DRAFT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

FOR THE

MOUNTAIN HOUSE GENERAL PLAN

(SCH: 2026050303)

NOVEMBER 2026

Prepared for:

City of Mountain House
Community Development Department, Planning Division
City of Mountain House
251 E Main Street
Mountain House, CA 95391

Prepared by:

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El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

De Novo Planning Group

A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

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DRAFT EIR

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Appendix A: NOP and NOP Comments

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PURPOSE

The City of Mountain House (City) as lead agency, determined that the Mountain House General Plan (General Plan, General Plan Update, or proposed Project) is a "Project" within the definition of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This Draft EIR has been prepared to evaluate the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Project. This EIR is designed to fully inform decision-makers in the City, other responsible and trustee agencies, and the general public of the potential environmental consequences of approval and implementation of the General Plan. A detailed description of the proposed Project, including the components and characteristics of the Project, project objectives, and how the EIR will be used, is provided in Chapter 2.0 (Project Description).

AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

This Draft EIR addresses environmental impacts associated with the Project that are known to the City, raised during the Notice of Preparation (NOP) scoping process, or raised during preparation of the Draft EIR. This Draft EIR addresses the potentially significant impacts associated with aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural and tribal cultural resources, geology, greenhouse gas emissions and energy, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning and population/housing, mineral resources, noise, public services and recreation, transportation, utilities and service systems, wildfire, and cumulative impacts.

The City received five written comment letters on the NOP. Copies of these letters are provided in Appendix A of this Draft EIR and the comments are summarized in Chapter 1.0 (Introduction). The City received the following comment letters.

- Native American Heritage Commission (May 15, 2026)
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (May 8, 2026)
- San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department (May 19, 2026)
- Igor Kiselev (May 28, 2026)
- Delta Stewardship Council (June 3, 2026)

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The CEQA Guidelines require an EIR to describe a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project or to the location of the Project which would reduce or avoid significant impacts, and which could feasibly accomplish the basic objectives of the proposed Project. The alternatives analyzed in this EIR include the following:

- **Alternative 1: No Project Alternative**. Under Alternative 1, the City would not adopt the proposed General Plan. The City would continue to implement the existing local regulatory framework, including the Master Plan and applicable Specific Plans, and no changes would be made to address the requirements of State law and the relevant items addressed in

Government Code Section 65300 et seq. California Government Code Section 65360 requires newly incorporated cities to adopt a comprehensive, long-range general plan within 30 months following their incorporation. Since Mountain House was incorporated in July 2024, the deadline for adoption of a legally compliant General Plan is January 2027, at which time Alternative 1 would result in a violation of California planning mandates. Further, under Alternative 1, the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions would not be adopted to address the concerns of the City's residents, property owners, decision-makers, and other stakeholders that participated in the visioning process, which led to many of the General Plan's goals and subsequent policy development.

- **Alternative 2: Residential Focused Alternative**. Under Alternative 2, the City would adopt the General Plan policy document, including the proposed goals, policies, and actions; however, the City would place more emphasis on residential development, increasing the maximum allowable development densities for residential uses by 15 percent. Land use designations would be the same as in the proposed General Plan, except the maximum allowable density would be increased by 15 percent for each of the residential designations and the mixed use designation. For comparison purposes, it is assumed that residential growth projections for buildout under Alternative 2 would be 15 percent greater than the proposed Project. Alternative 2 would thus result in more residential growth and population than the proposed General Plan, but non-residential development and jobs would remain the same.

A comparative analysis of the proposed General Plan and each of the Project alternatives is provided in Table ES-1 below. The table includes a numerical scoring system, which assigns a score of 1 to 5 to each of the alternatives with respect to how each alternative compares to the proposed Project in terms of the severity of the environmental topics addressed in this EIR. A score of "3" indicates that the alternative would have the same level of impact when compared to the proposed Project. A score of "1" indicates that the alternative would have a better (or reduced) impact when compared to the proposed Project. A Score of "2" indicates that the alternative would have a slightly better (or slightly reduced) impact when compared to the proposed Project. A score of "4" indicates that the alternative would have a slightly worse (or slightly increased) impact when compared to the proposed Project. A score of "5" indicates that the alternative would have a worse (or increased) impact when compared to the proposed Project. The Project alternative with the lowest total score is considered the environmentally superior alternative.

TABLE ES-1: COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED PROJECT	ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO PROJECT)	ALTERNATIVE 2 (RESIDENTIAL FOCUSED)
Aesthetics	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 - Same
Agricultural Resources	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Air Quality	3 – Same	2 – Slightly Better	4 – Slightly Worse
Biological Resources	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Cultural Resources	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Geology and Soils	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy	3 – Same	2 – Slightly Better	4 – Slightly Worse
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 - Same
Hydrology and Water Quality	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Land Use, Population, and Housing	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Mineral Resources	3 – Same	3 – Same	3 – Same
Noise	3 – Same	2 – Slightly Better	4 – Slightly Worse
Public Services and Recreation	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	4 – Slightly Worse
Transportation	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	2 – Slightly Better
Utilities	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	4 – Slightly Worse
Wildfire	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Irreversible Effects	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	4 – Slightly Worse
SUMMARY	**51**	**61**	**56**

Overall, the proposed Project is the environmentally superior alternative when looked at in terms of all potential environmental impacts. Information related to alternatives and their respective impacts are described in Chapter 5.0 of this DEIR.

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines, this EIR focuses on the Project's significant effects on the environment. The CEQA Guidelines defines a significant effect as a substantial adverse change in the physical conditions which exist in the area affected by the proposed Project. A less than significant effect is one in which there is no long or short-term significant adverse change in environmental conditions. Some impacts are reduced to a less than significant level through compliance with policies and regulations and/or the implementation of mitigation measures.

The environmental impacts of the proposed Project and the level of significance are summarized in Table ES-2.

TABLE ES-2: PROJECT IMPACTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
AESTHETICS		
Impact 3.1-1: General Plan implementation would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.1-2: General Plan implementation would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within a State scenic highway	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.1-3: General Plan implementation would not, in a non-urbanized area, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, or in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.1-4: General Plan implementation could result in the creation of new sources of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area	*None Required*	LS
AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES		
Impact 3.2-1: General Plan implementation could result in the conversion of farmlands, including Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance, to non-agricultural use	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.2-2: General Plan Implementation would conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.2-3: General Plan implementation would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use	*None Required*	NI
Impact 3.2-4: General Plan implementation would not involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use	*None Required*	LS
AIR QUALITY		

LS – less than significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
Impact 3.3-1: General Plan implementation would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	SU
Impact 3.3-2: General Plan implementation could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.3-3: General Plan implementation would not result in other emissions such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people	*None Required*	LS
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES		
Impact 3.4-1: General Plan implementation could have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.4-2: General Plan implementation could have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.4-3: General Plan implementation could have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.4-4: General Plan implementation would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.4-5: The General Plan would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance	*None Required*	LS

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable* *LS – less than significant*

PS – potentially significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
Impact 3.4-6: General Plan implementation would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan	*None Required*	LS
CULTURAL AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES		
Impact 3.5-1: General Plan implementation could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical or archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.5-2: Implementation of the General Plan could lead to the disturbance of human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.5-3: General Plan implementation could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074	*None Required*	LS
GEOLOGY AND SOILS		
Impact 3.6-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, or landslides	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.6-2: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.6-3: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in development located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.6-4: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in development on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.6-5: General Plan implementation does not have the potential to have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use	*None Required*	LS

LS – less than significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water		
Impact 3.6-6: General Plan implementation has the potential to directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature	*None Required*	LS
GREENHOUSE GASES, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY		
Impact 3.7-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to generate GHG emissions that could have a significant impact on the environment and/or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	SU
Impact 3.7-2: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in a significant impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, or conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency	*None Required*	LS
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS		
Impact 3.8-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.8-2: General Plan implementation has the potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.8-3: General Plan implementation has the potential to emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.8-4: General Plan implementation has the potential to allow projects located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5	*None Required*	LS

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable* *LS – less than significant*

PS – potentially significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
Impact 3.8-5: General Plan implementation is not located within an airport land use plan, two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.8-6: General Plan implementation has the potential to impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.8-7: General Plan implementation has the potential to expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires	*None Required*	LS
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY		
Impact 3.9-1: General Plan implementation could violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.9-2: General Plan implementation could result in the depletion of groundwater supplies, interfere substantially with groundwater recharge or conflict with a groundwater management plan	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.9-3: General Plan implementation could alter the existing drainage pattern in a manner which would result in substantial erosion, siltation, flooding, impeded flows, or polluted runoff	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.9-4: General Plan implementation would not release pollutants due to project inundation by flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche	*None Required*	LS
LAND USE, POPULATION, AND HOUSING		
Impact 3.10-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to physically divide an established community	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.10-2: General Plan implementation has the potential to cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect	*None Required*	LS

LS – less than significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
Impact 3.10-3: General Plan implementation would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.10-4: General Plan implementation has the potential to displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere	*None Required*	LS
MINERAL RESOURCES		
Impact 3.11-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state or of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan	*None Required*	NI
NOISE		
Impact 3.12-1: General Plan implementation may result in exposure to significant traffic noise sources	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	SU
Impact 3.12-2: General Plan implementation may result in exposure to excessive railroad noise sources	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.12-3: General Plan implementation would not result in exposure to excessive aircraft noise sources	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.12-4: General Plan implementation could result in the generation of excessive stationary noise sources	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.12-5: General Plan implementation may result in an increase in construction noise sources	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.12-6: General Plan implementation may result in exposure to groundborne vibration	*None Required*	LS
PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION		
Impact 3.13-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of	*None Required*	LS

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable* *LS – less than significant*

PS – potentially significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
which could cause significant environmental impacts, for fire protection and emergency services		
Impact 3.13-2: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, for police protection	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.13-3: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, for schools	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.13-4: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, for parks	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.13-5: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, for other public facilities	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.13-6: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in an increase in the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.13-7: General Plan implementation has the potential to require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment	*None Required*	LS
TRANSPORTATION		

LS – less than significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
Impact 3.14-1: General Plan implementation may conflict with a program, plan, policy, or ordinance addressing the circulation system, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.14-2: General Plan implementation may result in VMT per capita that is greater than 85 percent of Baseline conditions	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	SU
Impact 3.14-3: General Plan implementation may increase hazards due to a design feature, incompatible uses, or inadequate emergency access	*None Required*	LS
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS		
Impact 3.15-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.15-2: General Plan implementation has the potential to not have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	SU
Impact 3.15-3: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.15-4: General Plan implementation has the potential to generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.15-5: General Plan implementation would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste	*None Required*	LS
WILDFIRES		

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable* *LS – less than significant*

PS – potentially significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
Impact 3.16-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.16-2: Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, General Plan implementation has the potential to exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.16-3: General Plan implementation has the potential to require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment	*None Required*	LS
Impact 3.16-4: General Plan implementation has the potential to expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes	*None Required*	LS
OTHER CEQA-REQUIRED TOPICS		
Impact 4.1: Cumulative degradation of the existing visual character of the region	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.2: Cumulative impact to agricultural lands and resources.	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.3: Cumulative impact on the region's air quality	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	CC and SU
Impact 4.4: Cumulative loss of biological resources, including habitats and special status species	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.5: Cumulative impacts on known and undiscovered cultural resources	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.6: Cumulative impacts related to geology and soils	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.7: Cumulative impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions and energy	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	CC and SU
Impact 4.8: Cumulative impacts related to hazardous materials and human health risks	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.9: Cumulative impacts related to hydrology and water quality	*None Required*	LCC

LS – less than significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	*MITIGATION MEASURE*	*LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE*
Impact 4.10: Cumulative impacts related to local land use, population, and housing	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.11: Cumulative impacts related to mineral resources	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.12: Cumulative impacts related to noise	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	CC and SU
Impact 4.13: Cumulative impacts to public services and recreation	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.14: Cumulative impacts on the transportation network	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	CC and SU
Impact 4.15: Cumulative impacts related to utilities	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	CC and SU
Impact 4.16: Cumulative impact related to wildfire	*None Required*	LCC
Impact 4.17: Irreversible and adverse effects	*Minimized to the greatest extent feasible through General Plan Policies and Actions. No feasible mitigation is available.*	SU

CC – cumulatively considerable *LCC – less than cumulatively considerable* *LS – less than significant*

PS – potentially significant *SU – significant and unavoidable* *NI – No Impact*

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) specifies that before a public agency decides to approve a project that could have one or more adverse effects on the physical environment, the agency must inform itself about the Project's potential environmental impacts, give the public an opportunity to comment on the environmental issues, and take feasible measures to avoid or reduce potential harm to the physical environment. The CEQA Guidelines are in the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000-15387, while the CEQA Statute is codified in Public Resources Code Sections 21000-21189.70.10.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE GENERAL PLAN

General Plan

The Mountain House General Plan (General Plan, General Plan Update, or proposed Project) is the overarching policy document that guides land use, housing, transportation, open space, public safety, community services, and other policy decisions throughout the City. The General Plan includes the elements and topics mandated by State law, to the extent that they are relevant locally, including land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, and environmental justice. The City may also address other topics of interest; the proposed General Plan includes topics and elements related to economic development and public facilities and services. The General Plan sets out the goals, policies, and actions in each of these areas, serves as a policy guide for how the City will make key planning decisions in the future, and guides how the City will interact with San Joaquin County, surrounding cities, and other local, regional, State, and federal agencies.

Existing Conditions Report

The Existing Conditions Report takes a "snapshot" of Mountain House's current trends and conditions. It provides a detailed description of a wide range of topics within the City, such as demographic and economic conditions, land use, public facilities, and environmental resources. The Existing Conditions Report provides decision-makers, the public, and local agencies with context for making policy decisions. The Existing Conditions Report also provides the basis for the environmental setting and description contained within this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Community Outreach and Visioning

The City hosted a Community Visioning Workshop in October 2025 as its first "It Takes a Village" Community Forum. The Workshop included a brief overview of California Planning Law, the steps and process to prepare the City's first General Plan, including its context and applicability to local decision making, and background information on the evening's topics. A series of facilitated activities were conducted to solicit input on key topics or ideas related to assets and challenges, community priorities, land use considerations, and other relevant issues. The City also conducted a survey online to elicit questions, concerns, and feedback from community members. The feedback received during the Visioning Workshop and online survey was used to help inform work tasks associated with preparation of the General Plan, including preparation of a Vision Statement, evaluation of opportunities and challenges, consideration of land use changes, and the creation of new goals, policies, and actions. The topics explored in the Visioning Workshop along with summaries of community feedback findings are provided in an Outreach Summary Report.

The Mountain House Community Vision is an aspirational statement of what the community wants to become through the implementation of its General Plan. The Vision Statement provides a sense of purpose and mission for the General Plan and sets the tone for the Plan's guiding principles and core values to aid in the development of goals, policies and actions that will guide development in the coming years.

Environmental Impact Report

An EIR responds to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City Council will use this EIR during the General Plan adoption process in order to understand the potential environmental implications associated with implementing the General Plan. This EIR was prepared concurrently with the General Plan policy document in order to facilitate the development of a General Plan that is largely self-mitigating. In other words, as environmental impacts associated with the new General Plan, including the Land Use Map, were identified, policies and actions were incorporated into the General Plan policy document in order to reduce or avoid potential environmental impacts.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

The City of Mountain House, as lead agency, has determined that preparation of the Mountain House General Plan constitutes a "Project" within the meaning of CEQA. CEQA requires the preparation of an EIR prior to approving any project that may have a significant impact on the environment. For the purposes of CEQA, the term "Project" refers to the whole of an action, which has the potential for resulting in a direct physical change or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378[a]).

This Draft EIR has been prepared according to CEQA requirements to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Mountain House General Plan. A copy of the Public Draft General Plan is located at City Hall and on the Mountain House General Plan website (https://www.mountainhouseca.gov/381/General-Plan). The Draft EIR also discusses alternatives to the General Plan and identifies any proposed General Plan policies and/or mitigation

measures that will offset, minimize, or otherwise avoid potentially significant environmental impacts. This Draft EIR has been prepared in accordance with CEQA, California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.; the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3); and the rules, regulations, and procedures for implementing CEQA as adopted by the City of Mountain House.

An EIR must disclose the expected direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with a project, including impacts that cannot be avoided, growth-inducing effects, impacts found not to be significant, and significant cumulative impacts, as well as identify mitigation measures and alternatives to the proposed Project that could reduce or avoid its adverse environmental impacts. CEQA requires government agencies to consider and, where feasible, minimize significant environmental impacts of proposed development.

1.3 TYPE OF EIR

The State CEQA Guidelines identify several types of EIRs, each applicable to different project circumstances. This EIR has been prepared as a Program EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. Section 15168 states:

"A program EIR is an EIR which may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either:

1) *Geographically;*
2) *As logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions;*
3) *In connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program; or*
4) *As individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways."*

The program-level analysis considers the broad environmental effects of the proposed Project. This EIR will be used to evaluate subsequent projects and activities under the proposed Project. This EIR is intended to provide the information and environmental analysis necessary to assist public agency decision-makers in considering approval of the proposed Project, but not to the level of detail to consider approval of subsequent development projects that may occur after adoption of the General Plan unless they meet conditions set forth in the following paragraph.

Additional environmental review under CEQA may be required for subsequent projects and would be generally based on the subsequent project's consistency with the General Plan and the analysis in this EIR, as required under CEQA. It may be determined that some future projects or infrastructure improvements may be exempt from further environmental review. When individual subsequent projects or activities under the General Plan are proposed, the lead agency that would approve and/or implement the individual project will examine the projects or activities to determine whether their effects were adequately analyzed in this program EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168). If the

projects or activities would have no effects beyond those disclosed in this EIR, no further CEQA compliance would be required.

This EIR is a new Program EIR prepared for the City's first General Plan. Although the CEQA documents prepared for the Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plans were reviewed for background information, this EIR does not tier from or supplement those documents.

1.4 INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

The City of Mountain House, as the lead agency, has prepared this EIR to provide the public and responsible and trustee agencies with an objective analysis of the potential environmental impacts resulting from adoption of the Mountain House General Plan and subsequent implementation of the General Plan. The environmental review process enables interested parties to evaluate the proposed Project in terms of its environmental consequences, to examine and recommend methods to eliminate or reduce potential adverse impacts, and to consider a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project. While CEQA requires that consideration be given to avoiding adverse environmental effects, the lead agency must balance adverse environmental effects against other public objectives, including the economic and social benefits of a project, in determining whether a project should be approved.

This EIR will be used as the primary environmental document to evaluate all subsequent planning and permitting actions associated with the General Plan. Subsequent actions that may be associated with the General Plan are identified in Chapter 2.0 (Project Description). This EIR may also be used by other agencies within San Joaquin County.

1.5 KNOWN RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

The term "Responsible Agency" includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the Project or an aspect of the Project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15381). For the purpose of CEQA, a "Trustee" agency has jurisdiction by law over natural resources that are held in trust for the people of the State of California (CEQA Guidelines Section 15386). While no Responsible Agencies or Trustee Agencies are responsible for approvals associated with adoption of the Mountain House General Plan, implementation of future projects within Mountain House may require permits and approvals from such agencies, which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW);
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans);
- Regional (Central Valley) Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB);
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE);
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
- San Joaquin Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO);
- San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG);
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD); and
- San Joaquin Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC).

1.6 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The review and certification process for the EIR has involved, or will involve, the following general procedural steps:

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The City circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR for the proposed Project on May 5, 2026 to trustee and responsible agencies, the State Clearinghouse, and the public. A scoping meeting was held on May 21, 2026 at the City of Mountain House Council Chambers. Oral comments on the NOP related to the EIR were presented during the scoping meeting. Additionally, during the 30-day public review period for the NOP, five written comment letters were received on the NOP. A summary of the NOP comments is provided later in this chapter. The NOP and all comments received on the NOP are presented in Appendix A.

DRAFT EIR

This document constitutes the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR contains a description of the Project, description of the environmental setting, identification of the Project's direct and indirect impacts on the environment and any mitigation measures for impacts found to be significant, as well as an analysis of Project alternatives, identification of significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts. This Draft EIR identifies issues determined to have no impact or a less than significant impact and provides detailed analysis of potentially significant and significant impacts. Comments received in response to the NOP were considered in preparing the analysis in this EIR. Upon completion of the Draft EIR, the City of Mountain House will file the Notice of Completion (NOC) with the State Clearinghouse of the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation to begin the public review period.

PUBLIC NOTICE/PUBLIC REVIEW

Concurrent with the NOC, the City of Mountain House will provide a public notice of availability for the Draft EIR, and invite comment from the general public, agencies, organizations, and other interested parties. Consistent with CEQA requirements, the review period for this Draft EIR is forty-five (45) days. Public comment on the Draft EIR will be accepted in written form. All comments or questions regarding the Draft EIR should be addressed to:

John B. Anderson, Contract Planner
Community Development Department
City of Mountain House
251 E. Main St.
Mountain House, CA 95391
mountainhouseplanning@sjgov.org

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS/FINAL EIR

Following the public review period, a Final EIR will be prepared. The Final EIR will respond to comments received during the public review period.

CERTIFICATION OF THE EIR/PROJECT CONSIDERATION

The City of Mountain House City Council will review and consider the Final EIR. If the City finds that the Final EIR is "adequate and complete," the City Council may certify the Final EIR in accordance with CEQA. As set forth by CEQA Guidelines Section 15151, the standards of adequacy require an EIR to provide a sufficient degree of analysis to allow decisions to be made regarding the proposed Project that intelligently take account of environmental consequences.

Upon review and consideration of the Final EIR, the City Council may take action to approve, revise, or deny the Project. If the EIR determines that the Project would result in significant adverse impacts to the environment that cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels, the City Council would be required to adopt a statement of overriding considerations as well as written findings in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15091 and 15093. If additional mitigation measures are required (beyond the General Plan policies and actions that reduce potentially significant impacts, as identified throughout this EIR), a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) would also be adopted in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21081.6(a) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15097 for mitigation measures that have been incorporated into or imposed upon the project to reduce or avoid significant effects on the environment. The MMRP would be designed to ensure that these measures are carried out during project implementation, in a manner that is consistent with the EIR.

1.7 ORGANIZATION AND SCOPE

Sections 15122 through 15132 of the State CEQA Guidelines identify the content requirements for Draft and Final EIRs. An EIR must include a description of the environmental setting, an environmental impact analysis, significant impacts, alternatives, significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts. The EIR reviews environmental and planning documentation developed for the project, environmental and planning documentation prepared for recent projects located within the City of Mountain House, and responses to the Notice of Preparation (NOP).

This Draft EIR is organized in the following manner:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Executive Summary summarizes the characteristics of the proposed Project, known areas of controversy and issues to be resolved, and provides a concise summary matrix of the Project's environmental impacts and possible mitigation measures. This chapter identifies alternatives that reduce or avoid at least one significant environmental effect of the proposed Project.

CHAPTER 1.0 - INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1.0 briefly describes the proposed Project, the purpose of the environmental evaluation, identifies the lead, trustee, and responsible agencies, summarizes the process associated with preparation and certification of an EIR, identifies the scope and organization of the Draft EIR, and summarizes comments received on the NOP.

CHAPTER 2.0 - PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Chapter 2.0 provides a detailed description of the proposed Project, including the location, intended objectives, background information, the physical and technical characteristics, including the decisions subject to CEQA, subsequent projects and activities, and a list of related agency action requirements.

CHAPTER 3.0 - ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Chapter 3.0 contains an analysis of environmental topic areas as identified below. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a), unless otherwise stated, the environmental baseline for this EIR is established as the physical environmental conditions existing within the Planning Area at the time the NOP was issued. Each subchapter addressing a topical area is organized as follows:

Environmental Setting. A description of the existing environmental setting and condition as it pertains to the topical area.

Regulatory Setting. A description of the regulatory environment that may be applicable to the project.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures. Identification of the thresholds of significance by which impacts are determined, a description of project-related impacts associated with the environmental topic, identification of appropriate mitigation measures, and a conclusion as to the significance of each impact.

