling Document

Where the Mountain House plans or agreements differ from the Development Title or other ordinances, the approved Specific Plan, Master Plan, or Development Agreement shall govern.

Other Agreements

The County will need to enter into an agreement with a Mountain House Community Services District (MHCSD) to define what services each agency provides. The MHCSD will also enter into agreements with other agencies and developers.

1.2.4 Master Developer Responsibility

The Master Developer for Mountain House is Trimark Communities. Trimark was the applicant for the previous General Plan Amendment process that established the land use designations for the new community.

The Master Plan has been prepared without consideration of pre-development property locations or ownership, but rather in consideration of the best assignment of those land uses that will result in an efficient and desirable community character. Buildout of the community will require close cooperation between owners of lands with overlapping uses, access and infrastructure requirements.

The first phase of development has occurred entirely within lands controlled by the Master Developer. Costs of preparation of the Master Plan and Specific Plans will be reimbursed as specified in the Cost Reimbursement Program.

1.3 SITE DESCRIPTION

1.3.1 Location

Mountain House consists of 4,784 acres or about 7.5 square miles located in southwestern San Joaquin County. Interstate 205 forms the southern boundary, Old River forms the northern boundary, and the Alameda County line runs along the western boundary. Along the eastern edge is Mountain House Parkway and the Wicklund Cut. The 1993 city limits of Tracy are about 3.5 miles to the east, and the city of Livermore is located about nine miles to the west (see Figures 1.2 - Project Location and 1.3 - Master Plan Boundary).