The following environmental topics are addressed in this section:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use, Population, and Housing
- Mineral Resources

- Noise
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

CHAPTER 4.0 - OTHER CEQA-REQUIRED TOPICS

Chapter 4.0 evaluates and describes the following CEQA required topics: impacts considered less-than-significant, significant and irreversible impacts, growth-inducing effects, cumulative impacts, and significant and unavoidable environmental effects.

CHAPTER 5.0 - ALTERNATIVES

Chapter 5.0 provides a comparative analysis between the merits of the proposed Project and the selected alternatives. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project, which could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project and avoid and/or lessen any significant environmental effects of the Project.

CHAPTER 6.0 - REPORT PREPARERS

Chapter 6.0 lists all authors and agencies that assisted in the preparation of the Draft EIR, by name, title, and company or agency affiliation.

APPENDICES

This section includes all notices and other procedural documents pertinent to the Draft EIR, as well as technical material prepared to support the analysis.

1.8 COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The City received five written comment letters on the NOP. Table 1.0-1 identifies each commenter and the topical issue(s) they commented on or would like to see evaluated. Copies of these letters are provided in Appendix A of this Draft EIR.

TABLE 1.0-1: NOTICE OF PREPARATION COMMENT MATRIX

Commenter	Comment Date	Topical Issue
Native American Heritage Commission	May 15, 2026	Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	May 8, 2026	Air Quality
San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department	May 19, 2026	Public Services and Recreation; Geology and Soils; Hazards and Hazardous Materials
Igor Kiselev	May 28, 2026	Air Quality; Noise; Public Services and Recreation; Transportation
Delta Stewardship Council	June 3, 2026	Land Use, Population, and Housing

Source: City of Mountain House & De Novo Planning Group, 2026.

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

Mountain House is located in southwestern San Joaquin County, just east of the Alameda County line, north of Interstate 205 (I-205), and northwest of the City of Tracy. Regional access to Mountain House is provided by I-205 at Mountain House Parkway and Interstate 580 (I-580) via Grant Line Road. Figure 2.0-1 shows Mountain House's regional location.

The Planning Area is the geographic area for which the Plan provides a framework for long-term plans for growth, resource conservation, and the provision of public services. State law requires the Plan to include all territory within Mountain House's incorporated area as well as "any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning" (California Government Code Section 65300). The General Plan Planning Area includes all incorporated lands within the Mountain House City Limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI). The Planning Area encompasses approximately 4,792 acres, comprising 4,419 acres in the city limits and 373 acres in the SOI. Figure 2.0-2 shows the General Plan Planning Area.

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Mountain House was originally developed as a master planned community in western San Joaquin County. The Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plan I were adopted by the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors in 1994, and the Mountain House Community Services District (MHCSD) was formed in 1996. Specific Plan II was adopted on February 8, 2005, and Specific Plan III was adopted on November 22, 2005. In July 2024, Mountain House officially became California's 483rd incorporated city. As a newly incorporated city, the City of Mountain House must prepare and adopt a General Plan that identifies the community's vision for the future and provides a framework to guide decisions on growth, development, and conservation of open space and natural resources in a manner consistent with the quality of life desired by residents, businesses, and local elected officials, while also meeting the requirements of State planning law. This project involves the development of the Mountain House General Plan, as described below.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE MASTER PLAN

The Mountain House Master Plan is a community-wide Specific Plan adopted by San Joaquin County on November 10, 1994. The Master Plan implemented the San Joaquin County General Plan amendment which added the new community of Mountain House to the San Joaquin County 2010 General Plan, as approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 25, 1993. The Master Plan presents objectives, policies, implementation measures, and standards for development for the Mountain House community. The plan and its appendices contain comprehensive plans for land use, infrastructure, environmental resources, public service provisions, and implementation. Also included is information on phasing, maintenance, and costs for infrastructure and services. The Master Plan was intended to serve as the overall community-wide policy document guiding

subsequent Specific Plans, Tentative Maps, development projects, Development Agreements, and other approvals.

The Master Plan envisioned Mountain House as a new self-sufficient community offering employment, goods, services, and recreation. Land use and circulation was designed to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use in a highly landscaped, visually attractive community. Development in Mountain House is divided into 12 neighborhoods (A through L), each organized around a Neighborhood Center. Figure 2.0-3 shows the existing Master Plan Land Use Map.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE SPECIFIC PLAN I

The Mountain House Specific Plan I was adopted on November 10, 1994. Specific Plan I covers the first stage of development of Mountain House, encompassing approximately 1,348 acres and three neighborhoods (E, F, and G).

MOUNTAIN HOUSE SPECIFIC PLAN II

The Mountain House Specific Plan II was adopted on February 8, 2005. Specific Plan II covers the second phase of development, encompassing approximately 2,300 acres, seven neighborhoods (C, H, I, J, K, L, and part of neighborhood D), and the Town Center.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE SPECIFIC PLAN III

The Mountain House Specific Plan III was adopted on November 22, 2005. Plan III covers the third and final phase of development for Mountain House and encompasses approximately 816 acres in the southern part of the community and covers neighborhoods A and B and part of neighborhood D.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE DEVELOPMENT CODE

The City's Development Title (also known as the Development Code or Zoning Ordinance) is codified in Title 9, *Development Title*, of the Mountain House Municipal Code. The Development Code is intended to serve as the basis for land use regulations adopted by the City and achieve the following objectives: to encourage the most appropriate use of land and the harmonious relationship among land uses; to promote a safe and efficient traffic circulation system; to provide open spaces for light and air; to prevent overcrowding of land and the undue concentration of population; to secure safety from fire and other dangers; to facilitate the provision of needed community facilities; to conserve and stabilize the value of property; and to conserve the City's natural beauty, to improve its appearance, and to enhance its physical character.

2.3 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

State planning and zoning law (California Government Code Section 65000 et seq.) requires all counties and cities to prepare and maintain a general plan for the long-term growth, development, and management of the land within the jurisdiction's planning boundaries. The general plan acts as

a "constitution" for development and is the jurisdiction's lead legal document in relation to growth, development, and resource management issues. Development regulations (e.g., zoning and subdivision standards) are required by law to be consistent with the general plan.

General plans must address a broad range of topics, including land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, and environmental justice, as specified in Government Code Section 65302, to the extent that the issues identified by State law exist in a city's planning area. At the discretion of each jurisdiction, the general plan may combine these elements and may add optional elements relevant to the physical features of the jurisdiction.

State planning and zoning law also establishes that zoning ordinances are required to be consistent with the general plan and any applicable specific plans, area plans, master plans, and other related planning documents. When amendments to the general plan are made, corresponding changes in the zoning ordinance may be required within a reasonable time to ensure consistency between the revised land use designations in the general plan (if any) and the permitted uses or development standards of the zoning ordinance (Gov. Code Section 65860, subd. [c]).

The City of Mountain House proposes preparation of a General Plan to address the requirements of State law and the relevant items addressed in Government Code Section 65300 et seq.

2.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Mountain House General Plan is intended to reflect the desires and vision of residents, businesses, and City Council. The following objectives are identified for the proposed General Plan:

1. Reflect the current goals and vision expressed by City residents, businesses, decision-makers, and other stakeholders;
2. Address issues and concerns identified by City residents, businesses, decision-makers, and other stakeholders;
3. Protect Mountain House's existing residences, character, and sense of community;
4. Proactively plan for and accommodate local and regional growth in a responsible manner;
5. Allow for a range of high-quality housing options;
6. Attract and retain businesses and industries that provide high-quality and high-paying jobs;
7. Continue to maintain a safe and efficient roadway network while improving multimodal transportation opportunities;
8. Maintain strong fiscal sustainability and continue to provide efficient and adequate public services;
9. Address the requirements of State law; and
10. Address emerging transportation, housing, and employment trends.

2.5 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN PROJECT

The City of Mountain House is preparing its first General Plan following incorporation in 2024. The City initiated preparation of the Mountain House General Plan in mid-2025 and the General Plan process is expected to be completed near the end of 2026.

The General Plan is intended to be an expression of the community's vision for the City and Planning Area and constitutes the policy and regulatory framework by which future development projects will be reviewed and public improvements will be implemented. The City will implement the General Plan by requiring development, infrastructure improvements, and other projects to be consistent with its policies, and by implementing the actions included in the General Plan.

The Mountain House General Plan includes a comprehensive set of goals, policies, and actions (implementation measures), organized into Elements, as well as a Land Use Map (refer to Figure 2.0-4). The goals and policies provide guidance to the City on how to direct change, manage growth, and manage resources over the 20-year life of the General Plan. In order to ensure that the goals and policies in the General Plan are effectively implemented, a series of actions, or implementation measures have been developed, and are presented in each Element alongside the goals and policies they implement.

- A **goal** is a description of the general desired result that the City seeks to create through the implementation of the General Plan.
- A **policy** is a specific statement that guides decision-making as the City works to achieve its goals. Once adopted, policies represent statements of City regulations. The General Plan's policies set out the standards that will be used by City staff, City Council, and other local decision makers in their review of land development projects, resource protection activities, infrastructure improvements, and other City actions. Policies are on-going and require no specific action on behalf of the City.
- An **action** is an implementation measure, procedure, technique, or specific program to be undertaken by the City to help achieve a specified goal or implement an adopted policy. The City must take additional steps to implement each action in the General Plan. An action is something that can and will be completed.

GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

The General Plan is being prepared to address the requirements of State law and the relevant items addressed in Government Code Section 65300 et seq. The Mountain House General Plan will include all of the State-mandated topics and elements, as well as two optional elements: Economic Development and Public Services and Facilities. The elements included in the General Plan are described below.

- The **Land Use Element** designates the general distribution and intensity of residential, commercial, industrial, open space, public/semi-public, and other categories of public and

private land uses. The Land Use Element includes the Land Use Map, which identifies land use designations for each parcel in the Planning Area (refer to Figure 2.0-4).

- The **Circulation Element** correlates closely with the Land Use Element and identifies the general locations and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, and alternative transportation facilities necessary to support a multi-modal transportation system. This element is intended to facilitate mobility of people and goods throughout Mountain House by a variety of transportation modes, including bicycle, pedestrian, and transit.

- The **Economic Development Element** provides tools and strategies to strengthen and diversify the local economy and ensures the City maintains adequate revenues to provide quality public services. This element seeks to sustain and diversify the City's economy, recognizing the importance of supporting existing and local businesses while broadening and expanding the employment base and economic opportunities within the city.

- The **Resource Management Element** combines the State-mandated Conservation and Open Space elements and addresses topics such as development and use of natural resources, and protections for native plant and animal species, sensitive habitats, soils, cultural/historical resources, air quality, and opportunities for energy conservation**.**

- The **Public Services and Facilities Element** establishes policies and programs that address public services and facilities. While not specifically required by State law for inclusion in the General Plan, the Public Services and Facilities Element is a critical component in meeting the infrastructure and utility services needs of businesses and residents.

- The **Safety Element** provides the framework to reduce risks associated with a range of environmental and human-caused hazards that may pose a risk to life and property in Mountain House. This element addresses hazards such as fires, geologic hazards, as well as hazardous materials, emergency response, and climate resiliency and adaptation. This element also addresses the required topics related to noise, including standards and policies to protect the community from the harmful and annoying effects of exposure to excessive noise levels. This element includes strategies to reduce land use conflicts that may result in exposure to unacceptable noise levels.

- The **Environmental Justice Element** acknowledges the profound effects of the built environment on travel choices, access to food, levels of physical activity, and exposure to risk from accidents or pollution. This element addresses the topics of active living and environmental justice.

- The **Housing Element** is the City's primary policy guide for the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing. The City's Housing Element is being prepared simultaneously through separate contract with PlaceWorks, Inc.

GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The Land Use Element of the Mountain House General Plan defines various land use designations by their allowable uses and maximum development densities. The following describes the proposed land use designations for the General Plan. Table 2.0-1 shows the total acreage for each land use designation shown on the proposed Land Use Map.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS

Very Low Density Residential (R/VL)

The Very Low Density Residential (R/VL) designation is intended to provide for the development of relatively large lot, single family detached homes. The allowable development density is 1.00 to 2.00 units per acre.

Low Density Residential (R/L)

The Low Density Residential (R/L) designation is intended to provide for a variety of single family dwelling unit types for single family homes. The allowable development density is 2.01 to 7.0 units per acre.

Medium Density Residential (R/M)

The Medium Density Residential (R/M) designation is intended to provide for a variety of residential dwelling unit types, which could include both detached and attached homes. Examples of these developments might include small lot detached single family residential units, “patio” homes, and duets. The allowable development density is 6.01 to 9.50 units per acre.

Medium-High Density Residential (R/MH)

The Medium-High Density Residential (R/MH) designation is intended to provide for detached and attached residential dwelling units, including duets, triplexes, “Patio” homes and townhomes, and other attached residential uses. The allowable development density is 9.51 to 12.50 units per acre.

High Density Residential (R/H)

The High Density Residential (R/H) designation is intended to provide opportunities for a variety of attached housing in close proximity to shopping, entertainment, employment, higher education and recreation uses. Housing types may include condominiums, townhomes, garden apartments, and other attached residential uses. The allowable development density is 9.51 to 40.00 units per acre.

COMMERCIAL DESIGNATIONS

Neighborhood Commercial (C/N)

The Neighborhood Commercial (C/N) designation is intended to provide for small, localized retail and service businesses which serve the immediate, surrounding residential neighborhood with goods and services located within easy pedestrian and bicycle access. The maximum FAR is 0.35.

Community Commercial (C/C)

The Community Commercial (C/C) designation is intended to provide for the development of a full range of retail and service establishments, allowing comparison shopping and serving the daily shopping needs of the community. The maximum FAR is 0.35.

General Commercial (C/G)

The General Commercial (C/G) designation is intended to provide for commercial areas that offer a variety of retail and service uses that generally require special purpose trips rather than providing daily shopping needs. These uses are typically oriented to automobile use and are intended to provide convenient automobile access while minimizing impacts on nearby residential neighborhoods. The maximum FAR is 0.40.

Office Commercial (C/O)

The Office Commercial (C/O) designation provides for office/employment centers. Primary land uses in this designation are intended to accommodate administrative and professional office development. The maximum FAR is 0.50.

Freeway Service Commercial (C/FS)

The Freeway Service Commercial (C/FS) designation is intended to provide for commercial uses that serve freeway travelers and rely on the exposure and a fully accessible freeway interchange locations. Such businesses include convenience stores, gas stations, restaurants and motels. Additionally, Freeway Service areas may include uses which will support nearby employment areas. The maximum FAR is 0.35.

Commercial Recreation (C/R)

The Commercial Recreation (C/R) designation is intended to provide a mixture of recreation-oriented commercial uses and associated facilities. The maximum FAR is 0.15.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGNATIONS

Limited Industrial (I/L)

The Limited Industrial (I/L) designation is intended to accommodate modern business park developments that provide little or no nuisance activities and are therefore suitable for employment

generating uses located along major community roadways and near residential neighborhoods. Outdoor storage areas must be screened or enclosed entirely in buildings. Typical uses include light manufacturing, electronics, high technology businesses, and limited warehousing, as well as office uses to support these functions. The maximum FAR is 0.50.

General Industrial (I/G)

The General Industrial (I/G) designation is intended to provide for a range of industrial activities which may have moderate to high nuisance characteristics, requiring segregation from sensitive land uses. Typical uses include manufacturing, warehouse distribution, outdoor storage, and wholesaling. The maximum FAR is 0.45.

MIXED USE DESIGNATIONS

Mixed Use (M/X)

The Mixed Use (M/X) designation is intended to provide an integration of land use types, including office, retail, recreation, public, and residential uses, under a coherent plan; provide a central location for community activities, such as parades, exhibits, shows and other civic functions that serve to give identity and interest to the lifestyle of a community; and otherwise create a focal point of activity within the community. The M/X designation allows for more urban densities, innovative design, and a more efficient land and infrastructure utilization than would be permitted under other traditional designations. The allowable development density is 9.51 to 40.0 units per acre. The maximum FAR is 2.0.

OTHER DESIGNATIONS

Public Facilities (P/F)

The Public Facilities (P/F) designation is intended to provide for public and institutional land uses including schools, medical facilities, places of religious assembly, public buildings such as police and fire protection facilities, infrastructure facilities such as water and wastewater treatment plants, and transit centers.

Neighborhood Park (P/NP)

The Neighborhood Park (P/NP) designation is intended to provide for centrally located parks of approximately five acres located adjacent to neighborhood K-8 schools. Neighborhood Parks are designed to be developed and operated in coordination with the schools and provide for greenspace and active recreation activities for nearby residential neighborhoods. Neighborhood Parks may include a variety of facilities, including hard surface courts, playgrounds, field games, picnic tables, and free play areas.

Community Park (P/CP)

Community parks are located to provide easy access from neighborhoods and to make use of the Mountain House Creek corridor. Much of the acreage allocated to community parks is located along Mountain House Creek, with major parks sited around the Town Center, in close proximity to the Mountain House Campus of Delta Junior College and adjacent to the lakes north of Byron Road. The Community Park (P/CP) designation is intended to provide for parks, facilities, and natural areas that serve the entire Mountain House community. Community parks may include active recreation facilities, such as athletic fields and complexes, swimming pools, tennis/racquet courts, picnic areas, amphitheaters, as well as passive uses such as picnicking, jogging/walking/bicycle paths, and nature areas.

Regional Park (P/RP)

The Regional Park (P/RP) designation consists of a riverfront park along the Old River edge. This location makes use of the river's open space, wildlife and scenic values to provide a regional open space and recreational resource. This regional park extends from the northwest corner of Neighborhood K to the southeast corner of Neighborhood L and includes the mouth of Mountain House Creek where it joins Old River.

Open Space/Resource Conservation (OS/RC)

The Open Space/Resource Conservation (OS/RC) designation is intended to conserve and protect existing wetlands and other natural open space areas.

Open Space/Other (OS/O)

The Open Space/Other (OS/O) designation is applied to other open space areas such as utility easements, lakes, and detention basins.

TABLE 2.0-1: PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATION ACREAGES

General Plan Designation	Within City Boundary		Within Sphere of Influence		Total Planning Area	
	Acres	% of Total	Acres	% of Total	Acres	% of Total
Residential/Very Low (R/VL)	4.20	0.1%	59.33	15.9%	63.53	1.3%
Residential/Low (R/L)	840.50	19.0%	12.62	3.4%	853.12	17.8%
Residential/Medium (R/M)	821.34	18.6%	24.54	6.6%	845.88	17.7%
Residential/Medium High (R/MH)	158.91	3.6%	14.61	3.9%	173.52	3.6%
Residential/High (R/H)	56.74	1.3%	8.62	2.3%	65.36	1.4%
Mixed Use (M/X)	67.46	1.5%	0.00	0.0%	67.46	1.4%
Community Commercial (C/C)	54.42	1.2%	9.76	2.6%	64.19	1.3%
General Commercial (C/G)	1.98	0.0%	39.52	10.6%	41.50	0.9%
Neighborhood Commercial (C/N)	11.97	0.3%	0.00	0.0%	11.97	0.2%
Office Commercial (C/O)	25.88	0.6%	0.00	0.0%	25.88	0.5%
Freeway Service Commercial (C/FS)	0.00	0.0%	25.81	6.9%	25.81	0.5%
Commercial Recreation (C/R)	23.98	0.5%	0.00	0.0%	23.98	0.5%
Limited Industrial (I/L)	132.70	3.0%	103.49	27.8%	236.19	4.9%
General Industrial (I/G)	94.99	2.1%	12.21	3.3%	107.20	2.2%
Neighborhood Park (P/NP)	59.56	1.3%	0.00	0.0%	59.56	1.2%
Community Park (P/CP)	292.00	6.6%	0.00	0.0%	292.00	6.1%
Regional Park (P/RP)	100.54	2.3%	0.00	0.0%	100.54	2.1%
Open Space/Resource Conservation (OS/RC)	29.93	0.7%	1.97	0.5%	31.90	0.7%
Open Space/Other (OS/O)	143.06	3.2%	0.00	0.0%	143.06	3.0%
Public Facilities (P/F)	466.08	10.5%	5.85	1.6%	471.93	9.8%
Road/ROW*	1,033.07	23.4%	54.38	14.6%	1,087.45	22.7%
Total	*4,419.34*	*100.0%*	*372.71*	*100.0%*	*4,792.05*	*100.0%*

Source: City of Mountain House & De Novo Planning Group, 2026.
Note: Rounding may impact totals.
**Acreage includes undevelopable land such as roads and public rights-of-way (ROW).*

2.6 GENERAL PLAN BUILDOUT ANALYSIS

While no specific development projects are proposed as part of the Mountain House General Plan Project, the General Plan will accommodate future growth in Mountain House, including new residential uses, new businesses, and expansion of existing businesses. The General Plan EIR evaluates the realistic buildout potential under the proposed land use plan. The buildout analysis assumes an approximate 20-year horizon, and 2045 is assumed to be the buildout year of the General Plan. Table 2.0-2 includes a comparison overview of existing conditions, existing Master Plan, and proposed General Plan buildout projections in terms of population, housing units, non-residential development square footage, and jobs.

Growth projections shown in Table 2.0-2 represent an estimate of new growth potential under the proposed General Plan compared to existing conditions, and are based on several factors, including the availability of vacant and underutilized parcels and historical growth trends. Growth projections should not be considered a prediction for growth, as the actual amount of development that will occur throughout the planning horizon of the General Plan is based on many factors outside of the City's control. Actual future development would depend on future real estate and labor market conditions, property owner preferences and decisions, site-specific constraints, and other factors. As such, it is not realistic to assume that all parcels would develop to their maximum potential under the implementation time frame projected for the General Plan. The buildout projection shown below represents the reasonably foreseeable development potential that could theoretically occur within the Planning Area through 2045. For each environmental issue addressed in this EIR, the analysis is based on various assumptions regarding existing and future conditions in Mountain House. Unless otherwise stated, the assumptions are as specified in Table 2.0-2.

As shown in Table 2.0-2, buildout of the proposed General Plan Land Use Map could yield up to 18,163 dwelling units, 54,258 persons, 7,869,878 square feet of non-residential development, and 8,199 jobs within Mountain House. This represents net development over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs.

To protect the character of existing neighborhoods while meeting State housing mandates, the proposed Plan strategically focuses new multi-family housing primarily within the Residential High (R/H) and Mixed-Use (M/X) designations. This targeted approach is intended to ensure the City remains in compliance with State law without requiring widespread changes to established low-density areas.

TABLE 2.0-2: COMPARATIVE GROWTH PROJECTIONS: EXISTING CONDITIONS, EXISTING MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP, AND PROPOSED LAND USE MAP

	Dwelling Units	Population	Non-Residential Square Footage	Jobs
Existing Conditions	8,440	28,795	660,303	1,092
Existing Master Plan	16,597	43,028	7,966,063[a]	9,814
Proposed General Plan	18,163	54,258	7,869,878	8,199
Net Growth Potential (Over Existing Conditions)	*9,723*	*25,463*	*7,209,575*	*7,107*
Net Growth Potential (Over Existing Master Plan)	*1,566*	*11,230*	*-96,186*	*-1,615*

Source: City of Mountain House & De Novo Planning Group, 2026.

Note: a) The existing Master Plan does not include buildout projections for non-residential square footage. This table calculates Master Plan non-residential square footage using the same methodology as the proposed General Plan and is included for comparison purposes only.

2.7 USES OF THE EIR AND REQUIRED AGENCY APPROVALS

This EIR may be used for the following direct and indirect approvals and permits associated with adoption and implementation of the proposed Project.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE

The City of Mountain House is the lead agency for the proposed Project. The Mountain House General Plan will be presented to the City Council for comment, review, and consideration for adoption. The City Council has the sole discretionary authority to approve and adopt the Mountain House General Plan. In order to approve the proposed project, the City Council would consider the following actions:

- Certification of the General Plan EIR;
- Adoption of required CEQA findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations for the above action, if required;
- Adoption of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and
- Approval of the General Plan.

SUBSEQUENT USE OF THE EIR

The policy framework set forth in the proposed General Plan would not result in the construction of any new development nor entitlement of any new project. All new development within the Planning Area would continue to be subject to the City's development review and approval processes (with San Joaquin County responsible for the unincorporated SOI area). Elected and appointed officials and City staff will review subsequent project applications for consistency with the General Plan and Development Code and will prepare appropriate environmental documentation to comply with CEQA and other applicable environmental requirements.

Pursuant to Section 15168 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this EIR is a Program EIR. The goals, policies, actions, land use designations, and other substantive components of the General Plan constitute the "program" evaluated in this Program EIR. This EIR provides a review of environmental effects associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan. When considering approval of subsequent activities under the proposed General Plan, the City would utilize this EIR as the basis in determining potential environmental effects and the appropriate level of environmental review, if any, of a subsequent activity. Projects or activities successive to this EIR may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Approval and funding of major projects and capital improvements;
- Future Specific Plan or Special Purpose Plans approvals;
- Revisions to the Mountain House Municipal Code;
- Development plan approvals, such as tentative subdivision maps, variances, conditional use permits, and other land use permits;
- Development Agreements;
- Property rezoning consistent with the General Plan;
- Permit issuances and other approvals necessary for public and private development projects;
- Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for implementation of the General Plan;
- Sphere of Influence (SOI) updates prepared by the San Joaquin County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO); and
- Annexations processed by LAFCO.

OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY APPROVALS

Subsequent projects and other actions to support implementation of the proposed project would require actions, including permits and approvals, by other public agencies that may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) approval of projects and encroachment permits for projects affecting State highway facilities;
- Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) approval for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System compliance, including permits and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan approval and monitoring;
- San Joaquin Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) approvals for annexation of any lands into the boundaries of the City of Mountain House;
- San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) approvals for coverage under the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP);
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) approval of potential future streambed alteration agreements, pursuant to Fish and Game Code, as well as approval of any future potential take of State-listed wildlife and plant species pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act;

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) approvals involving any future potential take of Federally listed wildlife and plant species and their habitats, pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act.

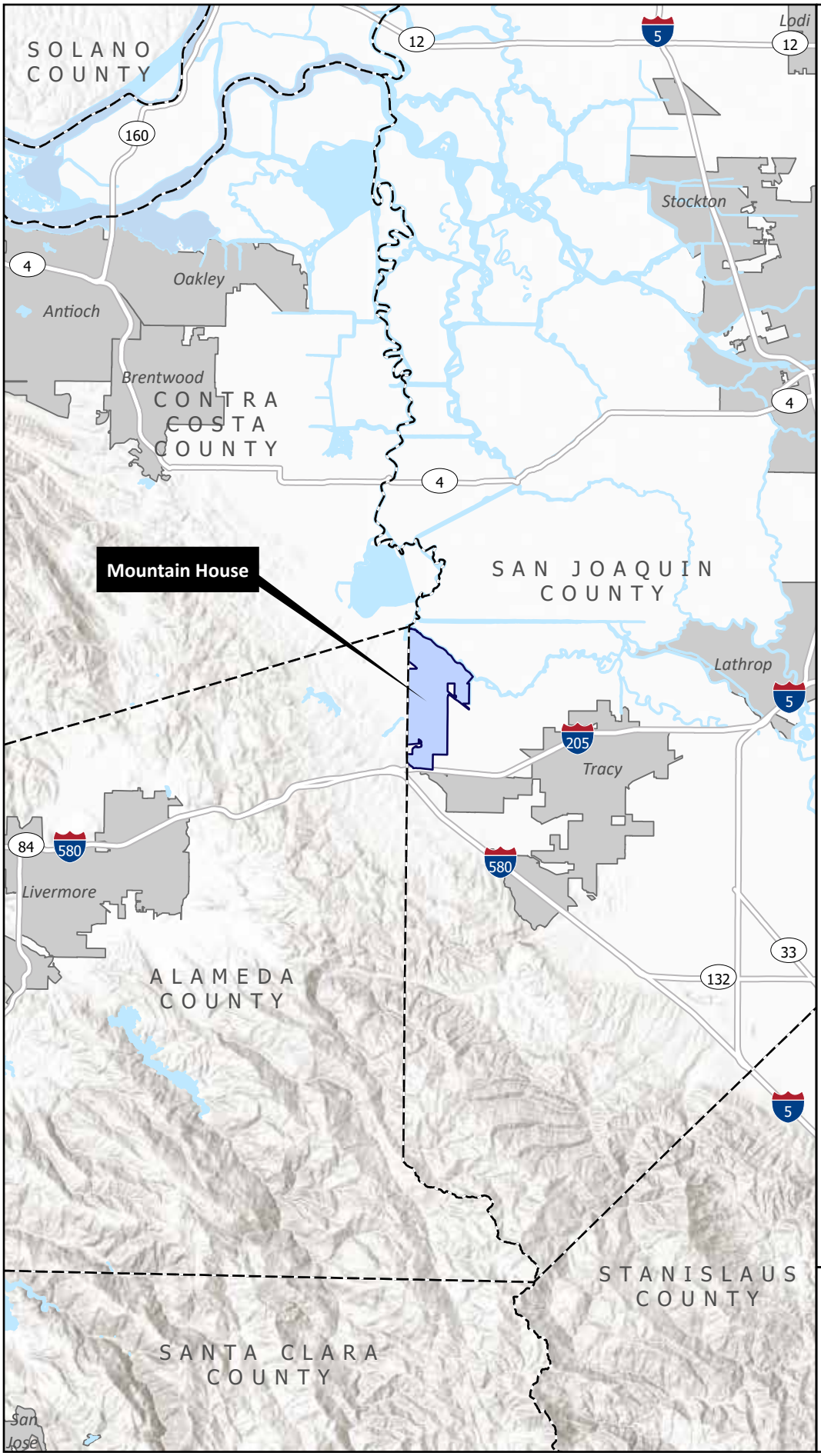

FIGURE 2.0-1.

REGIONAL MAP

City of Mountain House

Other Incorporated Area

County Area

0 2½ 5

Miles

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
May 18, 2026.

De Novo Planning Group

A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: California State Geoportal.

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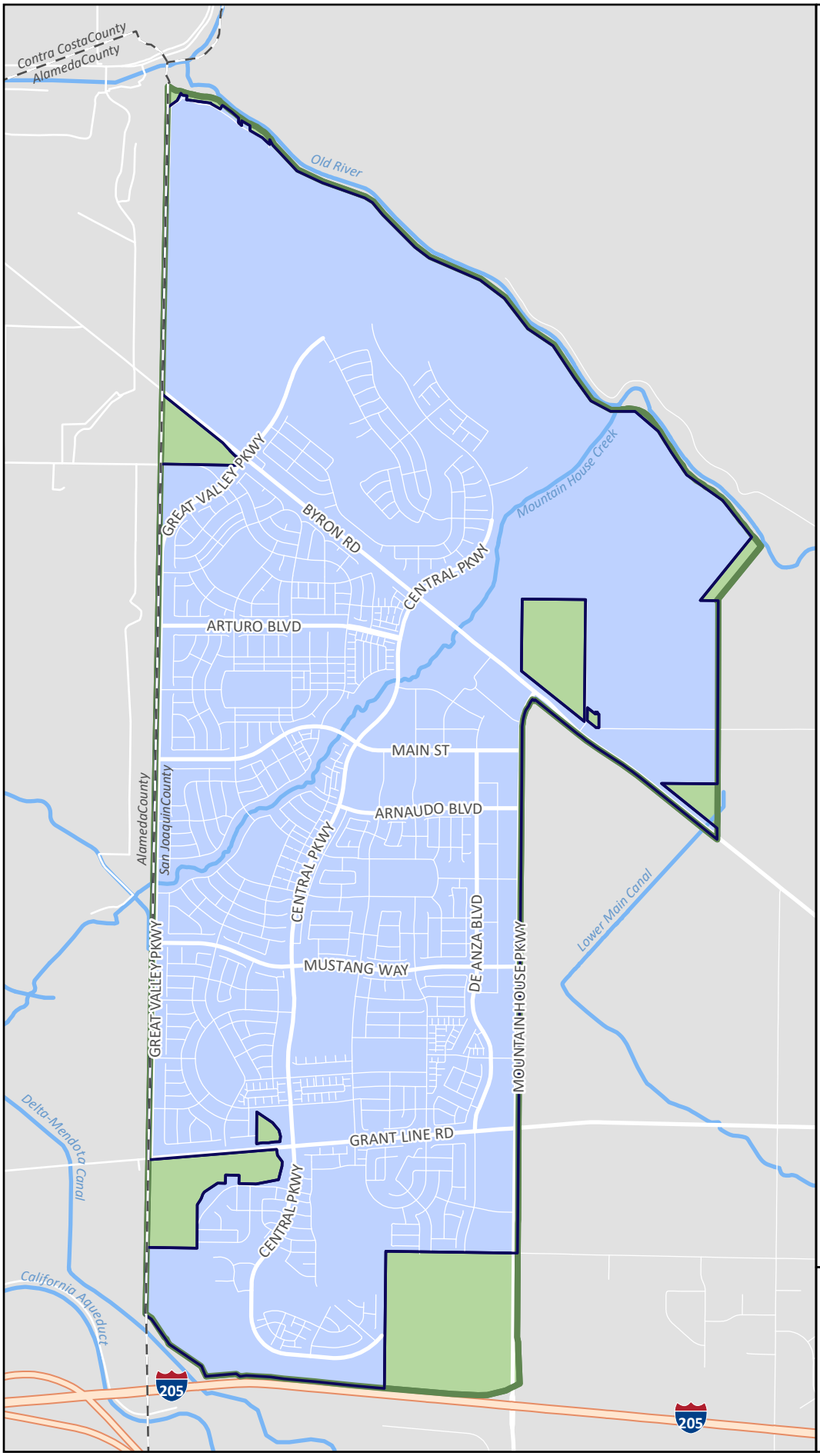

FIGURE 2.0-2.

GENERAL PLAN PLANNING AREAS

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

City of Mountain House

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
August 1, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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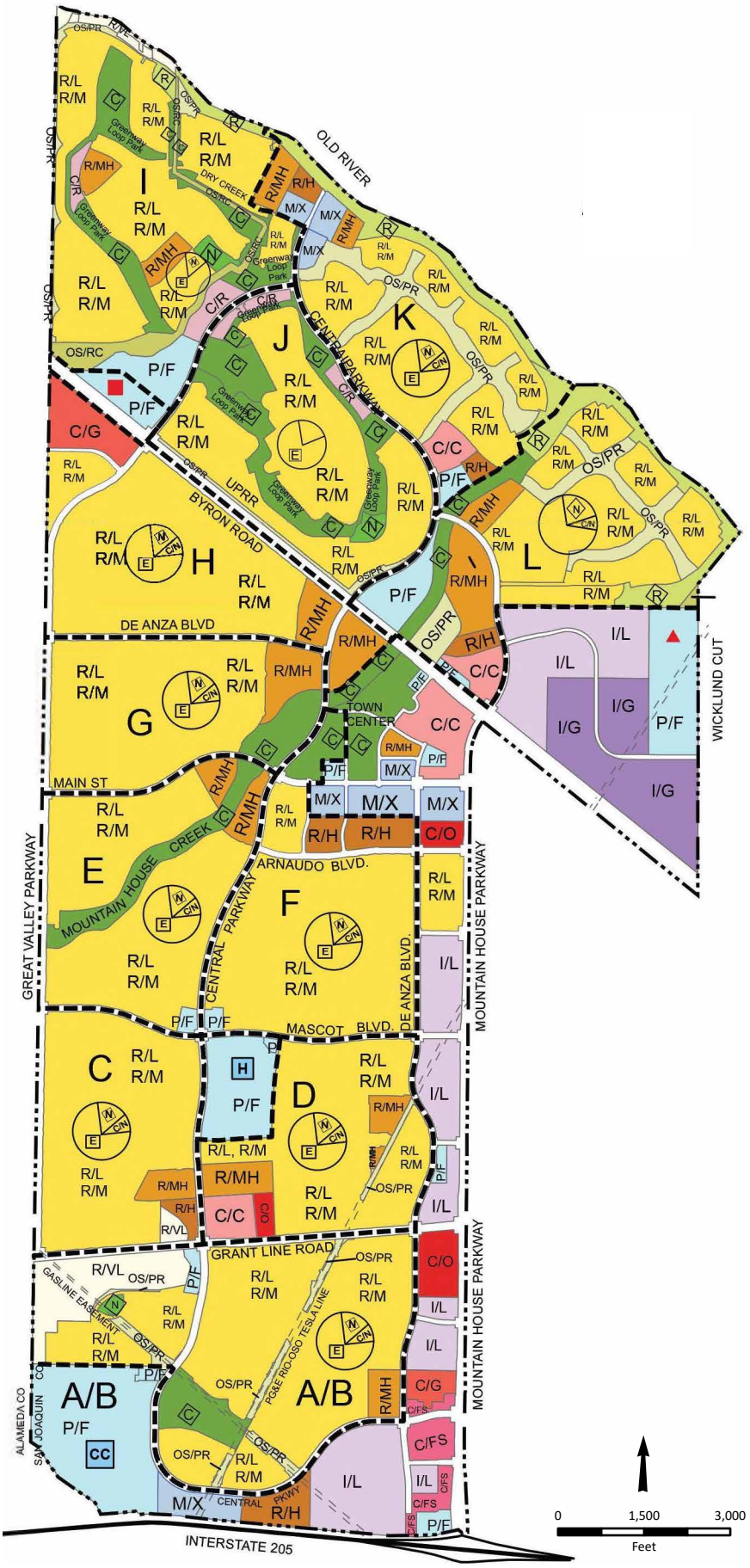
FIGURE 2.0-3.

EXISTING MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



Residential

- R/VL (Very Low Density Residential)
- R/L (Low Density Residential)
- R/L & R/M (Low & Medium Density Residential)
- R/M (Medium Density Residential)
- R/MH (Medium High Density Residential)
- R/H (High Density Residential)

Commercial

- C/O (Office Commercial)
- C/FS (Freeway Service)
- C/G (General Commercial)
- C/C (Community Commercial)
- C/R (Recreation Commercial)

Mixed Use

- M/X (Mixed Use)

Industrial

- I/L (Limited Industrial)
- I/G (General Industrial)

Open Space

- OS/RC (Open Space Resource Conservation)
- OS/PR (Open Space Parks and Recreation)

Public

- P/F (Public)
- CC Community College
- H High School
- T Transit Center

Parks

- C Community Park
- N Neighborhood Park
- R Regional Park

Neighborhood Center

- E Elementary School (K-8)
- N Neighborhood Park
- C/N Neighborhood Commercial Site

Other

- County Line
- Community Boundary
- Neighborhood Boundary
- Railroad
- Easement
- F Neighborhood Designation

City of Mountain House

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
May 18, 2026.

DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP
A LAND USE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FIRM

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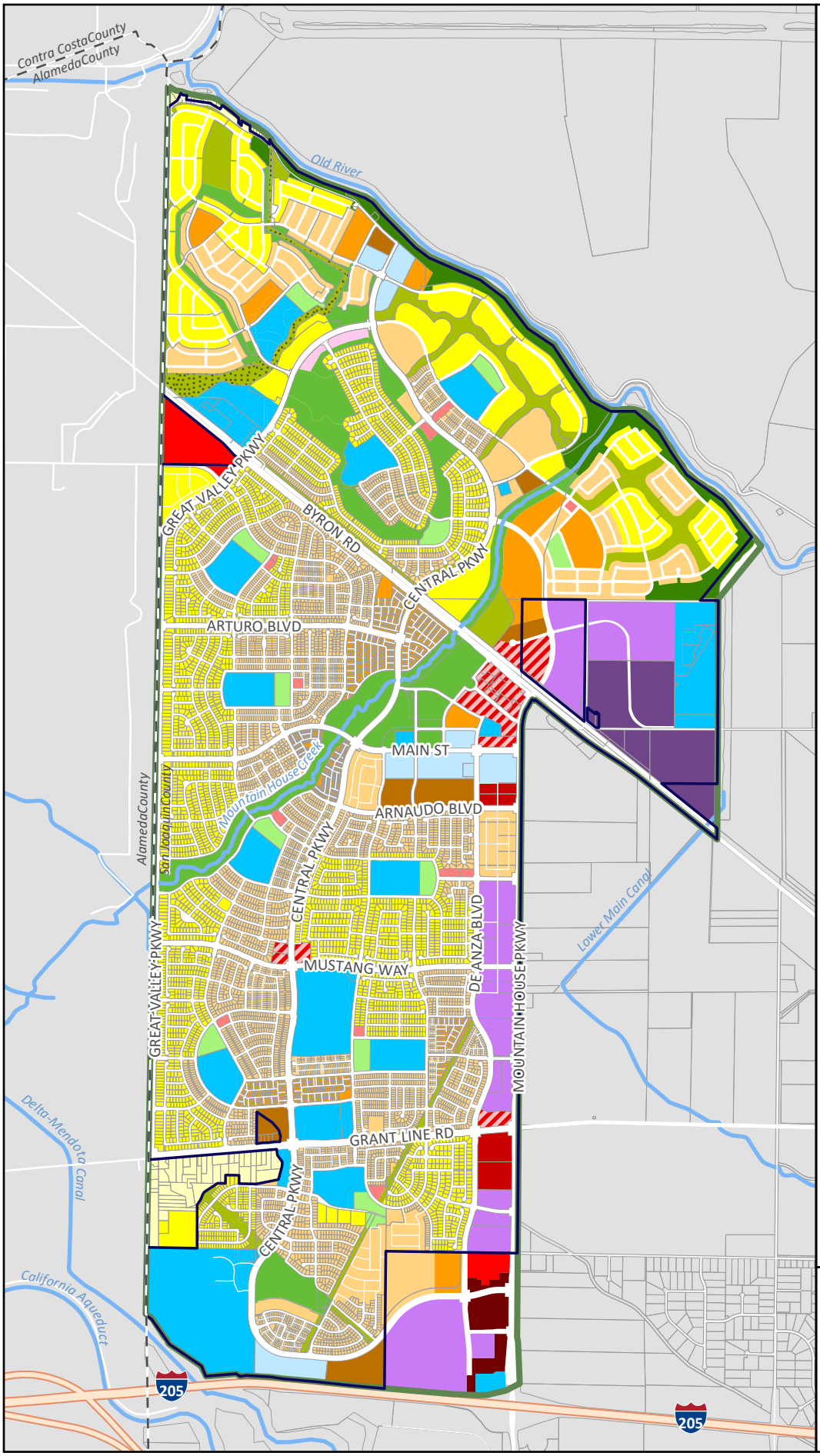

FIGURE 2.0-4.

GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary
- Assessor Parcel Boundary

Residential

- R/VL - Residential Very Low
- R/L - Residential Low
- R/M - Residential Medium
- R/MH - Residential Medium High
- R/H - Residential High

Commercial

- C/G - General Commercial
- C/C - Community Commercial
- C/N - Neighborhood Commercial
- C/FS - Commercial Freeway Service
- C/O - Commercial Office
- C/R - Commercial Recreation

Industrial

- I/L - Industrial Light
- I/G - Industrial General

Mixed Use

- M/X - Mixed Use

Public Facility

- P/F - Public Facility

Parks

- P/NP - Neighborhood Park
- P/CP - Community Park
- P/RP - Regional Park

Open Space

- OS/RC - Open Space/Resource Conservation
- OS/O - Open Space/Other

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
October 9, 2026.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: City of Mountain House; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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The City of Mountain House and the surrounding areas possess numerous scenic resources, including waterways, natural open space areas, and prominent landforms. Buildings and landscaping within the Planning Area and agricultural uses surrounding the Planning Area contribute to the overall visual character.

This section provides a background discussion of resources including scenic highways, natural scenic resources such as open space areas, and prominent visual features found in the Planning Area. This section is organized with an existing setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis.

There were no comments received during the NOP comment period related to this environmental topic.

CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGY

The assessment of aesthetics involves a qualitative analysis that is inherently subjective in nature. People viewing the same landscape may have different responses to that landscape and any proposed visual changes based upon their values, familiarity, concern, or expectations. Visual changes to the landscape affect viewers differently, since each person's attachment to and value for a particular landscape is unique. However, generalizations can be made about viewer sensitivity to scenic quality and visual changes. The visual sensitivity of a landscape is affected by the viewing distances at which it is seen, such as close-up or far away. The visual sensitivity of a landscape is also affected by the travel speed at which a person is viewing the landscape (e.g., high speeds on a highway, low speeds on a hiking trail, or stationary at a residence).

The same feature of a project can be perceived differently by people depending on the distance between the observer and the viewed object. When a viewer is closer to a viewed object in the landscape, more detail can be seen, and there is greater potential influence of the object on visual quality because of its form or scale (relative size of the object in relation to the viewer). When the same object is viewed at background distances, details may be imperceptible but overall forms of terrain and vegetation are evident, and the horizon and skyline are dominant. In the middle-ground, some detail is evident (e.g., the foreground), and landscape elements are seen in context with landforms and vegetation patterns (e.g., the background).

The following terms and concepts are used in this EIR section:

- **Scenic vista**. An area that is designated, signed, and accessible to the public for the express purposes of viewing and sightseeing. This includes any such areas designated by a federal, state, or local agency.
- **Scenic highway**. Any stretch of public roadway that is designated as a scenic corridor by a federal, state, or local agency.
- **Sensitive receptors**. Viewer responses to visual settings are inferred from a variety of factors, including distance, viewing angle, types of viewers, number of viewers, duration of view, and viewer activities. The viewer type and associated viewer sensitivity are distinguished among project viewers in recreational, residential, commercial, military, and industrial areas. Viewer activities can range from a circumstance that encourages a viewer to observe the surroundings more closely (such as recreational activities) to one that

discourages close observation (such as commuting in heavy traffic). Viewers in recreational areas are considered to have high sensitivity to visual resources.

- **Viewshed**. The viewshed for a project is defined as the surrounding geographic area from which the project is likely to be seen, based on topography, atmospheric conditions, land use patterns, and roadway orientations.
- **Visual character.** Visual character is typically defined as the landforms, vegetation, water features, and cultural modifications that impart an overall visual impression of an area's landscape. Scenic areas typically include open space, landscaped corridors, and viewsheds. Visual character is influenced by many different landscape attributes including color contrasts, landform prominence, repetition of geometric forms, and uniqueness of textures among other characteristics.
- **Light and Glare.** Lighting effects are associated with the use of artificial light during the evening and nighttime hours. There are two primary sources of light: light emanating from building interiors passing through windows and light from exterior sources (i.e., street lighting, building illumination, security lighting, parking lot lighting, landscape lighting, and signage). Light introduction can be a nuisance. Uses, such as residences, are considered light sensitive, since occupants have expectations of privacy during evening hours and may be subject to disturbance by bright light sources. Light spill is typically defined as the presence of unwanted light on properties adjacent to the property being illuminated. With respect to lighting, the degree of illumination may vary widely depending on the amount of light generated, height of the light source, presence of barriers or obstructions, type of light source, and weather conditions.

  Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light on highly polished surfaces such as window glass or reflective materials and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Perceived glare is the unwanted and potentially objectionable sensation as observed by a person as they look directly into the light source of a luminaire. Daytime glare generation is common in urban areas and is typically associated with buildings with exterior facades largely or entirely comprised of highly reflective glass. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by the reflection of artificial light sources such as automobile headlights. Glare generation is typically related to either moving vehicles or sun angles, although glare resulting from reflected sunlight can occur regularly at certain times of the year. Glare-sensitive uses include residences, transportation corridors, and aircraft landing corridors.

3.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Mountain House is a suburban community located in southwestern San Joaquin County near the foothills of the Diablo Range. The Planning Area is relatively flat with a gentle northeast-slope. Topographic features are limited to areas along Mountain House Creek, which dissects the northern half of the community, and the levee bordering Old River, which forms the Planning Area's northern boundary. Intermittent long-range views of the Diablo Range are generally available to the west and south and serve as a visual backdrop to the low-rise buildings and landscaping within the Planning Area.

The Planning Area's visual character is largely defined by its suburban environment, featuring a predominantly low-rise residential development pattern with landscaping, parks, and open space areas interspersed throughout. Most of the natural landscape of Mountain House has been altered by previous grading activities; however, waterbodies such as Mountain House Creek and Old River support wetland habitat. Retail, office, industrial, and public/institutional land uses make up a small proportion of the City's total land area and are primarily located along major corridors, such as Mountain House Parkway in the eastern portion of the Planning Area. Interstate 205 (I-205) runs in an east-west direction along the southern boundary of the Planning Area.