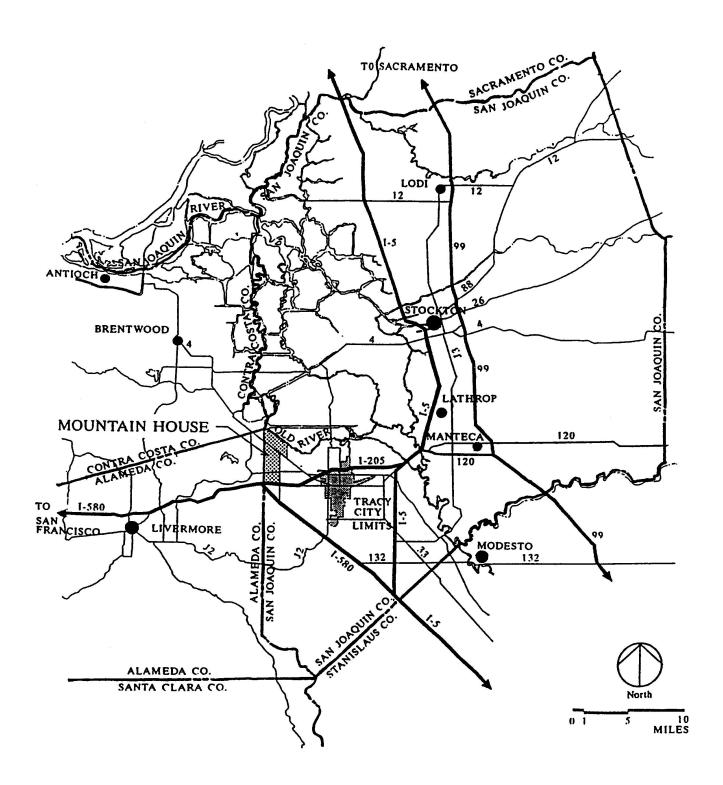


FIGURE 1.1 - REGIONAL VICINITY MAP

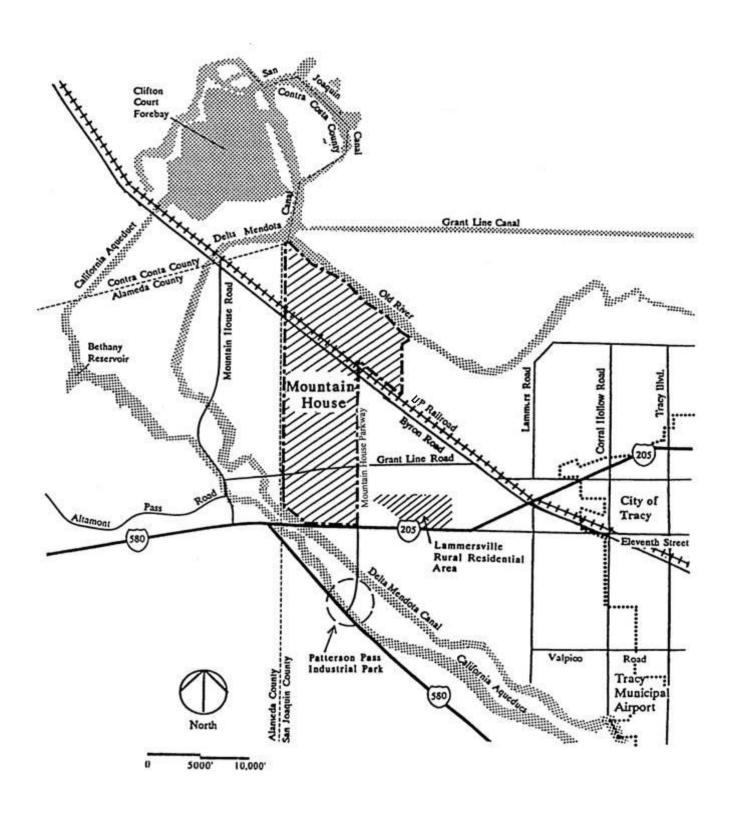


FIGURE 1.2 - PROJECT LOCATION

1.3.2 Pre-Development Land Ownership Patterns (1993)

As of January 1, 1993, the Master Developer, Trimark Communities, owned or controlled approximately 72% of the Mountain House area.

1.3.3 Pre-development Land Use and Infrastructure (1993)

Pre-development Land Use

The project site consists of agricultural lands extending from I-205 northward to Old River. Much of the acreage is used for field and row crop agriculture, with a smaller area in non-irrigated pasture and crop land (see Figure 1.5 - 1993 Cropping Patterns Map). The remaining acreage includes scattered residences, roadways, the Union Pacific railroad right of way, transmission lines and two large dairies.

A number of existing residences occur within or near the Mountain House area. Grant Line Village consists of several homes located along Grant Line Road. The majority of the residences are located south of Grant Line Road, with approximately 5.5 acres located north of Grant Line. Approximately 15 homesites exist adjacent to Old River in the northwestern corner of the Mountain House area. Two homes exist at the northwest corner of Bethany and Henderson Roads. Several other rural residences are scattered throughout the Master Plan area.

The Livermore Yacht Club and Del's Boat Harbor are located in Alameda County, a quarter mile west of the northwest corner of the Master Plan area. Access to these boating facilities is via Lindeman Road from Byron Road.

Agricultural Water Supply

Agricultural water is supplied to Mountain House from the Byron Bethany Irrigation District (2,900 acres) and Westside Irrigation District (about 200 acres). About 10 acres near I-205 are within the Plain View Irrigation District, which currently delivers no water to that area. Riparian water rights to Old River provide irrigation supplies for approximately 1,420 acres of land adjacent to the river. Approximately 115 acres in the southwestern corner of the site currently have no agricultural water supplies except for groundwater, and agricultural uses are limited to grazing or other dry-farming activities. The remainder of the site consists of roads and the railroad right-of-way with no water rights.

Primary water delivery canals servicing the site are located along the 70-foot, 120-foot and 155-foot elevation contours (see Figure 1.6: Pre-Development Agricultural Water Supply). The canals are piped beneath Mountain House Creek and laterals branch off the main canals.

Further information on water supply is provided in Chapter Twelve: Potable Water Systems.

Existing Circulation

Major highway access to the site is available from Interstate 580 and Interstate 205. Immediately southwest of the site, I-580 splits from I-205 to join Interstate 5 to the south. I-580 leads to the East Bay area over Altamont Pass located west of the site.

Local road access is available via Grant Line Road, Mountain House Parkway, and Byron Road, all of which connect to I-205 and other points. Byron Road passes through the site, connecting the City of Tracy with Brentwood, located northwest of Mountain House in Contra Costa County (see Figure 1.7: Pre-Development (1993) Circulation). Kelso Road, Von Sosten Road, Bethany Road and Wicklund Road intersect the three main roads noted above within the site.