SCENIC VISTAS

While there are no officially designated scenic vistas in the City, views of scenic resources are available from many publicly available vantage points within the Planning Area, including public trails, parks and open space areas, and streets. Intermittent long-range views of the Diablo Range are generally available to the west and south throughout much of the Planning Area. Views of these scenic resources are highly dependent on topographic features of the area and atmospheric conditions. Other features that contribute to the visual character within the Planning Area include trees and landscaping, open space areas, the density and distribution of existing development, and the architecture of the built environment.

SCENIC HIGHWAYS

No eligible or designated State Scenic Highways exist within the Planning Area.[1] However, a portion of Interstate 580 (I-580) that runs from I-205 to Interstate 5 (I-5) is designated as a State Scenic Highway. This designated State Scenic Highway is located just south of the Planning Area (approximately 0.2 miles at its closest point) and provides mid-to-long range views of the southern portion of the Planning Area. In addition, a portion of I-580 that runs from I-5 (south of Vernalis) to Interstate 80 (I-80) is an eligible State Scenic Highway. This eligible State Scenic Highway is located west-southwest of the Planning Area.

LIGHT AND GLARE

Sensitive light and glare receptors in and around the Planning Area are generally represented by residential uses. Sunlight reflecting from structures is a primary source of glare during the day, while nighttime light and glare can be divided into both stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources of nighttime light include structure illumination, interior lighting, decorative landscape lighting, and streetlights. The principal mobile source of nighttime light and glare is vehicle headlamp illumination. This ambient light environment can be accentuated during periods of low clouds or fog.

[1] California Department of Transportation, *California State Scenic Highway System Map*, https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa, accessed March 2026.

The variety of urban land uses in the Planning Area are the main source of daytime and nighttime light and glare. They are typified by residences, commercial structures, and streetlights. These areas and their associated human activities (inclusive of vehicular traffic) characterize the existing light and glare environment present during daytime and nighttime hours in the Planning Area. Areas along major corridors in the Planning Area (e.g., Byron Road, Mountain House Parkway, Grant Line Road, Great Valley Parkway, and De Anza Boulevard) generally have more sources of glare due to increased vehicle traffic and/or reflective surfaces associated with increased building intensity in these areas.

Within the Planning Area, existing light sources generally include buildings, recreational facilities (i.e., sports fields), and nighttime safety lighting along roadways and parking lots. Interior light emanating from a structure, exterior light sources (i.e., security lighting), or lighting to illuminate features for safety or decorative purposes may be visible within the existing landscape.

Sunlight reflecting off a reflective surface can result in glare effects and unsafe visual conditions that may interfere with the vision of motorists operating vehicles in the area or that may otherwise generally degrade scenic views. Few structures within the Planning Area exhibit highly reflective materials (i.e., taller buildings with extensive glazing); therefore, potential glare effects are not considered to be of major concern under existing conditions.

3.1.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

There are no federal regulations that apply to the proposed Project related to aesthetics in the Planning Area.

STATE

California Scenic Highways and Historic Parkways Program

Created in 1963, the California Scenic Highways and Historic Parkways Program preserves and protects highway corridors located in areas of outstanding natural beauty from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of the adjacent lands. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) maintains its State Scenic Highways and Historic Parkways Program, through which segments of the state highway system are designated as being of particular scenic value or interest. A highway may be designated as scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view. Interstates, state highways, byways, and parkways are eligible for designation or for recognition as eligible for designation. The program is governed by the regulations found in the California Streets and Highways Code, Section 260 et seq.

California Building Standards Code

California Building Standards Code Title 24 serves as the basis for the design and construction of buildings in California. In addition to safety, sustainability, new technology and reliability, the

California Building Standards Code addresses light pollution and glare hazards through the establishment of maximum allowable backlight, up light, and glare ratings.

LOCAL

Mountain House Municipal Code

The City's Development Title (also known as the Development Code or Zoning Ordinance) is codified in Title 9, *Development Title*, of the Mountain House Municipal Code. The Development Title provides general development standards that influence the City's scenic views, visual character, and restrict lighting. It implements the General Plan goals and policies by classifying and regulating the specific uses of land and structures within the City. The Development Title identifies standards that include but are not limited to minimum lot size and lot coverage requirements; maximum building height; minimum building setbacks; automobile storage requirements; signage requirements; open space and landscaping requirements; and lighting requirements.

Mountain House Specific Plans

The City has three approved Specific Plans (i.e., Specific Plan I, II, and III). Each of these plans contains development and design elements applicable to projects proposed in the Specific Plan area, including guidelines and standards related to construction, lighting and glare, screening, signage, and neighborhood and streetscape design.

Mountain House Design Manuals and Guidelines

The City has adopted four design manuals (i.e., Mountain House Community Services District Design Manual, Single Family Residential Design Manual, Multi-Family Development Design Manual, and Commercial, Office & Industrial Design Manual) containing design standards and guidelines related to construction, lighting and glare, screening, signage, and neighborhood and streetscape design.

3.1.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project will have a significant impact on aesthetics if it will:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
- In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; and/or
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.1-1: General Plan implementation would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista (Less than Significant)

While the Planning Area contains areas and viewsheds with scenic characteristics, such as views of open space and agricultural land, there are no officially designated scenic vista points in the Planning Area. The most significant scenic resources within or adjacent to the Planning Area are views of natural resources, including: Old River, located along the northern boundary of the Planning Area; Mountain House Creek corridor, which runs in a southwesterly direction from northern to central Mountain House; open space and wetland areas, particularly those located in the Mountain House Creek corridor and in the northeast and northwest portions of the Planning Area; and the Altamont Hills, which are part of the Diablo Range, located west of the Planning Area in Alameda County. Other features that contribute to the visual character include the built environment (e.g., buildings, landscaping, and infrastructure) and surrounding agricultural lands.

The proposed General Plan is the City's first general plan following incorporation and would guide future development within the existing City limits and SOI that have been planned for urban uses through the Mountain House Master Plan, adopted in 1994, and Specific Plan I (1994), Specific Plan II (2005), and Specific Plan III (2005). Under existing conditions, the City is primarily urbanized in the area south of Byron Road and north of Grant Line Road, with the exception of some remaining vacant parcels (including, but not limited to, the Town Center area and along the western boundary of Mountain House Parkway) and the Mountain House Creek corridor. The areas north of Byron Road and south of Grand Line Road are generally still under development and contain a mixture of urban uses and vacant land planned for urban uses.

While the Project does not include any specific development proposals, implementation of the proposed General Plan would allow for new and expanded urban and suburban development throughout the Planning Area, as shown in the proposed Land Use Map (Figure 2.0-4). The Land Use Map has been developed to preserve areas of open space and to ensure that new development is located in and around existing and planned urbanized areas, thus ensuring that new development is primarily an extension of the existing urban landscape, and minimizes interruption of views of nearby visual features. Further, the General Plan includes a number of policies designed to preserve and protect the City's natural resources and scenic resources, such as open space lands along the Old River and Mountain House Creek, and to promote visually-appropriate design elements and principles, such as design and maintenance standards for City amenities. Other applicable General Plan policies seek to ensure that new development fits within the existing community setting and is compatible with surrounding uses, support the preservation and protection of the City's existing neighborhoods, and promote the City visually through design and physical features.

In addition to the General Plan Land Use Map and policies, the City's Development Code and/or applicable Specific Plans would regulate maximum building height, building setbacks, building type and intensity, and other development characteristics in place in each zoning district to protect scenic resources that are within or visible from the Planning Area. Future development projects would be reviewed by the City to ensure that the project is consistent with applicable development standards and design guidelines. Additionally, applicable future land use changes and development projects

would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis prior to consideration by the decision-making authority.

The implementation of the policies and actions contained in the General Plan listed below would ensure that open space uses are preserved consistent with the General Plan Land Use Map, that new development in the Planning Area is compatible with nearby agricultural and other open space resources, and that new development is designed in a way that enhances the visual quality of the community, compliments the visual character of the City, and minimizes adverse effects on public views. Additionally, as described previously there are no designated scenic vistas within the City. Therefore, impacts on scenic vistas would be ***less than significant*.**

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Policy LU-1.1: Holistic Land Use Planning. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.3: Comprehensive Land Use Analysis. Land use decisions should include evaluation of both fiscal impacts (costs and revenues to the City) and qualitative community benefits, including public health, environmental quality, housing affordability, and equitable access to services, to ensure long-term community sustainability.

Policy LU-1.7: Parks and Recreation. Provide accessible, high-quality parks and recreation amenities throughout the City. The City shall ensure the majority of residential units are located within one-half mile of a Neighborhood Center consisting of a K-8 school, Neighborhood Park, and Neighborhood Commercial area. The City shall also strive to ensure that all residents are within a safe, comfortable walking distance of a park, trail, and/or open space area.

Action LU-2d: Implement the policies and actions of this General Plan as program-level mitigation measures, where applicable. In approving development projects consistent with this General Plan, the City shall identify which General Plan policies and actions address potential environmental impacts and shall rely on those policies and actions to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, or to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with the findings of the General Plan EIR. All applicable development projects shall be reviewed and processed per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Policy LU-3.1: Site Planning and Design. The City shall maintain comprehensive design standards and guidelines that emphasize high-quality architecture, landscaping, visual cohesion, and well-planned functional spaces that respond to site conditions and complement the surrounding built and natural environment. All new development shall demonstrate compliance with applicable design standards as a condition of approval.

Policy LU-3.9: Above-Ground Utilities. Ensure thoughtful placement and aesthetic treatment of utilities and support structures to minimize their visual impact of utility facilities and support structures.

Action LU-3a: Conduct design review of all applicable projects and ensure consistency with the City's design standards and guidelines; balance design considerations with surrounding development, public spaces, and natural and historical resources.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-2.1: Balanced Open Space System. Support a balanced and integrated open space system that reflects a variety of considerations, including habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, stormwater management, public safety, community health and recreation, aesthetics, and overall community benefit.

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.
- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.
- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

Policy RM-2.5: Scenic Resources and Views. Protect scenic resources and prominent views of the Diablo Range foothills through the siting and design of development projects and public improvements.

Policy RM-2.6: Wildlife Corridor. Support the maintenance and enhancement of wildlife movement corridors along creeks, open space areas, and agricultural edges by minimizing barriers and maintaining habitat connectivity where feasible.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action RM-2a: Prepare and maintain an inventory of significant natural resources, including but not limited to wetlands, riparian corridors, special-status species constraints, wildlife corridors, protected trees, and scenic corridors, to inform development review.

Action RM-2b: Review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements.

Action RM-2f: Explore the possibility of identifying local scenic corridors and vistas and develop guidelines for development visible from these scenic areas to minimize visual impacts.

Public Services Element

Policy PSF-6.9: Visual Clutter. Minimize the visual impact of essential energy and telecommunications infrastructure by requiring the undergrounding of all new utility lines and through the siting of wireless communication facilities, promoting techniques such as co-location and incorporating stealth design whenever possible.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.1-2: General Plan implementation would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within a State scenic highway (Less than Significant)

As discussed in the Environmental Setting section, while there are no eligible or designated State Scenic Highways within the Planning Area, a portion of I-580 just south of the Planning Area (from I-205 to I-5) is designated as a State Scenic Highway. Additionally, the portion of I-580 located west-southwest of the Planning Area that runs from I-5 (south of Vernalis) to I-80 is an eligible State Scenic Highway.

Due to intervening topography, views of the Planning Area from the portion of I-580 that is officially designated as a State Scenic Highway are generally limited to vehicles driving westbound near the I-580 bypass. Mid- to long-range views of the Planning Area to the northeast-east are available to motorists traveling westbound on I-580 near the I-580 bypass; however, such views are fleeting, as they are only available for approximately 1,000 feet before the eastern/northern terminus of the officially designated portion of I-580. Further, while views of landscaping and low-rise development within the Planning Area are available from this location, such views are not the dominant scenic features, which include short- to long-range views of grasslands and rolling hills, the I-580 roadway, manmade canals, and electrical transmission lines.

Views of the Planning Area from the portion of I-580 that is an eligible State Scenic Highway are generally limited to vehicles driving eastbound between Grant Line Road and Midway Road. Long-range views of the Planning Area to the northeast-east are available to motorists traveling eastbound on I-580; however, such views are fleeting, as they are only available for approximately 2,000 feet, from the area just east of Grant Line Road to the I-580 interchange. Views from this location include short- to-mid-range views of the roadway, grasslands, and transmission lines, and

long-range views of landscaping and low-rise development within the Planning Area, Tracy, and unincorporated County land.

While the Project does not include any specific development proposals, implementation of the proposed General Plan would allow for new and expanded urban and suburban development throughout the Planning Area. The Land Use Map has been developed to preserve areas of open space and to ensure that new development is located in and around existing and planned urbanized areas, thus ensuring that new development is primarily an extension of the existing urban landscape.

Because there are no State Scenic Highways within the Planning Area and views of the Planning Area from designated State Scenic Highways in the vicinity are fleeting, and because the proposed General Plan would not introduce drastic changes to the existing urban landscape beyond what has already been planned under the Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plans, State scenic highway impacts associated with General Plan implementation would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Policy LU-1.1: Holistic Land Use Planning. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.3: Comprehensive Land Use Analysis. Land use decisions should include evaluation of both fiscal impacts (costs and revenues to the City) and qualitative community benefits, including public health, environmental quality, housing affordability, and equitable access to services, to ensure long-term community sustainability.

Policy LU-1.7: Parks and Recreation. Provide accessible, high-quality parks and recreation amenities throughout the City. The City shall ensure the majority of residential units are located within one-half mile of a Neighborhood Center consisting of a K-8 school, Neighborhood Park, and Neighborhood Commercial area. The City shall also strive to ensure that all residents are within a safe, comfortable walking distance of a park, trail, and/or open space area.

Action LU-2d: Implement the policies and actions of this General Plan as program-level mitigation measures, where applicable. In approving development projects consistent with this General Plan, the City shall identify which General Plan policies and actions address potential environmental impacts and shall rely on those policies and actions to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, or to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with the findings of the General Plan EIR. All applicable development projects shall be reviewed and processed per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Policy LU-3.1: Site Planning and Design. The City shall maintain comprehensive design standards and guidelines that emphasize high-quality architecture, landscaping, visual cohesion, and well-planned functional spaces that respond to site conditions and

complement the surrounding built and natural environment. All new development shall demonstrate compliance with applicable design standards as a condition of approval.

Policy LU-3.9: Above-Ground Utilities. Ensure thoughtful placement and aesthetic treatment of utilities and support structures to minimize their visual impact of utility facilities and support structures.

Action LU-3a: Conduct design review of all applicable projects and ensure consistency with the City's design standards and guidelines; balance design considerations with surrounding development, public spaces, and natural and historical resources.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-2.1: Balanced Open Space System. Support a balanced and integrated open space system that reflects a variety of considerations, including habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, stormwater management, public safety, community health and recreation, aesthetics, and overall community benefit.

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.

- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.

- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

Policy RM-2.5: Scenic Resources and Views. Protect scenic resources and prominent views of the Diablo Range foothills through the siting and design of development projects and public improvements.

Policy RM-2.6: Wildlife Corridor. Support the maintenance and enhancement of wildlife movement corridors along creeks, open space areas, and agricultural edges by minimizing barriers and maintaining habitat connectivity where feasible.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action RM-2a: Prepare and maintain an inventory of significant natural resources, including but not limited to wetlands, riparian corridors, special-status species constraints, wildlife corridors, protected trees, and scenic corridors, to inform development review.

Action RM-2b: Review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements.

Action RM-2f: Explore the possibility of identifying local scenic corridors and vistas and develop guidelines for development visible from these scenic areas to minimize visual impacts.

Public Services Element

Policy PSF-6.9: Visual Clutter. Minimize the visual impact of essential energy and telecommunications infrastructure by requiring the undergrounding of all new utility lines and through the siting of wireless communication facilities, promoting techniques such as co-location and incorporating stealth design whenever possible.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.1-3: General Plan implementation would not, in a non-urbanized area, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, or in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality (Less than Significant)

Public Resources Code Section 21071 defines an "Urbanized area" as:

(a) An incorporated city that meets either of the following criteria:

(1) Has a population of at least 100,000 persons.

(2) Has a population of less than 100,000 persons if the population of that city and not more than two contiguous incorporated cities combined equals at least 100,000 persons.

According to the California Department of Finance, the City has a current (2025) population of 28,795.[2] The adjacent City of Tracy has a population of 98,215. Combined, the cities have a population of 127,010, which exceeds 100,000 persons; thus, the City qualifies as being within an

[2] California Department of Finance (DOF), *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, January 2020-2025 with 2020 Census Benchmark*, May 2025.

"Urbanized Area." A significant impact would occur if the General Plan conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Construction activities associated with future development under the General Plan could temporarily degrade the visual character and quality of the respective development site and/or its immediate surroundings. Visible features associated with construction activities would include exposed building pads and staging areas for grading, excavation, and construction equipment. In addition, temporary structures could be located on the respective development site during various stages of construction, within materials storage areas, or associated with construction debris piles on site. Exposed trenches, roadway bedding, spoils/debris piles, and steel plates would be visible during construction of street and utility infrastructure improvements. These materials could temporarily degrade the existing visual character and quality of the respective development sites and surrounding areas. However, all construction activities related to implementation of the General Plan would be temporary in nature and all construction equipment would ultimately be removed from individual project sites following completion of construction activities.

The proposed General Plan is the City's first general plan following incorporation and would guide future development within the existing City limits and SOI that have been planned for urban uses through the Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plans. Under existing conditions, the City is primarily urbanized in the area south of Byron Road and north of Grant Line Road, with the exception of some remaining vacant parcels and the Mountain House Creek corridor. The areas north of Byron Road and south of Grand Line Road are generally still under development and contain a mixture of urban uses and vacant land planned for urban uses.

While the Project does not include any specific development proposals, implementation of the proposed General Plan would allow for new and expanded urban and suburban development throughout the Planning Area, particularly in areas designated for residential, commercial, industrial, mixed use, and public/quasi-public use as shown in the proposed Land Use Map (Figure 2.0-4). In general, new growth associated with buildout of the General Plan would occur in and around existing and planned urbanized areas, ensuring that new development is primarily an extension of the existing urban landscape. The proposed General Plan incorporates consistent and compatible development intensities that would maintain and enhance the overall visual character/quality of the Planning Area. Specifically, the Land Use Element includes policies and actions, maps, and diagrams to control and direct the general distribution, location, and extent of land uses within the Planning Area. Further, the General Plan includes policies and actions to promote land use compatibility and ensure that new development complies with applicable design standards and maintains high-quality architecture and other features that compliment surrounding uses. The policies and actions in the proposed General Plan are intended to complement and further the intent of the City's other regulations governing scenic quality.

All future development associated with General Plan implementation would be subject to conformance with applicable requirements in the Mountain House Municipal Code and/or applicable Specific Plan, which include regulations related to maximum building height, building setbacks, landscaping and screening requirements, and other development characteristics in place in each zoning district that govern scenic quality. Future development projects would be reviewed by the City to ensure that the project is consistent with applicable development standards and

design guidelines. Additionally, applicable future land use changes and development projects would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis prior to consideration by the decision-making authority. If necessary, project-specific mitigation would be recommended to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

Compliance with existing regulatory requirements would ensure that new development in the Planning Area would be designed to comply with applicable zoning and other regulations that govern scenic quality and to ensure new development is visually compatible with existing development and open space resources. Therefore, the General Plan would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Policy LU-1.1: Holistic Land Use Planning. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.3: Comprehensive Land Use Analysis. Land use decisions should include evaluation of both fiscal impacts (costs and revenues to the City) and qualitative community benefits, including public health, environmental quality, housing affordability, and equitable access to services, to ensure long-term community sustainability.

Policy LU-1.7: Parks and Recreation. Provide accessible, high-quality parks and recreation amenities throughout the City. The City shall ensure the majority of residential units are located within one-half mile of a Neighborhood Center consisting of a K-8 school, Neighborhood Park, and Neighborhood Commercial area. The City shall also strive to ensure that all residents are within a safe, comfortable walking distance of a park, trail, and/or open space area.

Policy LU-2.1: Specific Plans. Continue to maintain Specific Plans to further refine the concepts of the General Plan and provide orderly, well-planned growth within their boundaries.

Policy LU-2.5: Land Use Compatibility. The City shall require that land use decisions and development approvals include analysis of compatibility between adjacent land uses, with particular attention to potential nuisance impacts (noise, odor, light, vibration, and truck traffic) on sensitive receptors including residences, schools, daycare centers, and medical facilities. The City shall require appropriate buffers, setbacks, landscaping, hours of operation restrictions, or architectural treatments to ensure compatibility and protect sensitive receptors from significant adverse impacts.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action LU-2a: Analyze land use compatibility through the development review process to require adequate buffers and/or architectural enhancements that protect sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, schools, day care centers, hospitals, nursing homes) from intrusion of development activities that may cause unwanted nuisances and health risks.

Action LU-2d: Implement the policies and actions of this General Plan as program-level mitigation measures, where applicable. In approving development projects consistent with this General Plan, the City shall identify which General Plan policies and actions address potential environmental impacts and shall rely on those policies and actions to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, or to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with the findings of the General Plan EIR. All applicable development projects shall be reviewed and processed per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Action LU-2e: Review subdivision maps and site plans for compliance with density ranges and calculations of the corresponding Specific Plan prior to project approval.

Policy LU-3.1: Site Planning and Design. The City shall maintain comprehensive design standards and guidelines that emphasize high-quality architecture, landscaping, visual cohesion, and well-planned functional spaces that respond to site conditions and complement the surrounding built and natural environment. All new development shall demonstrate compliance with applicable design standards as a condition of approval.

Policy LU-3.3: Neighborhood Design. Each residential neighborhood shall achieve a distinct sense of identity and character through coordinated design of street landscaping, neighborhood entries, walls and fences, signage, and other elements as an integrated design system. Development within each neighborhood shall be consistent with an adopted neighborhood design framework.

Action LU-3a: Conduct design review of all applicable projects and ensure consistency with the City's design standards and guidelines; balance design considerations with surrounding development, public spaces, and natural and historical resources.

Action LU-3b: Review and revise, as necessary, the City's design review standards and guidelines for single-family, multi-family, and non-residential uses consistent with community preferences and state law.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-2.1: Balanced Open Space System. Support a balanced and integrated open space system that reflects a variety of considerations, including habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, stormwater management, public safety, community health and recreation, aesthetics, and overall community benefit.

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.
- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.
- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

Policy RM-2.5: Scenic Resources and Views. Protect scenic resources and prominent views of the Diablo Range foothills through the siting and design of development projects and public improvements.

Policy RM-2.6: Wildlife Corridor. Support the maintenance and enhancement of wildlife movement corridors along creeks, open space areas, and agricultural edges by minimizing barriers and maintaining habitat connectivity where feasible.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action RM-2a: Prepare and maintain an inventory of significant natural resources, including but not limited to wetlands, riparian corridors, special-status species constraints, wildlife corridors, protected trees, and scenic corridors, to inform development review.

Action RM-2b: Review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements.

Action RM-2f: Explore the possibility of identifying local scenic corridors and vistas and develop guidelines for development visible from these scenic areas to minimize visual impacts.

Public Services Element

Policy PSF-6.9: Visual Clutter. Minimize the visual impact of essential energy and telecommunications infrastructure by requiring the undergrounding of all new utility lines and through the siting of wireless communication facilities, promoting techniques such as co-location and incorporating stealth design whenever possible.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.1-4: General Plan implementation could result in the creation of new sources of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area (Less than Significant)

Future development accommodated through implementation of the General Plan would introduce new sources of light or glare with the potential to adversely affect day or nighttime views. Light and glare impacts could result from new light sources such as street lighting, interior and exterior building lighting (including for safety purposes), vehicle headlights, illuminated signage, and new glare sources such as reflective building materials, roofing materials, and windows. Impacts would be most severe with new development introducing new sources of light and glare into previously undeveloped areas of the Planning Area. These new sources of light and glare would be most visible from development along adjacent roadways and to receptors, such as residents and traveling motorists.

All lighting installed as part of future development projects resulting from General Plan implementation would be subject to conformance with applicable Development Code requirements, including outdoor lighting development standards (Municipal Code Section 9-10-706, *Light and Glare*), as well as lighting and glare standards contained in applicable Design Manuals and Specific Plans. These standards prohibit lighting of unusually high intensity or brightness, limit light spillover onto adjacent residential lots to 1.0 footcandles, and require shielded or recessed exterior lighting to minimize direct glare and reflections. Future development would also be guided by the General Plan Update Land Use Element, which includes policies and actions to reduce potential light and glare impacts. For example, proposed Policy LU-2.5 directs the City to require that land use decisions and development approvals include analysis of compatibility between adjacent land uses, with particular attention to potential nuisance impacts such as light and glare on sensitive receptors, and to require appropriate buffers, setbacks, landscaping, hours of operation restrictions, or architectural treatments to protect sensitive receptors from significant adverse impacts. Additionally, applicable future land use changes and development projects would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis prior to consideration by the decision-making authority. If necessary, project-specific mitigation would be recommended to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

Through implementation of policies and actions contained in the General Plan, adherence to the Development Code during the development review process, and applicable environmental review process, adverse impacts associated with lighting and glare would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Policy LU-1.3: Comprehensive Land Use Analysis. Land use decisions should include evaluation of both fiscal impacts (costs and revenues to the City) and qualitative community

benefits, including public health, environmental quality, housing affordability, and equitable access to services, to ensure long-term community sustainability.

Policy LU-2.1: Specific Plans. Continue to maintain Specific Plans to further refine the concepts of the General Plan and provide orderly, well-planned growth within their boundaries.

Policy LU-2.5: Land Use Compatibility. The City shall require that land use decisions and development approvals include analysis of compatibility between adjacent land uses, with particular attention to potential nuisance impacts (noise, odor, light, vibration, and truck traffic) on sensitive receptors including residences, schools, daycare centers, and medical facilities. The City shall require appropriate buffers, setbacks, landscaping, hours of operation restrictions, or architectural treatments to ensure compatibility and protect sensitive receptors from significant adverse impacts.

Policy LU-2.6: Mixed-Use Design Integration. Require residential and non-residential portions of mixed-use buildings and sites to be well-integrated through site and building design that ensures compatibility among different uses on the same site.

Action LU-2a: Analyze land use compatibility through the development review process to require adequate buffers and/or architectural enhancements that protect sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, schools, day care centers, hospitals, nursing homes) from intrusion of development activities that may cause unwanted nuisances and health risks.

Action LU-2d: Implement the policies and actions of this General Plan as program-level mitigation measures, where applicable. In approving development projects consistent with this General Plan, the City shall identify which General Plan policies and actions address potential environmental impacts and shall rely on those policies and actions to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, or to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with the findings of the General Plan EIR. All applicable development projects shall be reviewed and processed per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Policy LU-3.1: Site Planning and Design. The City shall maintain comprehensive design standards and guidelines that emphasize high-quality architecture, landscaping, visual cohesion, and well-planned functional spaces that respond to site conditions and complement the surrounding built and natural environment. All new development shall demonstrate compliance with applicable design standards as a condition of approval.

Action LU-3a: Conduct design review of all applicable projects and ensure consistency with the City's design standards and guidelines; balance design considerations with surrounding development, public spaces, and natural and historical resources.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.
- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.
- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

3.1.4 REFERENCES

California Department of Finance (DOF), *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, January 2020-2025 with 2020 Census Benchmark*, May 2025.

California Department of Transportation, *California State Scenic Highway System Map*, https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa, accessed March 2026.

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This section provides a background discussion of agricultural lands, agricultural resources, and forest/timber resources found in the Mountain House Planning Area. This section is organized with an environmental setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis.

There were no comments received during the NOP comment period related to this environmental topic.

3.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

San Joaquin County is located in the northern part of the San Joaquin Valley, California's agricultural heartland. According to the San Joaquin County Agricultural Commissioner's 2024 Crop Report, the County includes 3,439 farms comprising 891,008 total acres.[1] In 2024, the County's gross agricultural production value totaled $3,146,586,502. The report identifies milk as the County's leading commodity in 2024, followed by almond meats, grapes, eggs, and walnuts.

Prior to the adoption of the Mountain House Master Plan in 1994, much of the Planning Area was in use as agricultural lands.[2] Historical agricultural land uses within the Planning Area included alfalfa, irrigated row crops, and pasture. The Planning Area has undergone a significant transformation since the 1990s as a result of planned development consistent with the Mountain House Master Plan and now consists primarily of urban uses. There are no lands within the Planning Area that are designated for agricultural use on the existing Master Plan Land Use Map, existing San Joaquin County General Plan Land Use Diagram, or the proposed General Plan Land Use Map. There are three parcels (i.e., APNs 209-150-27, 209-150-30, and 209-160-11) within the City and four parcels (i.e., APNs 209-160-05, 209-150-28, and portions of 209-160-01 and 209-160-10) within the Sphere of Influence (SOI) zoned Agriculture-Urban Reserve (AU-20), which is intended to retain in agriculture those areas planned for future urban development. It should also be noted that existing agricultural uses occur outside but adjacent to the Planning Area. Adjacent lands north, east, and south of the Planning Area are designated General Agriculture (A/G) by the San Joaquin County General Plan.[3] Adjacent lands west of the Planning Area are designated Large Parcel Agriculture by the Alameda County General Plan.[4]

Important Farmlands

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) identifies important farmland throughout the State in its Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). The FMMP is non-regulatory and

[1] San Joaquin County, San Joaquin County Crop Report 2024. Available at: https://www.sjgov.org/docs/default-source/agricultural-commissioner-documents/croprpt-archive/2020to2029/sjc_cr2024.pdf?sfvrsn=9c18ab4f_5. Accessed May 2026.

[2] BASELINE Environmental Consulting, Final Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 90020776), Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plan I, September 1994.

[3] Mintier Harnish, San Joaquin County General Plan, December 2016.

[4] Alameda County, East County Area Plan, May 5, 1994 (as amended May 2025).

was developed to provide consistent and impartial data to decision makers for use in assessing nearly present status, reviewing trends, and planning for the future of California's agricultural land resources. The FMMP periodically prepares Important Farmland Maps, which classify a land's suitability for agricultural production based on both the physical and chemical characteristics of soils, and the actual land use. The system maps five categories of agricultural land, which include important farmlands (prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, unique farmland, and farmland of local importance) and grazing land, as well as three categories of non-agricultural land, which include urban and built-up land, other land, and water area.

The FMMP and San Joaquin County GIS data were used to illustrate the farmland characteristics for the Planning Area. Farmlands in the Planning Area are identified in Table 3.2-1 and are shown on Figure 3.2-1. The farmland classifications are described below.

TABLE 3.2-1: FARMLAND CLASSIFICATION

Land Classification	City		SOI		Grand Total	
	Acreage	Percent	Acreage	Percent	Acreage	Percent
Prime Farmland	58.1	1.3%	36.5	9.8%	94.6	2.0%
Farmland of Statewide Importance	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Unique Farmland	0.3	<0.1%	1.1	0.3%	1.4	<0.1%
Farmland of Local Importance	2,246.30	50.8%	267.2	71.7%	2,513.50	52.5%
Grazing Land	24.5	0.6%	0.3	0.1%	24.8	0.5%
Urban and Built Up Land	1,793.30	40.6%	50.2	13.5%	1,843.50	38.5%
Rural Residential	1.7	<0.1%	0.5	0.1%	2.2	<0.1%
Semi-Agricultural	15.8	0.4%	4.9	1.3%	20.7	0.4%
Vacant or Disturbed Land	219.3	5.0%	0	0.0%	219.3	4.6%
Nonagricultural	60.1	1.4%	11.9	3.2%	71.9	1.5%
Other Land	0	0.0%	0.1	<0.1%	0.1	<0.1%
Grand Total	**4,419.30**	**100%**	**372.7**	**100%**	**4,792.10**	**100%**

Source: California Department of Conservation; NRCS Custom Web Soil Survey, 2025.

Prime Farmland is farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date. Approximately 94.6 acres of Prime Farmland is located within the Planning Area.

Farmland of Statewide Importance is farmland with characteristics similar to those of prime farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date. There is no Farmland of Statewide Importance located within the Planning Area.

Unique Farmland is land which does not meet the criteria for Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance, that has been used for the production of specific high economic value crops at some time during the two update cycles prior to the mapping date. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high quality and/or high yields of a specific crop when treated and managed according to current farming methods. Examples of such crops may include oranges, olives, avocados, rice, grapes, and cut flowers. It does not include publicly owned lands for which there is an adopted policy preventing agricultural use. Approximately 1.4 acres of Unique Farmland is located within the Planning Area.

Farmland of Local Importance is land of importance to the local agricultural economy, as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee. Approximately 2,513.5 acres of Farmland of Local Importance is located within the Planning Area.

Grazing Land is land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities. Approximately 24.8 acres of Grazing Land is located within the Planning Area.

Urban And Built-Up Land includes Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes. Approximately 1,843.5 acres of Urban and Built-Up Land is located within the Planning Area.

Rural Residential Land has a building density of less than 1 structure per 1.5 acres, but with at least one structure per 10 acres. Approximately 2.2 acres of Rural Residential Land is located within the Planning Area.

Semi-Agricultural and Rural Commercial Land includes farmsteads, agricultural storage and packing sheds, unpaved parking areas, composting facilities, equine facilities, firewood lots, and campgrounds. Approximately 20.7 acres of Semi-Agricultural and Rural Commercial Land is located within the Planning Area.

Nonagricultural or Natural Vegetation includes heavily wooded, rocky/barren areas, riparian and wetland areas, grassland areas which do not qualify as Grazing Land due to their size or land management restrictions, small water bodies and recreational water ski lakes. Constructed wetlands are also included in this category. Approximately 71.9 acres of Nonagricultural or Natural Vegetation Land is located within the Planning Area.

Vacant or Disturbed Land consists of open field areas that do not qualify for an agricultural category, mineral and oil extraction areas, and rural freeway interchanges. Approximately 219.3 acres of Vacant or Disturbed Land is located within the Planning Area.

Farmland Preservation

The Williamson Act authorizes local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. Landowners receive substantially reduced property tax assessments in return for enrollment under Williamson Act contract. The contracts have a 10-year term that is automatically renewed each year, unless the property owner requests a non-renewal or the contract is cancelled. If the contract is cancelled without completing the process of term nonrenewal, the property owner is assessed a fee of up to 12.5 percent of the property value. As shown in Figure 3.2-2, there are no parcels under Williamson Act contracts within the Planning Area.

FOREST RESOURCES

Forest land is defined by Public Resources Code Section 12220(g), and includes *"land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions,*

and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits."

Timber land is defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526, and means *"land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the board as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. Commercial species shall be determined by the board on a district basis."*

There are no forest lands or timber lands located within the Mountain House Planning Area.

3.2.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

NRCS develops and maintains soil survey information that is used to identify farmland soils and supports FPPA implementation. NRCS also administers agricultural land easement programs (for example, through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program) that can help conserve farmland through voluntary easements, where implemented locally.

STATE

California Department of Conservation

The DOC administers and supports a number of programs, including the Williamson Act, the California Farmland Conservancy Program, the Williamson Act Easement Exchange Program (WAEEP), and the FMMP. These programs are designed to preserve agricultural land and provide data on conversion of agricultural land to urban use. The DOC has authority for the approval of agreements entered into under the WAEEP. Key DOC tools available for land conservation planning are conservation grants, tax incentives to keep land in agriculture or open space, and farmland mapping and monitoring.

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

DOC's FMMP prepares, updates, and maintains Important Farmland Series maps and reports changes in agricultural land use on an ongoing, biennial basis. FMMP mapping and data products are widely used for CEQA environmental setting and impact evaluation related to Important Farmland categories.

California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP), PRC § 10200 et seq.

CFCP supports the voluntary acquisition of agricultural conservation easements (typically through land trusts and local governments) to help retain land in agricultural use and limit conversion to

nonagricultural uses through deed restrictions, where pursued by willing landowners and eligible entities.

Farmland Security Zone

A Farmland Security Zone is an area created within an agricultural preserve by a board of supervisors (board) or city council (council) upon request by a landowner or group of landowners. An agricultural preserve defines the boundary of an area within which a city or county will enter into contracts with landowners. The boundary is designated by resolution of the board or council having jurisdiction. Agricultural preserves must generally be at least 100 acres in size. Farmland Security Zone contracts offer landowners greater property tax reduction. Land restricted by a Farmland Security Zone contract is valued for property assessment purposes at 65 percent of its Williamson Act valuation or 65 percent of its Proposition 13 valuation, whichever is lower.

California Right to Farm Act

The California Right to Farm Act (California Civil Code Section 3482.5) establishes that no agricultural activity, operation, or facility, conducted or maintained for commercial purposes and in a manner consistent with established customs and standards, shall become a nuisance after it has been in operation for more than three years if it was not a nuisance at the time it began. The Right to Farm Act requires that as a part of real estate transactions, land sellers and agents must disclose whether the property is located within one mile of farmland as designated on the most recent Important Farmland Map. Any of the five agricultural categories on the map qualifies for disclosure purposes, including Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land.

California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)

The California Land Conservation Act (Government Code Section 51200 et seq.) of 1965, commonly known as the Williamson Act, provides a tax incentive for the voluntary enrollment of agricultural and open space lands in contracts between local government and landowners. The contract restricts the land to agricultural and open space uses and compatible uses defined in State law and local ordinances. An agricultural preserve, which is established by local government, defines the boundary of an area within which a city or county will enter into contracts with landowners. Local governments calculate the property tax assessment for lands under contract based on the actual use of the land rather than the potential land value assuming full development.

Williamson Act contracts are effective for periods of 10 years and longer. The contract is automatically renewed each year, maintaining a constant, 10-year contract, unless the landowner or local government files to initiate non-renewal. Should that occur, the Williamson Act would terminate 10 years after the filing of a notice of non-renewal. Only a landowner can petition for a contract cancellation. Tentative contract cancellations can be approved only after a local government makes specific findings and determines the cancellation fee to be paid by the landowner. There are no Williamson Act contracts in effect on the Project site.

Forest Practice Rules

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) implements the laws that regulate timber harvesting on privately-owned lands. These laws are contained in the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973, which established a set of rules known as the Forest Practice Rules (FPRs) to be applied to forest management related activities (i.e., timber harvests, timberland conversions, fire hazard removal, etc.). FPRs are intended to ensure that timber harvesting is conducted in a manner that will preserve and protect fish, wildlife, forests, and streams.

Under the Forest Practice Act, a Timber Harvesting Plan (THP) is submitted to CAL FIRE by the landowner outlining what timber is proposed to be harvested, harvesting method, and the steps that will be taken to prevent damage to the environment. If the landowner intends to convert timberland to non-timberland uses, such as a winery or vineyard, a Timberland Conversion Permit (TCP) is required, in addition to the THP. It is CAL FIRE's intent that a THP will not be approved which fails to adopt feasible mitigation measures or alternatives from the range of measures set out or provided for in the FPRs, which would substantially lessen or avoid significant adverse environmental impacts resulting from timber harvest activities. THPs are required to be prepared by Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs) who are licensed to prepare these plans. For projects involving TCPs, CAL FIRE acts as the lead agency under CEQA, and the county or city would act as a responsible agency.

LOCAL

California Farmland Trust

The California Farmland Trust is a private, non-profit, regional land trust working in Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Fresno, Contra Costa and Madera Counties of California. The organization works to preserve farmland through the purchase of agricultural conservation easements from willing landowners.

Local Agency Formation Commission Boundary Controls

The San Joaquin Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is responsible for coordinating orderly amendments to local jurisdictional boundaries, including annexations. Annexation to the City of Mountain House would be subject to LAFCO approval, and LAFCO's decision is governed by State law (Gov't Code § 56001 et seq.) and the local LAFCO Policies and Procedures. State law requires LAFCOs to consider agricultural land and open space preservation in all decisions related to expansion of urban development. LAFCO's definition of Prime agricultural land refers to California Government Code Section 56064.3, which is described above under the State Regulatory Setting.

2035 San Joaquin County General Plan

The County General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to agricultural resources in unincorporated areas.

LAND USE

Goal LU-1: Direct most urban development towards cities and urban and rural communities within the unincorporated county to promote economic development, while preserving agricultural lands and protecting open space resources.

Policy LU-1.1 **Compact Growth and Development.** The County shall discourage urban sprawl and promote compact development patterns, mixed-use development, and higher development intensities that conserve agricultural land resources, protect habitat, support transit, reduce vehicle trips, improve air quality, make efficient use of existing infrastructure, encourage healthful, active living, conserve energy and water, and diversify San Joaquin County's housing stock.

Policy LU-1.4 **Encourage Infill Development.** The County shall encourage infill development to occur in Urban and Rural Communities and City Fringe Areas within or adjacent to existing development in order to maximize the efficient use of land and use existing infrastructure with the capacity to serve new development. The County shall balance infill development within outward expansion of communities and new development in other unincorporated areas.

Policy LU-1.5 **Clear Boundaries.** The County shall strive to preserve agricultural and open space areas that contribute to maintaining clear boundaries among cities and unincorporated communities.

Policy LU-1.7 **Farmland Preservation.** The County shall consider information from the State Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program when designating future growth areas in order to preserve prime farmland and limit the premature conversion of agricultural lands.

Goal LU-4: Provide opportunities for a variety of residential development types and densities in established communities, while minimizing conversion of agricultural and loss of natural resources

Policy LU-4.10 **Incompatible Land Uses**. The County shall ensure that residential development is protected from incompatible land uses through the use of buffers, screens, and land use regulations, while recognizing that agriculture and farming operations have priority in rural areas.

Goal LU-7: Provide for the long-term preservation of productive farmland and to accommodate agricultural services and related activities that support the continued viability of the County's agricultural industry.

Policy LU-7.1 **Protect Agricultural Land.** The County shall protect agricultural lands needed for the continuation of viable commercial agricultural production and other agricultural enterprises.

Policy LU-7.5 **Right to Farm.** The County shall strive to protect agricultural land against nuisance complaints from nonagricultural land uses though the implementation of the San Joaquin County Right to Farm ordinance and, if necessary, other appropriate regulatory and land use planning mechanisms.

Policy LU-7.7 **Agricultural Buffers**. The County shall ensure non-agricultural land uses at the edge of agricultural areas incorporate adequate buffers (e.g., fences and setbacks) to limit conflicts with adjoining agricultural operations.

Policy LU-7.10 **Agricultural Mitigation Program**. The County shall continue to require agricultural mitigation for projects that convert agricultural lands to urban uses.

Policy LU-7.11 **Agricultural Land Preservation Mechanisms.** The County shall support regulatory, incentive-based, and financial mechanisms for the preservation of agricultural land.

Policy LU-7.12 **Agricultural Land Conversion Mitigation.** The County shall maintain and implement the Agricultural Mitigation Ordinance to permanently protect agricultural land within the County.

Policy LU-7.15 **Williamson Act Contracts**. The County shall continue to administer the Williamson Act program and shall maintain procedures for Williamson Act contracts consistent with the policies in the General Plan.

San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan

The San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP), administered by the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), provides a countywide framework for balancing open space conservation with the conversion of open space to non-open space uses. The plan is intended to protect covered plant, fish, and wildlife species, preserve landowner property rights, support the regional agricultural economy, maintain multiple-use open space, and accommodate future growth while minimizing costs to project proponents and society. The SJMSCP provides a mechanism for conversions of open space associated with activities such as urban development, mining, expansion of existing urban boundaries, non-agricultural activities occurring outside of urban boundaries, transportation projects, utility installation, school expansions, non-federal flood control projects, new parks and trails, mining, preserve management, and similar public agency projects. The conversion of Natural Lands and Agricultural Habitat Lands trigger the compensation requirements, as described in Section 4.1 of the SJMSCP.

Mountain House Municipal Code

Title 9, Division 6, *Agricultural Zones*, prescribes use, lot, and structure regulations for the Agriculture-Urban Reserve (AU) Zone, which is intended to retain in agriculture those areas planned for future urban development. Title 9, Division 6, Chapter 3, *Agricultural Zones: Lot and Structure Regulations*, establishes agricultural lot-size variants (e.g., lots zoned "AG-20" shall be at least 20 acres, lots zones “AG-40” shall be at least 40 acres, etc.).

3.2.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project will have a significant impact on agricultural and forestry resources if it will:

- Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;

- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
- Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined in Government Code Section 51104(g));
- Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or
- Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.2-1: General Plan implementation would not result in the conversion of important farmlands, including Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance, to non-agricultural use (Less Than Significant)

As shown in Table 3.2-1 and Figure 3.2-1, the Planning Area contains approximately 94.6 acres of Prime Farmland and 1.4 acres of Unique Farmland. The Planning Area does not contain any Farmland of Statewide Importance. While the Planning Area also contains larger areas of Farmland of Local Importance, that category is not part of this threshold of significance.

The proposed General Plan is the City's first general plan following incorporation and would guide future development within the existing City limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI) that have long been planned for urban uses as the Mountain House master-planned community through the Mountain House Master Plan, adopted in 1994, and Specific Plan I (1994), Specific Plan II (2005), and Specific Plan III (2005). Although existing agricultural activities occur within a limited number of parcels within the Planning Area, there are no lands within the Planning Area that are specifically designated for agricultural use on the existing Master Plan Land Use Map, existing San Joaquin County General Plan Land Use Diagram, or the proposed General Plan Land Use Map. Areas identified as Prime Farmland or Unique Farmland are currently designated for a mix of residential and non-residential development, which would continue with the General Plan. While future development associated with the implementation of the General Plan would likely result in the conversion of these areas for urban uses, it is anticipated that agricultural uses would continue to operate until development of the site is proposed.

The proposed General Plan would not expand the Planning Area, extend urban growth beyond the existing City limits and SOI, redesignate any agricultural use parcels to a non-agricultural use, or approve any specific development project. Rather, it would establish a long-term policy framework under which future projects would be reviewed for consistency and undergo project-level environmental review, as appropriate. Although future development within the Planning Area could occur on parcels currently mapped as important farmland, including Prime or Unique Farmland, the proposed General Plan would not create a substantial new farmland conversion impact beyond the long-established urban development pattern for Mountain House. Further, the proposed General Plan includes policy direction to support continued agricultural use within the Planning Area and

vicinity. Specifically, proposed General Plan Action LU-1e requires the City to work with SJCOG to address agricultural mitigation obligations associated with conversion of prime agricultural soils. It also requires applicable development projects to participate in the SJMSCP, when applicable. Accordingly, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Action LU-1e: The City shall work with SJCOG to address agricultural mitigation obligations associated with conversion of prime agricultural soils within the Planning Area. This includes requiring development projects to participate in the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space plan (SJMSCP), when applicable.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.2-2: General Plan Implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract (Less Than Significant)

The City of Mountain House Development Code includes one agricultural zoning classification, the Agriculture-Urban Reserve (AU) Zone, which is intended to retain in agriculture those areas planned for future urban development. However, the Agriculture-Urban Reserve zone is intended to retain lands in agriculture only until urban services and utilities can be provided in an orderly manner. There are three parcels (i.e., APNs 209-150-27, 209-150-30, and 209-160-11) within the City and four parcels (i.e., APNs 209-160-05, 209-150-28, and portions of 209-160-01 and 209-160-10) within the SOI zoned Agriculture-Urban Reserve (AU-20). These parcels are designated for industrial uses under existing and proposed conditions. The Project does not include any zone changes at this time; however, consistent with existing and proposed land use designation, these areas may eventually be developed with urban land uses. Existing agricultural operations within the parcels zoned AU-20 are anticipated to remain in agricultural operation as an interim use until development of the site is proposed. While the Development Code and Zoning Map currently identify parcels in the Planning Area zoned AU-20, the Development Code makes clear that these parcels are intended to be developed with urban uses. As such, the proposed Project would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning.

There are no Williamson Act contracts within the City or Planning Area, as shown on Figure 3.2-2. Although Williamson Act enrollments occur in the broader mapped area outside the Planning Area, the proposed General Plan would not alter those contracts. Because the proposed General Plan would not conflict with any existing Williamson Act contract and since the General Plan would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

There are no General Plan goals, policies, or actions specific to this threshold.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.2-3: General Plan implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land or timberland zoned Timberland Production and would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use (No Impact)

The Planning Area does not contain parcels designated as forest land and the proposed General Plan does not propose uses that would convert existing forest land to non-forest use. There are also no parcels that are currently zoned as forest land, timber, or timber production. Therefore, the Project would result in ***no impact*** with regards to forest land, timber, or timber production.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

There are no General Plan goals, policies, or actions specific to forest or timber resources.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

No Impact.