In addition to roadways, a Union Pacific Railroad line, referred to as the Mococo Line, traverses the northern portion of the Mountain House site, adjacent to the north side of Byron Road. The railroad is currently in limited use and is believed to be usable for future transit service.

Existing Utilities

Electrical utilities and pipelines in the Master Plan area include PG&E's Rio Oso-Tesla Line, a 230 kV tower line which crosses the project site in a 75-foot wide easement from southwest to northeast (see Figure 1.8: Pre-Development (1993) Site Constraints). Parallel and adjacent to this is another PG&E right-of-way that is 192.5 feet in width for a total width of 267.5 feet. This right-of-way was originally intended to accommodate the Rancho-Seco Tesla Tower Line Facility. The Rancho Seco power plant has been permanently closed but PG&E has indicated that they wish to retain the right-of-way.

A 60 kV above-ground electrical facility crosses the site midway between Old River and Byron Road traversing the site from the southeast to the northwest.

An 8-inch diameter high pressure gas main traverses the project site from north to south. A 50-foot wide easement crosses the southwest portion of the site. The easement accommodates two natural gas pipelines owned by PG&E and an oil transmission pipeline owned by Chevron USA Inc. In addition, a new 20-foot wide easement for a second PG&E gas pipeline will be immediately adjacent to the east side of the existing 30-foot wide easement.

Other major utilities include communication facilities owned by GTE, AT&T, Pacific Bell, and Continental Telephone Company within the rights-of-way of Grant Line Road and Byron Highway. Several fuel and oil transmission pipelines occur within the right-of-way of Byron Road and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. These include an oil transmission pipeline owned by Southern Pacific Pipelines, Inc. and a fuel pipeline owned by Chevron USA, Inc.

1.3.4 Williamson Act Contracts

As of 1993, a total of 3,243.07 acres within the Mountain House site were under Williamson Act Contract. Notices of Non-renewal have been filed for 2,919.5 acres, representing 17 parcels. On February 25, 1993, following approval and adoption of the General Plan Amendment, the Board of Supervisors approved the cancellation of Williamson Act Contracts for 418 acres to serve, together with adjacent land not under contract, as the first phase of development within Mountain House.

Table 1.1 summarizes the status of all parcels within the community currently under Williamson Act, including Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN), non-renewal expiration dates and cancellations filed (see Figure 1.9 - Williamson Act Status).

Several parcels of land in the southern section of the community currently under Williamson Act Contract, have not filed for non-renewal. Under provisions of the Act, these properties could not be developed for at least nine years after filing for non-renewal, unless they are approved for cancellation by the Board of Supervisors.