Impact 3.2-4: General Plan implementation would not involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use (Less Than Significant)

This threshold addresses indirect or secondary environmental changes that could result in conversion of farmland, such as growth-inducing infrastructure, off-site land use incompatibilities, or other changes that place development pressure on agricultural land. The proposed General Plan would guide future growth within the existing City limits and SOI and would not expand the Planning Area into additional agricultural areas outside Mountain House.

As discussed in Chapter 2.0, the General Plan itself would not approve any specific development project. Future projects implemented under the General Plan would remain subject to the City's development review procedures and, as appropriate, subsequent environmental review. In addition, the proposed General Plan does not remove any Williamson Act contracts, does not reconfigure the City's planning boundaries, does not redesignate any agricultural use parcels to a

non-agricultural use, and does not include new agricultural or rural land use policies that would induce conversion of farmland outside the Planning Area. Further, compliance with the County General Plan and the Right to Farm Act (California Civil Code Section 3482.5) would reduce any potential land use conflicts between new development consistent with the proposed General Plan and existing agricultural operations adjacent to the Planning Area. Therefore, the proposed General Plan would not involve other changes in the existing environment that would result in a substantial indirect conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use, and this impact would be less than significant.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Action LU-1e: The City shall work with SJCOG to address agricultural mitigation obligations associated with conversion of prime agricultural soils within the Planning Area. This includes requiring development projects to participate in the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space plan (SJMSCP), when applicable.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

3.2.4 REFERENCES

San Joaquin County, San Joaquin County Crop Report 2024. Available at: https://www.sjgov.org/docs/default-source/agricultural-commissioner-documents/croprpt-archive/2020to2029/sjc_cr2024.pdf?sfvrsn=9c18ab4f_5. Accessed May 2026.

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California Department of Conservation, 2026. Williamson Act Enrollment Finder. Available at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/WilliamsonAct/App. Accessed March 2026.

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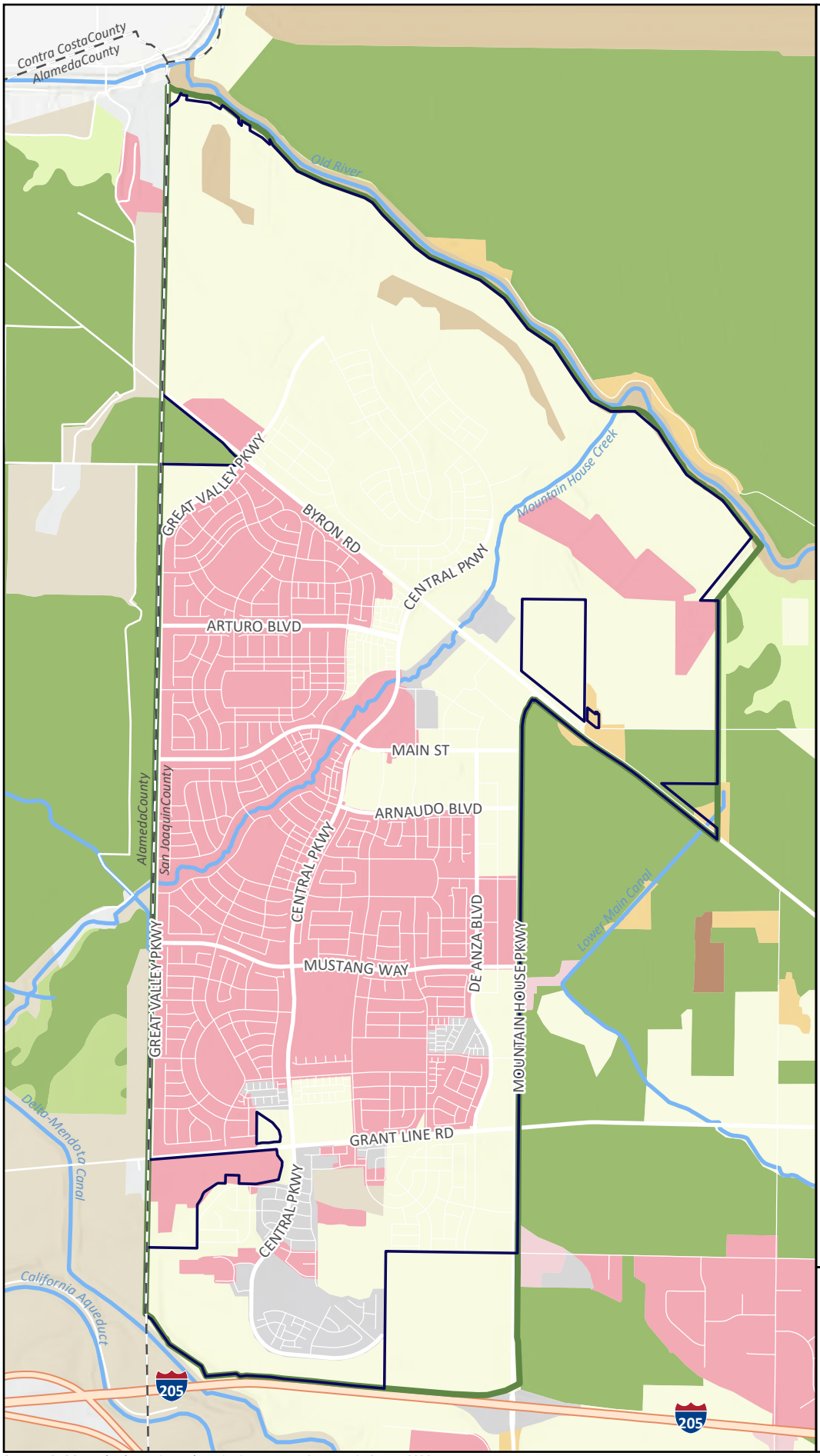

FIGURE 3.2-1.

IMPORTANT FARMLANDS

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary
- Prime Farmland
- Unique Farmland
- Grazing Land
- Farmland of Local Importance
- Confined Animal Agriculture
- Nonagricultural or Natural Vegetation
- Vacant or Disturbed Land
- Rural Residential Land
- Semi-agricultural and Rural Commercial Land
- Urban and Built-Up Land
- Other Land

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
July 31, 2025.

DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP
A LAND USE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FIRM

Sources: CDOC Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, San Joaquin County 2020 and Alameda County 2020; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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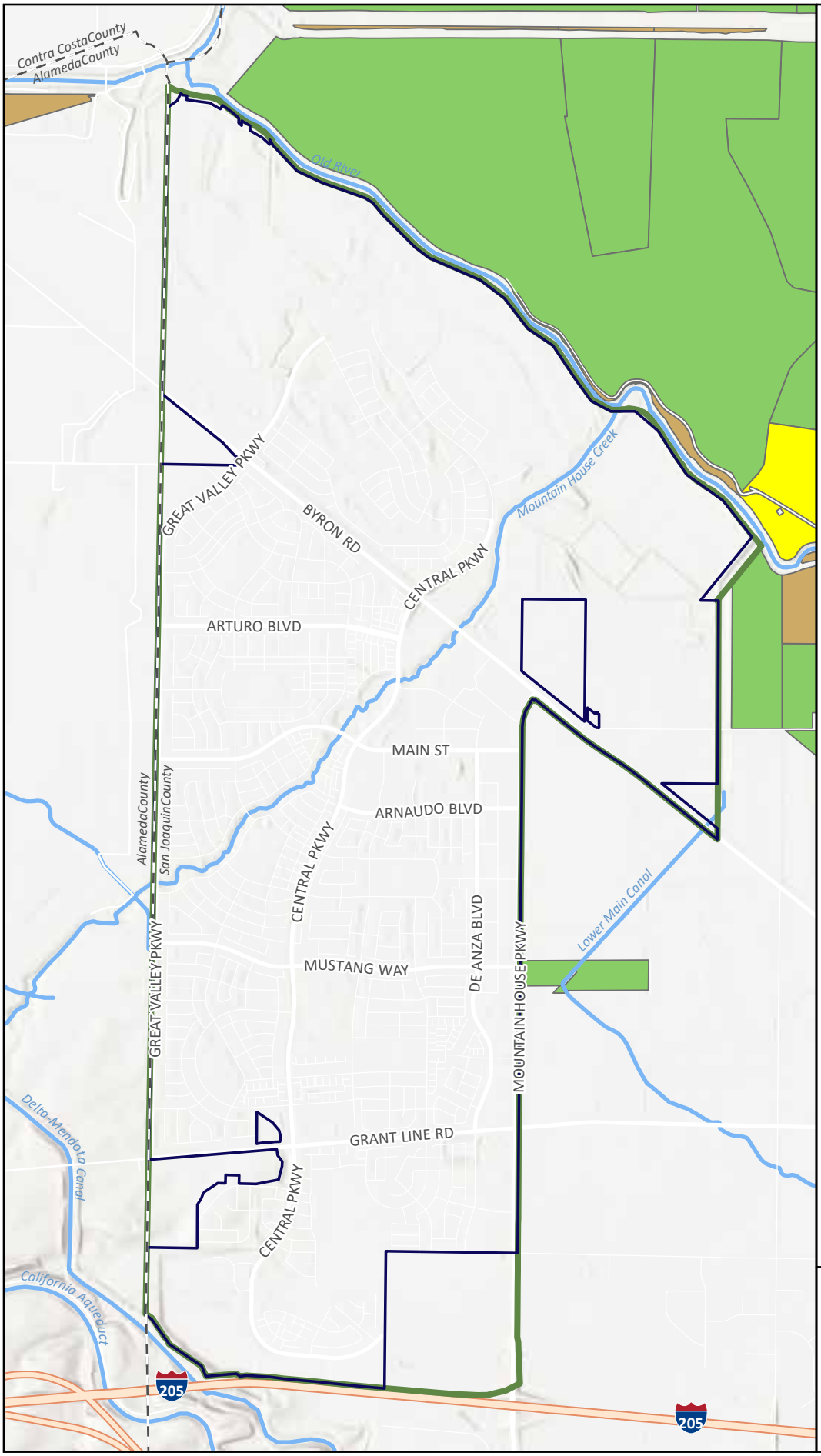

FIGURE 3.2-2.

WILLIAMSON ACT LANDS

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary

Williamson Act Enrollment

- Prime Agricultural Land
- Nonprime Agricultural Land
- Nonrenewal*
- Farmland Security Zone
- Mixed Enrollment Agriculture Land*

** There are no Williamson Act Enrollments of this type within the mapped extent.*

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

City of Mountain House

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group August 6, 2025.

DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP
A LAND USE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FIRM

Sources: CDOC Williamson Act Enrollments 2024 database, 5-20-2025; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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This section describes the regional air quality, current attainment status of the applicable air basin, local sensitive receptors, emission sources, and impacts that may result from Project implementation.

Two comments were received during the NOP comment period regarding this environmental topic; refer to Appendix A. The comment letter from Mark Montelongo of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), dated May 8, 2026, recommends that the EIR incorporate plan-level policies to assess, characterize, and mitigate air quality and health risk impacts for future development projects. Key recommendations include implementing strategies to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), establishing appropriate land use buffer distances for sensitive receptors, utilizing the cleanest available construction and operational equipment, and ensuring compliance with applicable SJVAPCD rules and regulations. The comment letter received from Igor Kiselev, dated May 28, 2026, recommends that the EIR address air quality impacts from vehicles.

3.3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AIR BASIN

The Planning Area is in the northern portion of the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB). The SJVAB consists of eight counties: Fresno, Kern (western and central), Kings, Tulare, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus. Air pollution from significant activities in the SJVAB includes a variety of industrial-based sources as well as on- and off-road mobile sources. These sources, coupled with geographical and meteorological conditions unique to the area, stimulate the formation of unhealthy air.

The SJVAB is approximately 250 miles long and an average of 35 miles wide. It is bordered by the Sierra Nevada in the east, the Coast Ranges in the west, and the Tehachapi mountains in the south. There is a slight downward elevation gradient from Bakersfield in the southeast end to sea level at the northwest end where the valley opens to the San Francisco Bay at the Carquinez Straits. At its northern end is the Sacramento Valley, which comprises the northern half of California's Central Valley. The bowl-shaped topography inhibits movement of pollutants out of the valley.[1]

Climate

The SJVAB is in a Mediterranean climate zone and is influenced by a subtropical high-pressure cell most of the year. Mediterranean climates are characterized by sparse rainfall, which occurs mainly in winter. Summers are hot and dry. Summertime maximum temperatures often exceed 100°F in the valley.

The subtropical high-pressure cell is strongest during spring, summer, and fall and produces subsiding air, which can result in temperature inversions in the valley. A temperature inversion can act like a lid, inhibiting vertical mixing of the air mass at the surface. Any emissions of pollutants can

[1] San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, *Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts*, March 19, 2015.

be trapped below the inversion. Most of the surrounding mountains are above the normal height of summer inversions (1,500 to 3,000 feet).

Winter-time high pressure events can often last many weeks, with surface temperatures often lowering into the 30°F. During these events, fog can be present and inversions are extremely strong. These wintertime inversions can inhibit vertical mixing of pollutants to a few hundred feet.[2]

Wind Patterns

Wind speed and direction play an important role in dispersion and transport of air pollutants. Wind at the surface and aloft can disperse pollution by mixing and transporting it to other locations.

Especially in summer, winds in the San Joaquin Valley most frequently blow from the northwest. The region's topographic features restrict air movement and channel the air mass towards the southeastern end of the valley. Marine air can flow into the basin from the San Joaquin River Delta and over Altamont Pass and Pacheco Pass, where it can flow along the axis of the valley, over the Tehachapi pass, into the Southeast Desert Air Basin. This wind pattern contributes to transporting pollutants from the Sacramento Valley and the Bay Area into the SJVAB. The Coastal Range is a barrier to air movement to the west and the high Sierra Nevada range is a significant barrier to the east (the highest peaks in the southern Sierra Nevada reach almost halfway through the Earth's atmosphere). Many days in the winter are marked by stagnation events where winds are very weak. Transport of pollutants during winter can be very limited. A secondary but significant summer wind pattern is from the southeast and can be associated with nighttime drainage winds, prefrontal conditions, and summer monsoons.

Two significant diurnal wind cycles that occur frequently in the valley are the sea breeze and mountain-valley upslope and drainage flows. The sea breeze can accentuate the northwest wind flow, especially on summer afternoons. Nighttime drainage flows can accentuate the southeast movement of air down the valley. In the mountains during periods of weak synoptic scale winds, winds tend to be upslope during the day and downslope at night. Nighttime and drainage flows are especially pronounced during the winter when flow from the easterly direction is enhanced by nighttime cooling in the Sierra Nevada. Eddies can form in the valley wind flow and can recirculate a polluted air mass for an extended period.[3]

Temperature, Sunlight, and Ozone Production

Solar radiation and temperature are particularly important in the chemistry of ozone formation. The SJVAB averages over 260 sunny days per year. Photochemical air pollution (primarily ozone) is produced by the atmospheric reaction of organic substances (such as volatile organic compounds) and nitrogen dioxide under the influence of sunlight. Ozone concentrations are very dependent on the amount of solar radiation, especially during late spring, summer, and early fall. Ozone levels typically peak in the afternoon. After the sun goes down, the chemical reaction between nitrous oxide and ozone begins to dominate. This reaction tends to scavenge and remove the ozone in the

[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

metropolitan areas through the early morning hours, resulting in the lowest ozone levels, possibly reaching zero at sunrise in areas with high nitrogen oxides emissions. At sunrise, nitrogen oxides tend to peak, partly due to low levels of ozone at this time and also due to the morning commuter vehicle emissions of nitrogen oxides.

Generally, the higher the temperature, the more ozone formed, since reaction rates increase with temperature. However, extremely hot temperatures can "lift" or "break" the inversion layer. Typically, if the inversion layer does not lift to allow the buildup of contaminants to be dispersed, the ozone levels will peak in the late afternoon. If the inversion layer breaks and the resultant afternoon winds occur, the ozone will peak in the early afternoon and decrease in the late afternoon as the contaminants are dispersed or transported out of the SJVAB.

Ozone levels are low during winter periods when there is much less sunlight to drive the photochemical reaction.[4]

Precipitation, Humidity, and Fog

Precipitation and fog may reduce or limit some pollutant concentrations. Ozone needs sunlight for its formation, and clouds and fog can block the required solar radiation. Wet fogs can cleanse the air during winter as moisture collects on particles and deposits them on the ground. Atmospheric moisture can also increase pollution levels. In fogs with less water content, the moisture acts to form secondary ammonium nitrate particulate matter. This ammonium nitrate is part of the valley's $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10} problem. The winds and unstable air conditions experienced during the passage of winter storms result in periods of low pollutant concentrations and excellent visibility. Between winter storms, high pressure and light winds allow cold moist air to pool on the SJVAB floor. This creates strong low-level temperature inversions and very stable air conditions, which can lead to tule fog. Wintertime conditions favorable to fog formation are also conditions favorable to high concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}.[5]

Temperature Inversions

The vertical dispersion of air pollutants in the San Joaquin Valley can be limited by persistent temperature inversions. Air temperature in the lowest layer of the atmosphere typically decreases with altitude. A reversal of this atmospheric state, where the air temperature increases with height, is termed an inversion. The height of the base of the inversion is known as the "mixing height." This is the level to which pollutants can mix vertically. Mixing of air is minimized above and below the inversion base. The inversion base represents an abrupt density change where little air movement occurs.

Inversion layers are significant in determining pollutant concentrations. Concentration levels can be related to the amount of mixing space below the inversion. Temperature inversions that occur on

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

the summer days are usually 2,000 to 2,500 feet above the valley floor. In winter months, overnight inversions occur 500 to 1,500 feet above the valley floor.[6]

CRITERIA POLLUTANTS

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six commonly found air pollutants known as "criteria pollutants." The NAAQS sets threshold concentrations for each criteria pollutant above which adverse effects on human health may occur. In addition to federal standards, California has established statewide ambient air quality standards, called California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS).

The ambient air quality standards for the six criteria pollutants (as shown in Table 3.3-1) are designed to protect public health and the environment within an adequate margin of safety (as provided under Section 109 of the Federal Clean Air Act). Epidemiological, controlled human exposure, and toxicology studies evaluate potential health and environmental effects of criteria pollutants, and form the scientific basis for new and revised ambient air quality standards. Principal characteristics and possible health and environmental effects from exposure to the six primary criteria pollutants are discussed below.

Ozone (O_3) is a photochemical oxidant and the major component of smog. While O_3 in the upper atmosphere is beneficial to life by shielding the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun, high concentrations of O_3 at ground level are a major health and environmental concern. O_3 is not emitted directly into the air but is formed through complex chemical reactions between precursor emissions of volatile organic compounds (ROG) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) in the presence of sunlight. These reactions are stimulated by sunlight and temperature so that peak O_3 levels occur typically during the warmer times of the year. Both ROGs and NO_x are emitted by transportation and industrial sources. ROGs are emitted from sources as diverse as autos, chemical manufacturing, dry cleaners, paint shops and other sources using solvents. Relatedly, reactive organic compounds (ROG) are defined as the subset of ROGs that are reactive enough to contribute substantially to atmospheric photochemistry.

The reactivity of O_3 causes health problems because it damages lung tissue, reduces lung function and sensitizes the lungs to other irritants. Scientific evidence indicates that ambient levels of O_3 not only affect people with impaired respiratory systems, such as asthmatics, but healthy adults and children as well. Exposure to O_3 for several hours at relatively low concentrations has been found to significantly reduce lung function and induce respiratory inflammation in normal, healthy people during exercise. This decrease in lung function generally is accompanied by symptoms including chest pain, coughing, sneezing and pulmonary congestion.

Studies show associations between short-term ozone exposure and non-accidental mortality, including deaths from respiratory issues. Studies also suggest long-term exposure to ozone may

[6] Ibid.

increase the risk of respiratory-related deaths.[7] The concentration of ozone at which health effects are observed depends on an individual's sensitivity, level of exertion (i.e., breathing rate), and duration of exposure. Studies show large individual differences in the intensity of symptomatic responses, with one study finding no symptoms to the least responsive individual after a 2-hour exposure to 400 parts per billion of ozone and a 50 percent decrement in forced airway volume in the most responsive individual. Although the results vary, evidence suggest that sensitive populations (e.g., asthmatics) may be affected on days when the 8-hour maximum ozone concentration reaches 80 parts per billion.[8] The average background level of ozone in California and Nevada is approximately 48.3 parts per billion, which represents approximately 77 percent of the total ozone in the western region of the U.S.[9]

In addition to human health effect, ozone has been tied to crop damage, typically in the form of stunted growth, leaf discoloration, cell damage, and premature death. O_3 can also act as a corrosive and oxidant, resulting in property damage such as the degradation of rubber products and other materials.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless and poisonous gas produced by incomplete burning of carbon in fuels. Carbon monoxide is harmful because it binds to hemoglobin in the blood, reducing the ability of blood to carry oxygen. This interferes with oxygen delivery to the body's organs. The most common effects of CO exposure are fatigue, headaches, confusion, and dizziness due to inadequate oxygen delivery to the brain. For people with cardiovascular disease, short-term CO exposure can further reduce their body's already compromised ability to respond to the increased oxygen demands of exercise, exertion, or stress. Inadequate oxygen delivery to the heart muscle leads to chest pain and decreased exercise tolerance. Unborn babies whose mothers experience high levels of CO exposure during pregnancy are at risk of adverse developmental effects. Exposure to CO at high concentrations can also cause fatigue, headaches, confusion, dizziness, and chest pain.[10]

Very high levels of CO are not likely to occur outdoors. However, when CO levels are elevated outdoors, they can be of particular concern for people with some types of heart disease. These people already have a reduced ability for getting oxygenated blood to their hearts in situations where the heart needs more oxygen than usual. They are especially vulnerable to the effects of CO when exercising or under increased stress. In these situations, short-term exposure to elevated CO may result in reduced oxygen to the heart accompanied by chest pain also known as angina.[11] Such

[7] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Health Effects of Ozone Pollution. Available at: https://www.epa.gov/ground-level-ozone-pollution/health-effects-ozone-pollution. Accessed May 2026.
[8] Ibid.
[9] NASA, Background Ozone a Major Issue in U.S. West. Available at: https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/news.php?feature=4723. Accessed May 2026.
[10] Ibid.
[11] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Basic Information about Carbon Monoxide (CO) Outdoor Air Pollution. Available at: https://www.epa.gov/co-pollution/basic-information-about-carbon-monoxide-co-outdoor-air-pollution#Effects. Accessed May 2026.

acute effects may occur under current ambient conditions for some sensitive individuals, while increases in ambient CO levels increases the risk of such incidences.

Nitrogen oxides (NO_x) are a group of highly reactive gases that include Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2) and are present in all urban atmospheres. The main effect of increased NO_2 is the increased likelihood of respiratory problems. Under ambient conditions, NO_2 can irritate the lungs, cause bronchitis and pneumonia, and lower resistance to respiratory infections. Nitrogen oxides are an important precursor both to ozone (O_3) and acid rain and may affect both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Longer exposures to elevated concentrations of NO_2 may contribute to the development of asthma and potentially increase susceptibility to respiratory infections. People with asthma, as well as children and the elderly are generally at greater risk for the health effects of NO_2.

The major mechanism for the formation of NO_2 in the atmosphere is the oxidation of the primary air pollutant nitric oxide (NO). NO_x plays a major role, together with ROGs, in the atmospheric reactions that produce O_3. NO_x forms when fuel is burned at high temperatures. The two major emission sources are transportation and stationary fuel combustion sources such as electric utility and industrial boilers.

Sulfur dioxide (SO_2) is one of the multiple gaseous oxidized sulfur species and is formed during the combustion of fuels containing sulfur, primarily coal and oil. The largest anthropogenic source of SO_2 emissions in the U.S. is fossil fuel combustion at electric utilities and other industrial facilities. SO_2 is also emitted from certain manufacturing processes and mobile sources, including locomotives, large ships, and construction equipment.

SO_2 affects breathing and may aggravate existing respiratory and cardiovascular disease in high doses. Sensitive populations include asthmatics, individuals with bronchitis or emphysema, children and the elderly. SO_2 is also a primary contributor to acid deposition, or acid rain, which causes acidification of lakes and streams and can damage trees, crops, historic buildings and statues. In addition, sulfur compounds in the air contribute to visibility impairment in large parts of the country. This is especially noticeable in national parks. Ambient SO_2 results largely from stationary sources such as coal and oil combustion, steel mills, refineries, pulp and paper mills and from nonferrous smelters.

Short-term exposure to ambient SO_2 has been associated with various adverse health effects. Multiple human clinical studies, epidemiological studies, and toxicological studies support a causal relationship between short-term exposure to ambient SO_2 and respiratory morbidity. The observed health effects include decreased lung function, respiratory symptoms, and increased emergency department visits and hospitalizations for all respiratory causes. These studies further suggest that people with asthma are potentially susceptible or vulnerable to these health effects. In addition, SO_2 reacts with other air pollutants to form sulfate particles, which are constituents of fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$). Inhalation exposure to $PM_{2.5}$ has been associated with various cardiovascular and

respiratory health effects.[12] Increased ambient SO_2 levels would lead to increased risk of such effects.

SO_2 emissions that lead to high concentrations of SO_2 in the air generally also lead to the formation of other sulfur oxides (SOx). SOx can react with other compounds in the atmosphere to form small particles. These particles contribute to particulate matter (PM) pollution. Small particles may penetrate deeply into the lungs and in sufficient quantity can contribute to health problems.

Particulate matter (PM) includes dust, dirt, soot, smoke and liquid droplets directly emitted into the air by sources such as factories, power plants, cars, construction activity, fires and natural windblown dust. Particles formed in the atmosphere by condensation or the transformation of emitted gases such as SO_2 and ROGs are also considered particulate matter. PM is generally categorized based on the diameter of the particulate matter: PM_{10} is particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter (known as respirable particulate matte*r*), and $PM_{2.5}$ is particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter (known as fine particulate matter).

Based on studies of human populations exposed to high concentrations of particles (sometimes in the presence of SO_2) and laboratory studies of animals and humans, there are major effects of concern for human health. These include effects on breathing and respiratory symptoms, aggravation of existing respiratory and cardiovascular disease, alterations in the body's defense systems against foreign materials, damage to lung tissue, carcinogenesis and premature death. Small particulate pollution causes health impacts even at very low concentrations – indeed no threshold has been identified below which no damage to health is observed.

Respirable particulate matter (PM_{10}) consists of small particles, less than 10 microns in diameter, of dust, smoke, or droplets of liquid which penetrate the human respiratory system and cause irritation by themselves, or in combination with other gases. Particulate matter is caused primarily by dust from grading and excavation activities, from agricultural activities (as created by soil preparation activities, fertilizer and pesticide spraying, weed burning and animal husbandry), and from motor vehicles, particularly diesel-powered vehicles. PM_{10} causes a greater health risk than larger particles, since these fine particles can more easily penetrate the defenses of the human respiratory system.

$PM_{2.5}$ consists of fine particles, which are less than 2.5 microns in size. Similar to PM_{10}, these particles are primarily the result of combustion in motor vehicles, particularly diesel engines, as well as from industrial sources and residential/agricultural activities such as burning. It is also formed through the reaction of other pollutants. As with PM_{10}, these particulates can increase the chance of respiratory disease, and cause lung damage and cancer.

The major subgroups of the population that appear to be most sensitive to the effects of particulate matter include individuals with chronic obstructive pulmonary or cardiovascular disease or influenza, asthmatics, the elderly and children. Particulate matter also impacts soils and damages materials and is a major cause of visibility impairment.

[12] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Report on the Environment: Sulfur Dioxide Concentrations. Available at: https://cfpub.epa.gov/roe/indicator_pdf.cfm?i=91. Accessed May 2026.

Numerous studies have linked PM exposure to premature death in people with preexisting heart or lung disease, nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, aggravated asthma, decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms. Long-term exposures, such as those experienced by people living for many years in areas with high particle levels, have been associated with problems such as reduced lung function and the development of chronic bronchitis – and even premature death. Additionally, depending on its composition, both PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ can also affect water quality and acidity, deplete soil nutrients, damage sensitive forests and crops, affect ecosystem diversity, and contribute to acid rain.[13]

Lead (Pb) exposure can occur through multiple pathways, including inhalation of air and ingestion of Pb in food, water, soil or dust. Once taken into the body, lead distributes throughout the body in the blood and is accumulated in the bones. Depending on the level of exposure, lead can adversely affect the nervous system, kidney function, immune system, reproductive and developmental systems and the cardiovascular system. Lead exposure also affects the oxygen carrying capacity of the blood. Excessive Pb exposure can cause seizures, intellectual disability, and/or behavioral disorders. Low doses of Pb can lead to central nervous system damage. Recent studies have also shown that Pb may be a factor in high blood pressure and subsequent heart disease.

Lead is persistent in the environment and can be added to soils and sediments through deposition from sources of lead air pollution. Other sources of lead to ecosystems include direct discharge of waste streams to water bodies and mining. Elevated lead in the environment can result in decreased growth and reproductive rates in plants and animals, and neurological effects in vertebrates.

Lead exposure is typically associated with industrial sources; major sources of lead in the air are ore and metals processing and piston-engine aircraft operating on leaded aviation fuel. Other sources are waste incinerators, utilities, and lead-acid battery manufacturers. The highest air concentrations of lead are usually found near lead smelters. As a result of the U.S. EPA's regulatory efforts, including the removal of lead from motor vehicle gasoline, levels of lead in the air decreased by 98 percent between 1980 and 2014.[14] Based on this reduction of lead in the air over this period, and since most new developments do not generate an increase in lead exposure, the health impacts of ambient lead levels are not typically monitored by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

TOXIC AIR CONTAMINANTS

Toxic air contaminants (TACs) are airborne substances capable of causing short-term (acute) and/or long-term (chronic) or carcinogenic (i.e., cancer causing) adverse human health effects (i.e., injury or illness). TACs include both organic and inorganic chemical substances. They may be emitted from a variety of common sources including gasoline stations, automobiles, dry cleaners, industrial

[13] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Health and Environmental Effects of Particulate Matter (PM). Available at: https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/health-and-environmental-effects-particulate-matter-pm. Accessed May 2026.

[14] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Basic Information about Lead Air Pollution. Available at: https://www.epa.gov/lead-air-pollution/basic-information-about-lead-air-pollution#how. Accessed May 2026.

operations, and painting operations. The current California list of TACs includes approximately 200 compounds, including particulate emissions from diesel-fueled engines.

Hazardous air pollutant is a term used in the FCAA and includes a variety of pollutants generated or emitted by industrial production activities. Identified as TACs under the California Clean Air Act (CCAA), ten pollutants have been singled out through ambient air quality data as being the most substantial health risks in California. Direct exposure to these pollutants has been shown to cause cancer, birth defects, brain and nervous system damage, and respiratory disorders.

TACs do not have ambient air quality standards, because no safe levels of TACs can be determined. Instead, TAC impacts are evaluated by calculating the health risks associated with a given exposure. The requirements of the Air Toxic "Hot Spots" Information and Assessment Act (Assembly Bill [AB] 2588) apply to facilities that use, produce, or emit toxic chemicals. Facilities subject to the toxic emission inventory requirements of AB 2588 must prepare, submit, and periodically update their toxic emission inventory plans and reports.

Toxic contaminants often result from fugitive emissions during fuel storage and transfer activities, and from leaking valves and pipes. For example, the electronics industry, including semiconductor manufacturing, uses highly toxic chlorinated solvents in semiconductor production processes. Automobile exhaust also contains toxic air pollutants, such as benzene and 1,3-butadiene.

Diesel Particulate Matter

Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM) is emitted from both mobile and stationary sources. In California, on-road diesel-fueled engines contribute approximately 24 percent of the statewide total, with an additional 71 percent attributed to other mobile sources, such as construction and mining equipment, agricultural equipment, and transport refrigeration units. Stationary sources contribute approximately five percent of total DPM in the State. It should be noted that CARB has developed several plans and programs to reduce diesel emissions such as the Diesel Risk Reduction Plan, the Statewide Portable Equipment Registration Program, and the Diesel Off-Road Online Reporting System. The Portable Equipment Registration Program and Diesel Off-Road Online Reporting System allow owners or operators of portable engines and certain other types of equipment to register their equipment, in order to operate them in the State without having to obtain individual permits from local air districts.

Diesel exhaust and many individual substances contained in it (e.g., arsenic, benzene, formaldehyde, and nickel) have the potential to contribute to mutations in cells that can lead to cancer. Long-term exposure to diesel exhaust particles poses the highest cancer risk of any TAC evaluated by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). CARB estimates that about 70 percent of the cancer risk faced by the average Californian from breathing toxic air pollutants stems from DPM.

Exposure to DPM can also have immediate health effects. DPM can irritate the eyes, nose, throat, and lungs and can cause coughing, headaches, lightheadedness, and nausea. In studies with human volunteers, DPM made people with allergies more susceptible to the materials to which they are allergic, such as dust and pollen. Exposure to DPM also causes inflammation in the lungs, which may aggravate chronic respiratory symptoms and increase the frequency or intensity of asthma attacks.

Diesel engines are a major source of fine particulate pollution. The elderly and people with emphysema, asthma, and chronic heart and lung disease are especially sensitive to fine-particle pollution. Numerous studies have linked elevated particle levels in the air to increased hospital admissions, emergency room visits, asthma attacks, and premature deaths among those suffering from respiratory problems. Because children's lungs and respiratory systems are still developing, they are also more susceptible than healthy adults to fine particles. Exposure to fine particles is associated with increased frequency of childhood illnesses and can also reduce lung function in children. In California, DPM has been identified as a carcinogen.

ODORS

Typically, odors are regarded as an annoyance rather than a health hazard. However, manifestations of a person's reaction to foul odors can range from psychological (e.g., irritation, anger, or anxiety) to physiological (e.g., circulatory and respiratory effects, nausea, vomiting, and headache).

The ability to detect odors varies considerably among the population and overall is quite subjective. Some individuals have the ability to smell minute quantities of specific substances; others may not have the same sensitivity but may have sensitivities to odors of other substances. In addition, people may have different reactions to the same odor; an odor that is offensive to one person (e.g., from a fast-food restaurant) may be perfectly acceptable to another. It is also important to note that an unfamiliar odor is more easily detected and is more likely to cause complaints than a familiar one. This is because of the phenomenon known as odor fatigue, in which a person can become desensitized to almost any odor and recognition only occurs with an alteration in the intensity.

Quality and intensity are two properties present in any odor. The quality of an odor indicates the nature of the smell experience. For instance, if a person describes an odor as flowery or sweet, then the person is describing the quality of the odor. Intensity refers to the strength of the odor. For example, a person may use the word "strong" to describe the intensity of an odor. Odor intensity depends on the odorant concentration in the air.

When an odorous sample is progressively diluted, the odorant concentration decreases. As this occurs, the odor intensity weakens and eventually becomes so low that the detection or recognition of the odor is quite difficult. At some point during dilution, the concentration of the odorant reaches a detection threshold. An odorant concentration below the detection threshold means that the concentration in the air is not detectable by the average human.

SENSITIVE RECEPTORS

Sensitive receptors are defined as facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Examples of these sensitive receptors are residences, schools, hospitals, and daycare centers. CARB has identified the following groups of individuals as the most likely to be affected by air pollution: the elderly over 65, children under 14, athletes, and persons with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases, such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis.

Some people are much more sensitive than others to breathing fine particles (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$). People with influenza, chronic respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and the elderly may suffer

worsening illness and premature death due to breathing these fine particles. People with bronchitis can expect aggravated symptoms from breathing in fine particles. Children may experience decline in lung function due to breathing in PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$. Other groups considered sensitive are smokers and people who cannot breathe well through their noses. Exercising athletes are also considered sensitive because many breathe through their mouths during exercise. As a conservative estimate of impacts, sensitive receptors are anticipated to be located directly adjacent to new development.

AMBIENT AIR QUALITY

Both the U.S. EPA and the CARB have established ambient air quality standards for common pollutants. These ambient air quality standards represent safe levels of contaminants that avoid specific adverse health effects associated with each pollutant.

The federal and State ambient air quality standards are summarized in Table 3.3-1 for important pollutants. The federal and State ambient standards were developed independently, although both processes attempted to avoid health-related effects. As a result, the federal and State standards differ in some cases. In general, the California standards are more stringent. This is particularly true for ozone and PM_{10}.

TABLE 3.3-1: FEDERAL AND STATE AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

Pollutant	Averaging Time	Federal Primary Standard	State Standard
Ozone	1-Hour	--	0.09 ppm
	8-Hour	0.070 ppm	0.070 ppm
Carbon Monoxide	8-Hour	9.0 ppm	9.0 ppm
	1-Hour	35.0 ppm	20.0 ppm
Nitrogen Dioxide	Annual	0.053 ppm	0.03 ppm
	1-Hour	0.100 ppm	0.18 ppm
Sulfur Dioxide	Annual	0.03 ppm	--
	24-Hour	0.14 ppm	0.04 ppm
	1-Hour	0.075 ppm	0.25 ppm
PM_{10}	Annual	--	20 ug/m^3
	24-Hour	150 ug/m^3	50 ug/m^3
$PM_{2.5}$	Annual	9 ug/m^3	12 ug/m^3
	24-Hour	35 ug/m^3	--
Lead	30-Day Avg.	--	1.5 ug/m^3
	3-Month Avg.	0.15 ug/m^3	--

Notes: ppm = parts per million, ug/m3 = Micrograms per Cubic Meter
Source: California Air Resources Board, Ambient Air Quality Standards. Available at: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-08/AAQS%20Table_ADA_FINAL_07222024.pdf. Accessed May 2026.

Attainment Status

In accordance with the CCAA, the CARB is required to designate areas of the State as attainment, nonattainment, or unclassified with respect to applicable standards. An "attainment" designation for an area signifies that pollutant concentrations did not violate the applicable standard in that area. A "nonattainment" designation indicates that a pollutant concentration violated the applicable standard at least once, excluding those occasions when a violation was caused by an exceptional event, as defined in the criteria.

Depending on the frequency and severity of pollutants exceeding applicable standards, the nonattainment designation can be further classified as serious nonattainment, severe nonattainment, or extreme nonattainment, with extreme nonattainment being the most severe of the classifications. An "unclassified" designation signifies that the data do not support either an attainment or nonattainment status. The CCAA divides districts into moderate, serious, and severe air pollution categories, with increasingly stringent control requirements mandated for each category.

The U.S. EPA designates areas for ozone, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen dioxide as "does not meet the primary standards," "cannot be classified," or "better than national standards." For sulfur dioxide, areas are designated as "does not meet the primary standards," "does not meet the secondary standards," "cannot be classified," or "better than national standards." However, the CARB terminology of attainment, nonattainment, and unclassified is more frequently used.

San Joaquin County has a State designation of Attainment or Unclassified for all criteria pollutants except for ozone, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$. San Joaquin County has a national designation of either Attainment or Unclassified for all criteria pollutants except for ozone (8-hour) and $PM_{2.5}$. Table 3.3-2 presents the state and national attainment status for San Joaquin County.

TABLE 3.3-2: STATE AND NATIONAL ATTAINMENT STATUS IN SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

Criteria Pollutants	State Designations	National Designations
Ozone (O_3) – 1 Hour	Nonattainment	Attainment[1]
Ozone (O_3) – 8 Hour	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
PM_{10}	Nonattainment	Attainment
$PM_{2.5}$	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
Lead	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
Sulfates	Attainment	No Federal Standard
Hydrogen Sulfide	Unclassified	No Federal Standard
Visibility Reducing Particles	Unclassified	No Federal Standard
Vinyl Chloride	Attainment	No Federal Standard

Source: San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin Valley Attainment Status. Available at: https://www.valleyair.org/air-quality-information/ambient-air-quality-standards-valley-attainmnet-status/. Accessed May 2026.

Notes:

1. Effective June 15, 2005, EPA revoked the federal 1-hour ozone standard, including associated designations and classifications. EPA had previously classified the District as extreme nonattainment for this standard. On March 8, 2010, EPA approved the 2004 Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan. In July of 2016, EPA determined that the Valley had attained the 1-hour ozone standard based on certified data for the 2012-2014 period. Subsequently, on September 25, 2025, EPA approved the 2023 Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request for the Revoked 1-Hour Ozone Standard as meeting all CAA requirements. EPA also finalized the Valley's attainment redesignation request and terminated all anti-backsliding obligations for the revoked 1-hour ozone standard.

San Joaquin County Air Quality Monitoring

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution District (SJVAPCD) and the CARB maintain air quality monitoring sites throughout San Joaquin County that collect data for ozone and $PM_{2.5}$. In addition, air quality monitoring sites for PM_{10} are located throughout the San Joaquin Valley (though not in San Joaquin

County). It is important to note that while the State retains the one-hour standard, the federal ozone 1-hour standard was revoked by the U.S. EPA and is no longer applicable for federal standards. Best available data obtained from the monitoring sites between 2022 and 2024 (latest year of data available) is shown in Table 3.3-3, Table 3.3-4, and Table 3.3-5.

TABLE 3.3-3 AMBIENT AIR QUALITY MONITORING DATA SUMMARY (SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY) - OZONE

Year	Days > Standard				1-Hour Observations			8-Hour Averages				Year Coverage	
	State		National			State	Nat'l	State		National			
	1-Hr	8-Hr	1-Hr	8-Hr	Max.	D.V.[1]	D.V.[2]	Max.	D.V.[1]	Max.	D.V.[2]	Min	Max
2024	2	4	0	4	0.111	0.09	0.091	0.083	0.075	0.082	0.066	97	98
2023	0	0	0	0	0.086	0.14	0.087	0.069	0.114	0.068	0.064	80	95
2022	1	1	0	1	0.141	0.14	0.091	0.114	0.114	0.113	0.066	96	97

Source: California Air Resources Board (Aerometric Data Analysis and Management System or iADAM) Air Pollution Summaries.

Notes: All concentrations expressed in parts per million. The national 1-hour ozone standard was revoked in June 2005 and is no longer in effect. D.V. [1] = State Designation Value . D.V. [2]= National Design Value.

TABLE 3.3-4: AMBIENT AIR QUALITY MONITORING DATA SUMMARY (SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY) – PM_{10}

Year	Est. Days > Std.		Annual Average		High 24-Hr Average		Year Coverage
	Nat'l	State	Nat'l	State	Nat'l	State	
2024	9.6	161.2	50.2	49.6	188.6	194.5	0-0
2023	2.9	126.4	48.4	44.2	270.4	266.0	0-0
2022	3.8	171.2	56.7	54.9	250.8	251.6	0-10

Source: California Air Resources Board (Aerometric Data Analysis and Management System or iADAM) Air Pollution Summaries.

Notes: The national annual average PM_{10} standard was revoked in December 2006 and is no longer in effect. An exceedance is not necessarily a violation. Statistics may include data that are related to an exceptional event. State and national statistics may differ for the following reasons: State statistics are based on California approved samplers, whereas national statistics are based on samplers using federal reference or equivalent methods. State and national statistics may therefore be based on different samplers. National statistics are based on standard conditions. State criteria for ensuring that data are sufficiently complete for calculating valid annual averages are more stringent than the national criteria.

TABLE 3.3-5 AMBIENT AIR QUALITY MONITORING DATA SUMMARY (SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY) - $PM_{2.5}$

Year	Est. Days > Nat'l '06 Std.	Annual Average		Nat'l Ann. Std. D.V.[1]	State Annual D.V.[2]	Nat'l '06 Std. 98th Percentile	Nat'l '06 24-Hr Std. D.V.[1]	High 24-Hour Average		Year Coverage	
		Nat'l	State					Nat'l	State	Min	Max
2024	7.0	10.1	10.0	10.3	10	32.6	31	46.8	46.8	99	100
2023	3.0	7.9	7.9	9.5	10	29.5	33	40.6	40.6	97	100
2022	6.2	10.2	10.2	*	15	35.2	54	51.9	51.9	72	96

Source: California Air Resources Board (Aerometric Data Analysis and Management System or iADAM) Air Pollution Summaries.

*Notes: All concentrations expressed in parts per million. State and national statistics may differ for the following reasons: State statistics are based on California approved samplers, whereas national statistics are based on samplers using federal reference or equivalent methods. State and national statistics may therefore be based on different samplers. State criteria for ensuring that data are sufficiently complete for calculating valid annual averages are more stringent than the national criteria. D.V. [1] = State Designation Value. D.V. [2]= National Design Value. * means there was insufficient data available to determine the value.*

3.3.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Clean Air Act

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) was first signed into law in 1970. In 1977, and again in 1990, the law was substantially amended. The FCAA is the foundation for a national air pollution control effort, and it is composed of the following basic elements: NAAQS for criteria air pollutants, hazardous air pollutant standards, state attainment plans, motor vehicle emissions standards, stationary source emissions standards and permits, acid rain control measures, stratospheric ozone protection, and enforcement provisions.

The U.S. EPA is responsible for administering the FCAA. The FCAA requires the U.S. EPA to set NAAQS for several problem air pollutants based on human health and welfare criteria. Two types of NAAQS were established: primary standards, which protect public health (with an adequate margin of safety, including for sensitive populations such as children, the elderly, and individuals suffering from respiratory diseases), and secondary standards, which protect the public welfare from non-health-related adverse effects such as visibility reduction.

NAAQS standards define clean air and represent the maximum amount of pollution that can be present in outdoor air without any harmful effects on people and the environment. Existing violations of the ozone and $PM_{2.5}$ ambient air quality standards indicate that certain individuals exposed to these pollutants may experience certain health effects, including increased incidence of cardiovascular and respiratory ailments.

Although there is some variability among the health effects of the NAAQS pollutants, each has been linked to multiple adverse health effects including, among others, premature death, hospitalizations and emergency department visits for exacerbated chronic disease, and increased symptoms such as coughing and wheezing. NAAQS standards were last revised for each of the six criteria pollutant as listed below, with detail on what aspects of NAAQS changed during the most recent update:

- Ozone: On October 1, 2015, the U.S. EPA lowered the national eight-hour standard from 0.075 ppm to 0.070 ppm, providing for a more stringent standards consistent with the current California state standard.
- CO: In 2011, the primary standards were retained from the original 1971 level, without revision. The secondary standards were revoked in 1985.
- NO_2: The national NO_2 standard was most recently revised in 2010 following an exhaustive review of new literature pointed to evidence for adverse effects in asthmatics at lower NO_2 concentrations than the existing national standard.
- SO_2: On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO_2 standard was established and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 99th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 75 ppb.

- PM: In February 2024, the EPA lowered the federal primary PM2.5 annual standard to 9.0 ug/m3 from the 12.0 ug/m3 standard set in 2012. The secondary annual standard remains at 15.0 ug/m3.
- Lead: The national standard for lead was revised on October 15, 2008 to a rolling 3-month average. In 2016, the primary and secondary standards were retained.

The law recognizes the importance for each state to locally carry out the requirements of the FCAA, as special consideration of local industries, geography, housing patterns, etc. are needed to have full comprehension of the local pollution control problems. As a result, the U.S. EPA requires each state to develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that explains how each state will implement the FCAA within their jurisdiction. A SIP is a collection of rules and regulations that a particular state will implement to control air quality within their jurisdiction. The CARB is the state agency that is responsible for preparing the California SIP.

Transportation Conformity

Transportation conformity requirements were added to the FCAA in the 1990 amendments, and the U.S. EPA adopted implementing regulations in 1997. See §176 of the FCAA (42 U.S.C. §7506) and 40 CFR Part 93, Subpart A. Transportation conformity serves much the same purpose as general conformity: it ensures that transportation plans, transportation improvement programs, and projects that are developed, funded, or approved by the United States Department of Transportation or that are recipients of funds under the Federal Transit Act or from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), conform to the SIP as approved or promulgated by U.S. EPA.