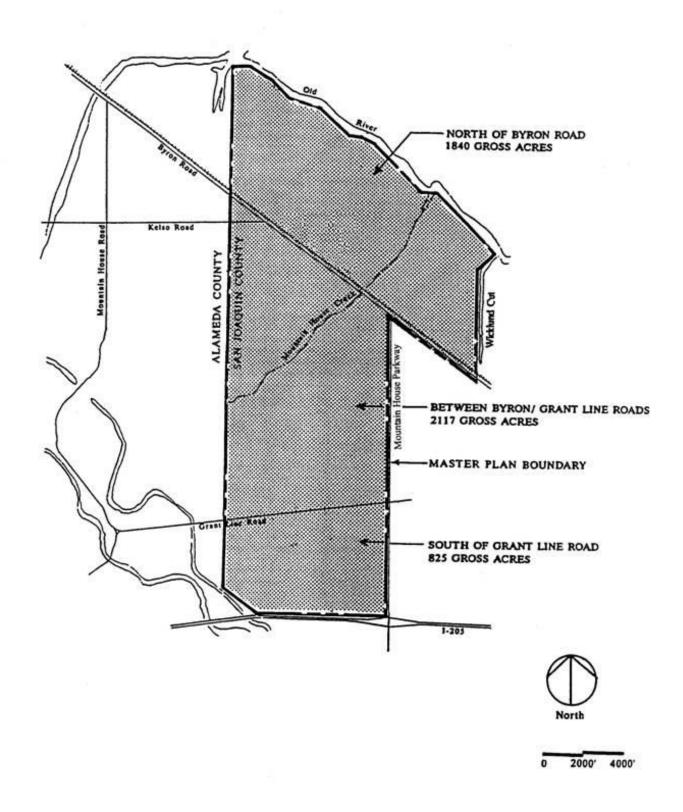


FIGURE 1.3 - MASTER PLAN BOUNDARY

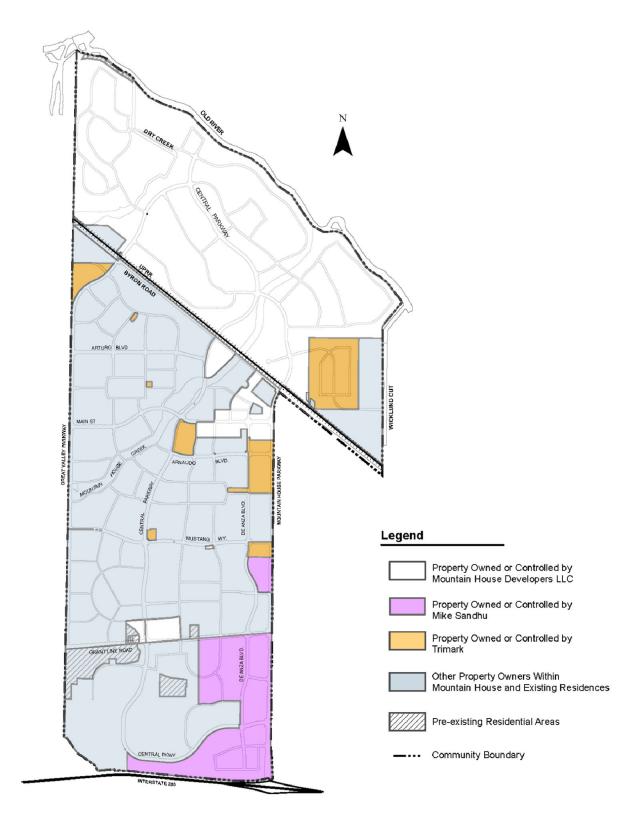


FIGURE 1.4 - OWNERSHIP MAP

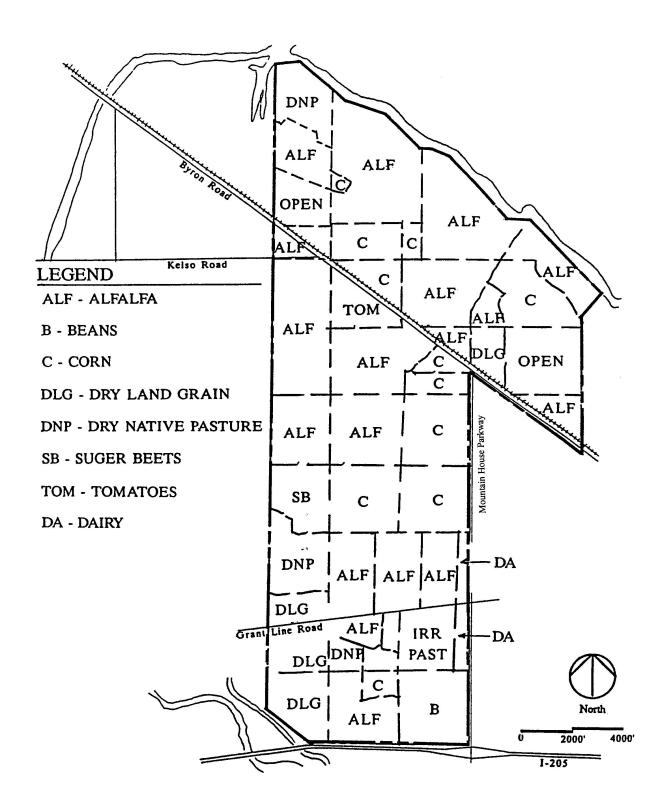


FIGURE 1.5 – 1993 CROPPING PATTERNS MAP

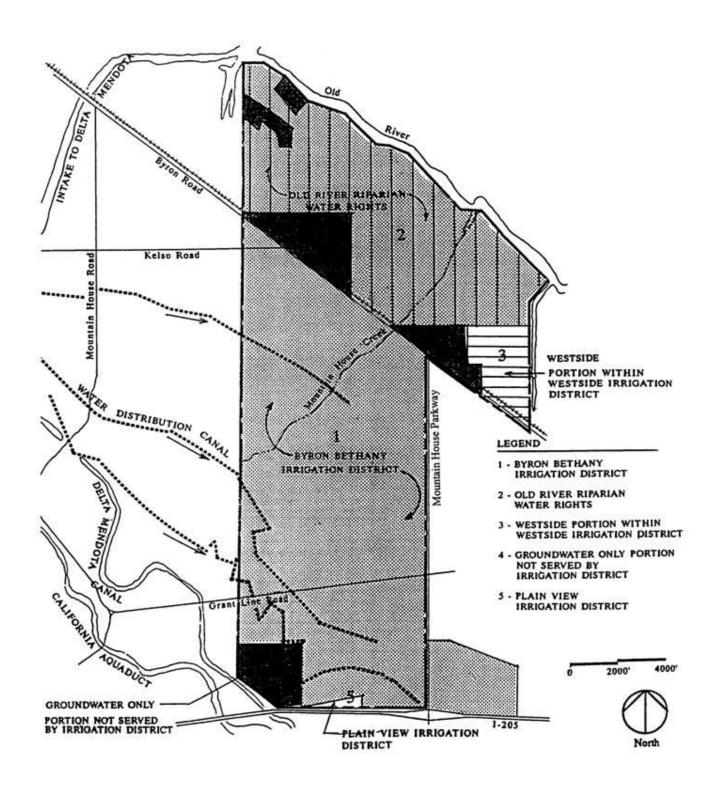


FIGURE 1.6 – PRE-DEVELOPMENT AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLY

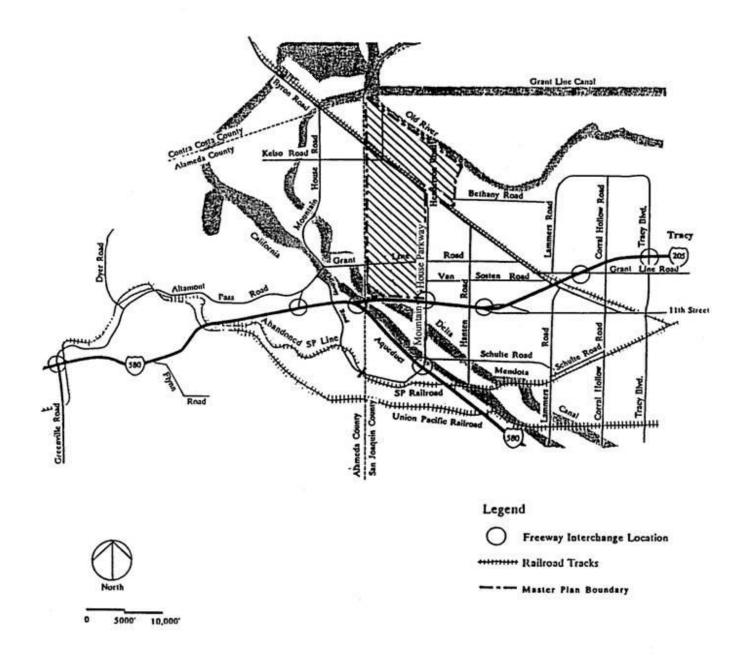


FIGURE 1.7 – PRE-DEVELOPMENT (1993) CIRCULATION

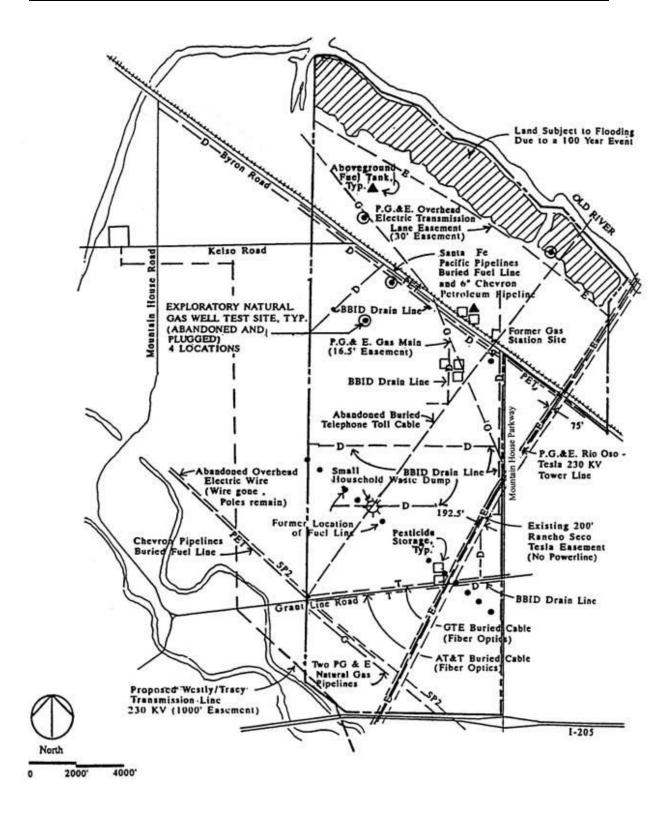


FIGURE 1.8 - PRE-DEVELOPMENT (1993) SITE CONSTRAINTS

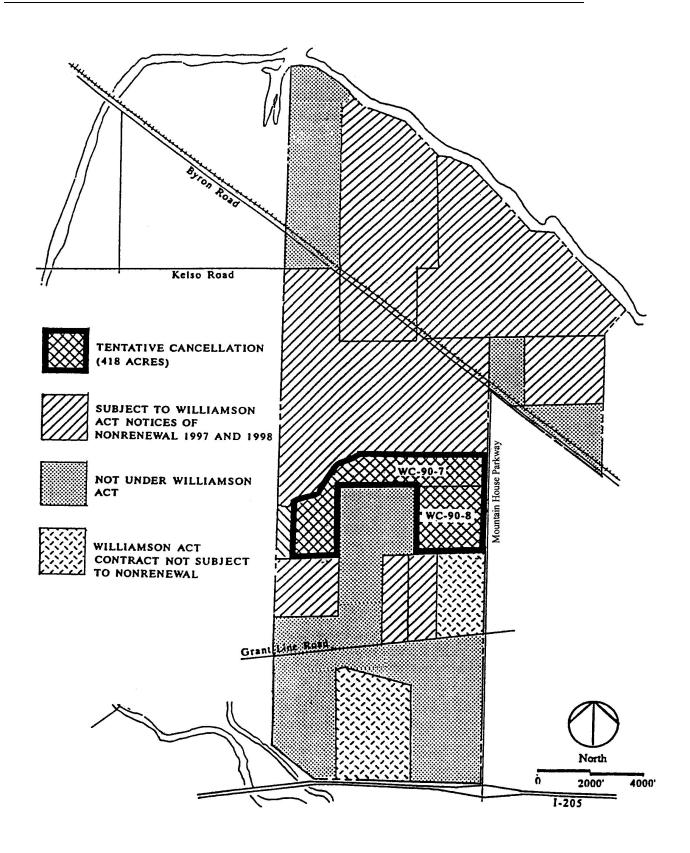


FIGURE 1.9 - WILLIAMSON ACT STATUS

Table 1.1: Williamson Act Summary APPROVED CANCELLATION AREA		
AREAS FILED FOR NON-RENEWAL		
209-030-04 209-170-02 209-030-03 209-030-05 209-040-02 209-040-03 209-040-06 209-040-09 209-040-10 209-050-02 (partial) 209-050-07 (partial) 209-050-03 (partial) 209-060-04 209-060-03 209-060-02	Acres - 689.1 333.8 79.5 60.3 84.6 254.7 31.0 281.2 148.6 122.0 45.3 6.3 60.5 55.5	Expiration Date December 31, 1997 December 31, 1998 December 31, 1998 December 31, 1998 December 31, 1998 December 31, 1997 December 31, 1998 December 31, 1998 December 31, 1998
209-060-27 Sub-Total	105.3 2513.0	December 31, 1998
Total	2,931.00	

4/28/93

(1) Although these parcels have been approved for tentative cancellation, until these cancellations have been perfected, the expiration date of the contracts is December 31, 1997.

1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

1.4.1 Site History

Historic activities in the vicinity of the site include diversified irrigation-based agriculture and the construction of oil and gas pipelines and electrical transmission lines. These activities have altered the landscape in the form of private houses, barns, irrigation canals, pipelines, pumping stations, and electrical towers. During most of the early and mid-1900's the site itself was either low rolling hills or delta flood plain. Construction of the Old River levee allowed about 500 acres of the northern site area to be converted to agricultural production.

Archaeological studies of the area located several zones of potential archaeological sensitivity. In several cases, the integrity and historical associations of the sites are poor; however, there is a possibility that additional subsurface features or artifact concentrations may be encountered by construction in these areas. None of the archaeological sites or historic structures identified within the project area are on or are probably eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, none are listed on the California Inventory of Historic Resources.

1.4.2 Visual Character

Mountain House is located at a visual gateway to San Joaquin County along I-205 and the County's western border near the foothills of the Diablo range. Predominant views are across open agricultural fields and grazing lands, occasionally interrupted by built features such as fences, overhead electrical transmission lines and towers and residences. The windmill-covered hills are visible two miles to the west.

The existing landform consists of gently sloping terrain ranging from a maximum elevation of approximately 160 feet in the southwest corner of the site dropping to approximately sea level along the northern project boundary. Topographic features are limited to areas along Mountain House Creek, and the levee bordering Old River.

1.4.3 Vegetation and Wildlife

The Master Plan area supports a variety of plant and animal species, with greatest diversity found in habitats located along Old River.

Vegetative Resources

Figure 7.9: 1993 Tree Locations and Wetlands in Chapter Seven identifies trees and indicates the locations and general conditions of trees throughout the site, as observed in mid-December 1992. As indicated, trees are generally confined to isolated portions of the Mountain House Creek corridor; windrows along existing roadways, agricultural fields or farmsteads; and the riparian edge of Old River.

Swainson's Hawk

As described in the EIRs prepared on the Mountain House General Plan Amendment, the Swainson's hawk has been observed at the site. These hawks are state-listed as a threatened species. They feed on burrowing rodents that thrive in alfalfa fields. During the 1994 season, two active nests were found within the new community boundaries. The agricultural portions of the site function as foraging area, as well, for this hawk.

Kit Fox

Mountain House is situated adjacent to the northern edge of the County's study area for the San Joaquin Kit Fox Habitat Conservation Plan. Spring and summer kit fox surveys, conducted in 1992 as part of the most recent field work for the SEIR, were performed on-site from April 27 to June 3 and from August 3 to September 3, respectively. The surveys included den and sign surveys, night spotlighting, scent stations, camera stations, and incidental wildlife observations, no direct evidence of kit fox occurrence on the site was found. Although limited populations of ground squirrels and hares (kit fox prey in the northern portion of its range) can be found on the site, the site does not provide current den sites for the kit fox.

1.4.4 Wetlands

There are five types of waters/wetlands existing within the project area: seasonal wetland, emergent marsh, alkali meadow, excavated stream channels, and perennial river. The Corps of Engineers has verified the wetland delineation with revisions and clarifications by letter dated October 1, 1992 (see Figure 7.9: in Chapter Seven).

Emergent marsh is found in two locations: one on Mountain House Creek approximately 2,000 feet upstream of Byron Road and the other in the northwest portion of the project area along Dry Creek. Seasonal wetlands are located along Mountain House Creek near the western project boundary. One alkali meadow was delineated in the northeast portion of the project area adjacent to the river levee. This wetland is enclosed by two ditch berms as well as the river levee.

Mountain House Creek and Dry Creek are small stream courses which have been channelized in the past and are periodically maintained by farmers to ensure irrigation runoff. As a result, they may be incised as much as ten feet, are largely devoid of established vegetation and are not considered to be wetlands except in two pond areas used for agricultural water supply. Old River is bordered by a large flood control levee. A narrow band of riparian wetland is supported along the waterward side of the levee to an elevation several feet above the ordinary high water line.

There are several large expanses of pasture which have been subject to flood irrigation for many years. While plants in these areas are

considered to be wetland species, such areas are not considered to be wetlands.

1.4.5 Hydrology and Drainage

The Mountain House site is located on a gentle, northeastward sloping alluvial surface at the base of the eastern flank of the Altamont Hills. Several existing watersheds to the west and south of the project site impact the project's storm drainage collection and disposal system.

Mountain House Creek is one of two northeastward flowing streams that traverse the site. The creek drains an area of about 15 square miles, and is seasonal or intermittent in its natural condition but has very low flows year-round due to possible leakage from the Delta-Mendota Canal and California Aqueduct or springs within the watershed. Dry Creek is a smaller stream parallel to and northwest of Mountain House Creek. It drains an area of about 6.8 square miles. Both channels have been modified by agricultural practices downstream of the Delta-Mendota Canal.

A network of numerous small ditches provides drainage of the interior of the Mountain House area. The majority of runoff is directed by drainage ditches to farm drains along Mountain House Parkway and Byron Road. North of Byron Road, the farm fields are drained by ditches that direct runoff northward toward Old River, where it collects in ditches along the levee and is pumped into the river by pump stations.

1.4.6 Flood Zones

The northern portion of the site is identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as being within the 100-year floodplain of Old River. The flood zone forms a band about 1,500 to 2,000 feet wide along the base of the levee at the north edge of the site. The existing stream channels of Mountain House Creek and Dry Creek are not able to contain storm flows during intense precipitation periods.

1.4.7 Geology and Soils

Topography

The project site is located on a gentle northeast-sloping surface which has been dissected by small northeast flowing streams, including Mountain House Creek. The average slope at the site is less than one percent. No slopes are greater than three percent with the exception of the side slopes of the levees along Old River.

Site topography has been significantly modified by agricultural operations to optimize irrigation and control erosion. A borrow pit was excavated at the southwest corner of the project site. Levees for flood protection have been constructed along Old River and the dredger cut along Wicklund

Road at the site's eastern boundary, as well as along the Delta-Mendota Canal.

Geology

Subsurface investigations at the site indicate that the majority of the near-surface sediments consists of silt and clay. Groundwater was encountered at depths from five to 16 feet below the ground surface at most of locations. Sandy silt and sand deposits at depths below the groundwater table were reported from data collected from borings made in the northern portion of the site, but subsequent investigations did not corroborate these results. If liquefaction of fine-grain deposits were to occur, it would be localized in nature and would not occur on a regional level.

The gentle hillslopes in the southwestern portion of the site do not show evidence of significant landsliding, and the project site is located outside areas of southwest San Joaquin County identified as susceptible to landsliding. No evidence of landslides or mudslides has been mapped within or immediately adjacent to the project site.

No active faults have been identified at the project site.

Soils

Eight distinctive soil types have been mapped by the US. Soil Conservation Service (SCS) at the site. Seven of these soil types are predominantly silty clay and clays developed on the gently sloping alluvial fan sediments. Seasonal wetting and drying of these soils cause expansion and contraction of clay particles within the soil. The erosion potential of these soils is low. The eighth soil type contains a comparatively higher content of sand particles and is found along the channels of Mountain House Creek and Dry Creek. The erosion potential is low when the topography is gentle.

Although wetlands have been identified within the project site, none of the mapped soil units in the project site are classified as hydric soils. Hydric soils, if present at the site, may be localized in extent and would not be identified by SCS mapping techniques.

1.4.8 Public Health and Safety

Potential sources of public health and environmental hazards at the Mountain House site include fuel tank usage, historic and recent pesticide usage, potential salt accumulation from agriculture, discarded drilling mud from the abandoned natural gas wells, spills and leakage from existing and abandoned fuel pipelines, possible presence of polychlorinated biphenyl's (PCBs) in power transformers, and electromagnetic fields generated by electrical overhead transmission lines.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE MASTER PLAN

Figure 1.8: Pre-Development (1993) Site Constraints identifies the location of potential hazards at Mountain House.