Currently, transportation conformity applies in nonattainment areas and maintenance areas. Under transportation conformity, a determination of conformity with the applicable SIP must be made by the agency responsible for the project, such as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Council of Governments, or a federal agency. The agency making the determination is also responsible for all the requirements relating to public participation. Generally, a project will be considered in conformance if it is in the transportation improvement plan and the transportation improvement plan is incorporated in the SIP. If an action is covered under transportation conformity, it does not need to be separately evaluated under general conformity.

Transportation Control Measures

One particular aspect of the SIP development process is the consideration of potential control measures as a part of making progress towards clean air goals. While most SIP control measures are aimed at reducing emissions from stationary sources, some are typically also created to address mobile or transportation sources. These are known as transportation control measures (TCMs). TCM strategies are designed to reduce vehicle miles traveled and trips, or vehicle idling and associated air pollution. These goals are achieved by developing attractive and convenient alternatives to single-occupant vehicle use. Examples of TCMs include ridesharing programs, transportation infrastructure improvements such as adding bicycle and carpool lanes, and expansion of public transit.

STATE

California Clean Air Act

The California Clean Air Act (CCAA) was first signed into law in 1988. The CCAA provides a comprehensive framework for air quality planning and regulation, and spells out, in statute, the state's air quality goals, planning and regulatory strategies, and performance. The CARB is the agency responsible for administering the CCAA. The CARB established ambient air quality standards pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code [Section 39606(b)], which are similar to the federal standards.

California Air Quality Standards

Although NAAQS are determined by the U.S. EPA, states have the ability to set standards that are more stringent than the federal standards. As such, California established more stringent ambient air quality standards. Federal and state ambient air quality standards have been established for ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, suspended particulates and lead. In addition, California has created standards for pollutants that are not covered by federal standards. Although there is some variability among the health effects of the CAAQS pollutants, each has been linked to multiple adverse health effects including, among others, premature death, hospitalizations and emergency department visits for exacerbated chronic disease, and increased symptoms such as coughing and wheezing. The existing state and federal primary standards for major pollutants are shown in Table 3.3-1.

CARB Mobile-Source Regulation

The State of California is responsible for controlling emissions from the operation of motor vehicles in the State. Rather than mandating the use of specific technology or the reliance on a specific fuel, the CARB motor vehicle standards specify the allowable grams of pollution per mile driven. In other words, the regulations focus on the reductions needed rather than on the manner in which they are achieved. Towards this end, the CARB has adopted regulations which require auto manufacturers to phase in less polluting vehicles.

Tanner Air Toxics Act (TACs)

California regulates TACs primarily through the Tanner Air Toxics Act (AB 1807) and the Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act of 1987 (AB 2588). The Tanner Act sets forth a formal procedure for CARB to designate substances as TACs. This includes research, public participation, and scientific peer review before CARB can designate a substance as a TAC. To date, CARB has identified more than 21 TACs and has adopted U.S. EPA's list of HAPs as TACs. Most recently, diesel PM was added to the CARB list of TACs. Once a TAC is identified, CARB then adopts an Airborne Toxics Control Measure (ATCM) for sources that emit that particular TAC. If there is a safe threshold for a substance at which there is no toxic effect, the control measure must reduce exposure below that threshold. If there is no safe threshold, the measure must incorporate Best Available Control Technologies (BACT) to minimize emissions.

AB 2588 requires that existing facilities that emit toxic substances above a specified level prepare a toxic-emission inventory, prepare a risk assessment if emissions are significant, notify the public of significant risk levels, and prepare and implement risk reduction measures. CARB has adopted diesel exhaust control measures and more stringent emission standards for various on-road mobile sources of emissions, including transit buses and off-road diesel equipment (e.g., tractors, generators). In February 2000, CARB adopted a new public-transit bus-fleet rule and emission standards for new urban buses. These rules and standards provide for (1) more stringent emission standards for some new urban bus engines, beginning with 2002 model year engines; (2) zero-emission bus demonstration and purchase requirements applicable to transit agencies; and (3) reporting requirements under which transit agencies must demonstrate compliance with the urban transit bus fleet rule.

Heavy-Duty Low NOx Omnibus

The CARB approved the Heavy-Duty Low NOx Omnibus regulation on August 28, 2020, which established stringent NOx engine emission standards that are 90 percent below current levels on existing certification cycles and lower NOx standards on new certification cycles to control emissions over a broader range of vehicle operation, including idling, low load, and highway operation. In addition, the regulation revised the heavy-duty in-use testing program to make it more effective in ensuring compliance with the in-use emission standards over a broader range of vehicle operation and lengthened the useful life and emissions warranty period requirements to reflect the longevity of heavy-duty vehicles. The CARB proposed and approved amendments to the Omnibus regulation to provide additional compliance flexibility to engine manufacturers while ensuring the proposed amendments will not reduce the emissions benefits of the program.

Assembly Bill 170

Assembly Bill 170, Reyes (AB 170), was adopted by state lawmakers in 2003, creating Government Code Section 65302.1, which requires cities and counties in the San Joaquin Valley to amend their general plans to include data and analysis, comprehensive goals, policies, and feasible implementation strategies designed to improve air quality. The elements to be amended include, but are not limited to, those elements dealing with land use, circulation, housing, conservation, and open space. Section 65302.1.c identifies four areas of air quality discussion required in these amendments:

- A report describing local air quality conditions, attainment status, and state and federal air quality and transportation plans;
- A summary of local, district, state, and federal policies, programs, and regulations to improve air quality;
- A comprehensive set of goals, policies, and objectives to improve air quality; and
- Feasible implementation measures designed to achieve these goals.

California Energy Code

The California Energy Code (CCR Title 24, Part 6), which is incorporated into the Building Energy Efficiency Standards, was first established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. Although these standards were not originally intended to reduce GHG emissions, increased energy efficiency results in decreased GHG emissions because energy efficient buildings require less electricity and thus less consumption of fossil fuels, which emit GHGs. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods.

The most recent Energy Code (also known as Title 24) standards are the 2025 Energy Code standards. The CEC updates the standards every three years and buildings permitted on or after January 1, 2026, must comply with the 2025 standards. The 2025 standards expand the use of heat pumps in newly constructed residential buildings, encourage electric-readiness, and strengthen ventilation standards, amongst others.

CALGreen

The purpose of the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) (CCR Title 24, Part 11) is to improve public health and safety and to promote the general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impact or positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: 1) planning and design; 2) energy efficiency; 3) water efficiency and conservation; 4) material conservation and resource efficiency; and 5) environmental quality. CALGreen, which became effective on January 1, 2011, instituted mandatory minimum environmental performance standards for all ground-up new construction of commercial, low-rise residential uses, and State-owned buildings, as well as schools and hospitals.

The latest version of CALGreen is the 2025 CALGreen Code, which became effective on January 1, 2026. Between 2010 and 2025, continuous updates and additions have been made to CALGreen, including water conservation and recycling, electric vehicle infrastructure and charging, and changes intended to eliminate conflicts with the California Energy Code, which is Part 6 of Title 24.

LOCAL

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

The primary role of SJVAPCD is to develop plans and implement control measures in the SJVAB to control air pollution. These controls primarily affect stationary sources such as industry and power plants. Rules and regulations have been developed by SJVAPCD to control air pollution from a wide range of air pollution sources. SJVAPCD also provides uniform procedures for assessing potential air quality impacts of proposed projects and for preparing the air quality section of environmental documents.

AIR QUALITY PLANNING

The FCAA requires areas that exceed the health-based national ambient air quality standards to develop State Implementation Plans (SIP) that demonstrate how they will attain the standards by

specified dates. California adopted the 2022 State Strategy for the SIP, which includes measures and commitments to reduce emissions from State-regulated sources to support attainment of the 70 ppb standard in all nonattainment areas across California.

The following describes the air plans prepared by the SJVAPCD, which are incorporated by reference per CEQA Guidelines Section 15150.

1-HOUR OZONE PLAN

The SJVAPCD's most recent 1-hour ozone plan, the 2013 Plan for the Revoked 1-hour Ozone Standard, demonstrated attainment of the 1-hour ozone standard by 2017. In July of 2016, the U.S. EPA determined that the SJVAB had attained the 1-hour ozone standard based on certified data for the 2012-2014 period. Subsequently, on September 25, 2025, EPA approved the 2023 Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request for the Revoked 1-Hour Ozone Standard as meeting all CAA requirements. EPA also finalized the SJVAPCD's attainment redesignation request and terminated all anti-backsliding obligations for the revoked 1-hour ozone standard.

8-HOUR OZONE PLAN

The SJVAPCD adopted the 2022 Plan for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard on December 15, 2022. This plan satisfies FCAA requirements and ensures expeditious attainment of the 70 ppb 8-hour ozone standard.[15]

PM_{10} PLAN

Based on PM_{10} measurements from 2003 to 2006, the U.S. EPA found that the SJVAB has reached federal PM_{10} standards. On September 21, 2007, the SJVAPCD's Governing Board adopted the 2007 PM_{10} Maintenance Plan and Request for Redesignation. This plan demonstrates that the valley will continue to meet the PM_{10} standard. U.S. EPA approved the document and on September 25, 2008, the SJVAB was redesignated to attainment/maintenance.[16]

PM2.5 PLAN

The U.S. EPA established the 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ annual standard of 12 µg/m3 in 2013. The U.S. EPA initially designated the SJVAB as Moderate nonattainment for the 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ standard in 2015. The SJVAPCD submitted the 2016 $PM_{2.5}$ Plan to address Moderate area requirements for the 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ standard and to request to be reclassified to Serious nonattainment. The U.S. EPA approved the Moderate Plan and reclassified the SJVAPCD to Serious nonattainment, effective December 2021.

The SJVAPCD adopted the *Initial State Implementation Plan (SIP) Requirements for the 2012 Annual $PM_{2.5}$ Standard* on October 19, 2023, to fulfill the first portion of SIP elements required by the FCAA for Serious $PM_{2.5}$ nonattainment areas, including an updated emissions inventory, precursor demonstration, and the demonstration that Best Available Control Measures requirements continue

[15] San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, 2022 Ozone Plan for the San Joaquin Valley. Available at: https://www.valleyair.org/rules-and-planning/air-quality-plans/ozone-plans/2022-ozone-plan-for-the-san-joaquin-valley/. Accessed May 2026.

[16] San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, *Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts*, March 19, 2015.

to be satisfied in the SJVAB. Additionally, the SJVAPCD fulfilled Nonattainment New Source Review requirements through amendments to District Rule 2201 (New and Modified Stationary Source Review Rule) in April 2023. The SJVAPCD adopted the 2024 Plan for the 2012 Annual $PM_{2.5}$ Standard on June 20, 2024 to fulfill the remaining FCAA requirements, including the final modeling analysis, attainment strategy and emission reduction commitments, reasonable further progress/quantitative milestones, and contingency measures. This plan addresses the federal 2012 annual $PM_{2.5}$ standard of 12 µg/m³.[17]

SJVAPCD RULES AND REGULATIONS

Since 1992, the SJVAPCD has adopted over 670 rules to implement an on-going control strategy to reduce emissions in the SJVAB in order to reach attainment of the federal standards. A summary of the most relevant rules and regulations is provided below.

SJVAPCD Indirect Source Review

The Indirect Source Review Rule (Rule 9510) is intended to reduce ozone precursors (i.e., ROG and NOx) and PM_{10} emissions from new land use development projects. Rule 9510 targets the indirect emissions from vehicles and construction equipment associated with these projects and applies to both construction and operational-related impacts. The rule requires all subject, nonexempt projects to mitigate both construction and operational period emissions by (1) applying feasible SJVAPCD-approved mitigation measures, or (2) paying any applicable fees to support programs that reduce emissions. Off-site emissions reduction fees (off-site fee) are required for projects that do not achieve the required emissions reductions through on-site emission reduction measures.

To determine how an individual project would satisfy Rule 9510, each project would submit an air impact assessment (AIA) to the SJVAPCD as early as possible, but no later than prior to the project's final discretionary approval, to identify the project's baseline unmitigated emissions inventory for indirect sources: on-site exhaust emissions from construction activities and operational activities from mobile and area sources of emissions (excludes fugitive dust and permitted sources). Rule 9510 requires the following reductions, which are levels that the SJVAPCD has identified as necessary, based on their air quality management plans, to reach attainment for ozone and particulate matter:

Construction Equipment Emissions

The exhaust emissions for construction equipment greater than 50 horsepower (hp) used or associated with the development project shall be reduced by the following amounts from the statewide average as estimated by CARB:

- 20 percent of the total NOx emissions
- 45 percent of the total PM_{10} exhaust emissions

[17] San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, 2024 Plan for the 2012 PM2.5 Standard. Available at: https://www.valleyair.org/rules-and-planning/air-quality-plans/particulate-matter-plans/2024-plan-for-the-2012-pm25-standard/. Accessed May 2026.

Mitigation measures may include those that reduce construction emissions on-site by using less polluting construction equipment, which can be achieved by utilizing add-on controls, cleaner fuels, or newer, lower emitting equipment.

Operational Emissions

- NOx Emissions. Applicants shall reduce 33.3 percent of the project's operational baseline NOx emissions over a period of 10 years as quantified in the approved AIA.
- PM_{10} Emissions. Applicants shall reduce of 50 percent of the project's operational baseline PM_{10} emissions over a period of 10 years as quantified in the approved AIA.

These requirements listed above can be met through any combination of on-site emission reduction measures. In the event that a project cannot achieve the above standards through imposition of mitigation measures, then the project would be required to pay the applicable off-site fees. These fees are used to fund various incentive programs that cover the purchase of new equipment, engine retrofit, and education and outreach.

Fugitive PM_{10} Prohibitions

SJVAPCD controls fugitive PM_{10} through Regulation VIII, Fugitive PM_{10} Prohibitions. The purpose of this regulation is to reduce ambient concentrations of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ by requiring actions to prevent, reduce, or mitigate anthropogenic (human caused) fugitive dust emissions.

- Regulation VIII, Rule 8021 applies to any construction, demolition, excavation, extraction, and other earthmoving activities, including, but not limited to, land clearing, grubbing, scraping, travel on-site, and travel on access roads to and from the site.
- Regulation VIII, Rule 8031 applies to the outdoor handling, storage, and transport of any bulk material.
- Regulation VIII, Rule 8041 applies to sites where carryout or trackout has occurred or may occur on paved roads or the paved shoulders of public roads.
- Regulation VIII, Rule 8051 applies to any open area having 0.5 acre or more within urban areas or 3.0 acres or more within rural areas, and contains at least 1,000 square feet of disturbed surface area.
- Regulation VIII, Rule 8061 applies to any new or existing public or private paved or unpaved road, road construction project, or road modification project.
- Regulation VIII, Rule 8071 applies to any unpaved vehicle/equipment traffic area.
- Regulation VIII, Rule 8081 applies to off-field agricultural sources.

Sources regulated are required to provide Dust Control Plans that meet the regulation requirements. Under Rule 8021, a Dust Control Plan is required for any residential project that will include 10 or more acres of disturbed surface area, a nonresidential project with 5 or more acres of disturbed surface area, or a project that relocates 2,500 cubic yards per day of bulk materials for at least three days. The Dust Control Plan is required to be submitted to SJVAPCD prior to the start of any

construction activity. The Dust Control Plan must also describe fugitive dust control measure to be implemented before, during, and after any dust-generating activity. For sites smaller than those listed above, the project is still required to notify SJVAPCD a minimum of 48 hours prior to commencing earthmoving activities.

National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants

Rule 4002 applies in the event an existing building will be renovated, partially demolished or removed (National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants); this rule applies to all sources of Hazardous Air Pollutants.

Cutback, Slow Cure, and Emulsified Asphalt, Paving and Maintenance Operations

If asphalt paving will be used, then paving operations of the proposed project will be subject to Rule 4641. This rule applies to the manufacture and use of cutback asphalt, slow cure asphalt and emulsified asphalt for paving and maintenance operations.

Nuisance Odors

SJVAPCD controls nuisance odors through implementation of Rule 4102, Nuisance. Pursuant to this rule, "a person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other materials which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public or which endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such person or the public or which cause or have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property."

Employer Based Trip Reduction Program

SJVAPCD has implemented Rule 9410, Employer Based Trip Reduction. The purpose of this rule is to reduce VMT from private vehicles used by employees to commute to and from their worksites to reduce emissions of NOx, ROG, and particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$). The rule applies to employers with at least 100 employees. Employers are required to implement an Employer Trip Reduction Implementation Plan (ETRIP) for each worksite with 100 or more eligible employees to meet applicable targets specified in the rule. Employers are required to facilitate the participation of the development of ETRIPs by providing information to its employees explaining the requirements and applicability of this rule. Employers are required to prepare and submit an ETRIP for each worksite to the District. The ETRIP must be updated annually. Under this rule, employers shall collect information on the modes of transportation used for each eligible employee's commutes both to and from work for every day of the commute verification period, as defined in using either the mandatory commute verification method or a representative survey method. Annual reporting includes the results of the commute verification for the previous calendar year along with the measures implemented as outlined in the ETRIP and, if necessary, any updates to the ETRIP.

Mountain House Municipal Code

Mountain House Municipal Code Title 9, Division 10, Chapter 7, *Performance Standards,* contains standards intended to mitigate dangerous or objectionable environmental impacts of commercial and industrial uses in the City. Section 9-10-703, *Air Quality*, specifies that all emissions shall be subject to the rules and regulations of the SJVAPCD. Section 9-10-704, *Odor*, specifies that all uses

shall be so operated as not to cause odors which are perceptible and offensive to the average person at any residential lot line. Primary and secondary safeguard systems shall be provided to control odors. Section 9-10-710, Evaluation of Proposed Projects, states that applicants for industrial or commercial projects requiring discretionary approval may be required to submit information to the City review authority that includes: measurement of the expected amount or rate of emission of any dangerous or objectionable elements from the premises; and specifications for the mechanisms and techniques used or proposed to be used in restricting the emission of any dangerous or objectionable elements from the premises.

3.3.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed General Plan will have a significant impact on the environment associated with air quality if it will:

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan;
- Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard;
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; and/or
- Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

METHODOLOGY

Nearly all development projects within the SJVAB, from general plans to individual development projects, have the potential to generate air pollutants, making it more difficult to attain State and federal ambient air quality standards. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate air quality impacts to comply with CEQA. As identified in the SJVAPCD's *Guidance for Assessing and Mitigation Air Quality Impacts* (GAMAQI), land use decisions are critical to improving air quality within the SJVAB because land use patterns greatly influence transportation needs and motor vehicle emissions are the largest source of air pollution. Land use decisions and project design elements such as preventing urban sprawl, encouraging mixed-use development, and project designs that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) have proven benefit for air quality.

The analysis presented below was completed to include both a qualitative and a quantitative approach. The qualitative analysis discusses the proposed General Plan's consistency with the SJVAPCD's GAMAQI and other applicable rules and regulations. The quantitative analysis presents the proposed General Plan's VMT projections associated with buildout of the General Plan, which were developed using the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) Travel Demand Model, in comparison to the population and job projections associated with buildout of the General Plan. The VMT analysis is described in greater detail in Section 3.14 (Transportation).

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.3-1: General Plan implementation would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants (Significant and Unavoidable)

CEQA requires lead agencies to determine whether a Project is consistent with all applicable air quality plans. The SJVAPCD's most current air quality plans for PM, ozone, and carbon monoxide are (respectively) the *2024 Plan for the 2012 Annual PM2.5 Standard*, the *2022 Ozone Plan for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard*, and the *2004 Revisions to the Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Plan*. These plans are also known as "Air Quality Attainment Plans". The SJVAPCD's Air Quality Attainment Plans include measures to promote air quality elements in county and city general plans as one of the primary indirect source programs. Consistency with the measures in these plans is typically determined based on individual projects' consistency with the criteria pollutant and other air quality thresholds as promulgated by the SJVAPCD.

The San Joaquin Valley is in State-level non-attainment for ozone, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. The SJVAPCD does not provide criteria pollutant thresholds for general plans (such as the proposed Project); instead, thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants are established at the project-level by the SJVAPCD. As such, there is no programmatic threshold of significance established for criteria pollutants for which to compare the proposed General Plan.

This EIR explicitly acknowledges that the proposed General Plan will allow notable amounts of new residential and non-residential growth in Mountain House, as described in detail in Chapter 2.0 (Project Description). This new growth will undoubtedly result in increases in the emissions of criteria pollutants compared to existing conditions, most notably from mobile-source and area-source emissions increases associated with increased growth and development in the Planning Area. Since specific projects are unknown at this time, the level of intensity of construction over these 20 years would be speculative and a quantitative evaluation of an individual project's construction related emissions cannot be undertaken accurately. Operational emissions for the proposed General Plan would also be speculative to evaluate at this time, given the uncertainty regarding actual specific tenants. Subsequent projects would undergo their own evaluation relative to potential air quality impacts and would be subject to compliance with applicable air quality regulations. However, because construction and operational emissions for individual projects would vary substantially, the implementation of individual projects within the General Plan has the potential to conflict with the SJVAPCD's thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants at the project-level, resulting in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria pollutants.

The proposed General Plan includes an extensive list of policies and actions that are specifically aimed at improving air quality. These policies and actions, which are provided below, would minimize potential air quality impacts, including by reducing the number and length of vehicle trips, supporting green and sustainable building development, promoting the use of renewable energy, and encouraging the conservation of resources.

The policies and actions included in the proposed General Plan cover the full breadth of air quality issues as recommended in the applicable air quality plans. If approval of the proposed General Plan would cause disruption, delay, or otherwise hinder the implementation of any air quality plan control measure, it may be inconsistent with the applicable air quality plans. The proposed General Plan was developed in part to comply with applicable requirements of State law, including Government Code Section 65302.1, and would not cause the disruption, delay, or otherwise hinder the implementation of any air quality plan control measure; therefore, it is consistent with the applicable air quality plans. All future development and infrastructure projects within the Planning Area would be subject to the General Plan goals, policies, and actions included below, which were adopted to reduce emissions and air quality impacts. However, while no site-specific development projects are proposed as part of the Project, buildout under the proposed General Plan would result in higher levels of growth when compared to existing conditions. As such, total emissions levels associated with Project buildout would increase, which may indirectly hinder the SJVAPCD's efforts to reduce total emissions of criteria pollutants.

While implementation of the proposed General Plan would be consistent with the applicable air quality plans, it would still lead to overall increases in emissions of criteria pollutants, given the total growth projected upon full buildout of the proposed General Plan.

The following quantitative analysis describes VMT and population increases associated with implementation of the General Plan. As part of the transportation analysis, AMG (the traffic consultant) modeled VMT for the Planning Area for air quality analysis purposes; refer to Section 3.14 (Transportation) and Appendix C.

As described in Section 2.0 of this EIR, buildout of the existing Master Plan is projected to result in a Planning Area population of 43,028 and 9,814 jobs, representing a total service population of 52,842 for the future baseline condition. Buildout of the proposed General Plan is projected to result in a Planning Area population of 54,258 and 8,199 jobs, representing a total service population of 62,457 for the future proposed Project condition. Table 3.3-6 compares the combined population and jobs growth (i.e. service population) anticipated under buildout of the existing Master Plan and the proposed Project.

TABLE 3.3-6: FUTURE SERVICE POPULATION (JOBS + POPULATION) GROWTH UNDER EXISTING MASTER PLAN AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN

Future (2045) Jobs + Population in Mountain House under the Existing Master Plan	52,842
Future (2045) Jobs + Population in Mountain House under the Proposed General Plan	62,457
Percent increase in Jobs + Population between the Existing and Proposed Future Scenarios	18.2%

Sources: City of Mountain House & De Novo Planning Group, 2026. Refer to Table 2.0-2 in Section 2.0-2 within this EIR for further detail.

Table 3.3-7 shows the future (2046) baseline scenario VMT and projected VMT following buildout of the proposed Project. As shown, the future (2046) baseline daily VMT for the Planning Area is approximately 1,316,910 and the VMT for the Planning Area under the proposed Project scenario would be approximately 1,946,093.

TABLE 3.3-7: FUTURE VMT UNDER EXISTING MASTER PLAN AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN

Future (2046) VMT in Mountain House under the Existing Master Plan	1,316,910

Future (2046) VMT in Mountain House under the Proposed General Plan	1,946,093
Percent increase in VMT between the Existing and Proposed Future Scenarios	47.8%

Source: AMG, 2026.
Note: VMT modeling reflects forecast conditions for the 2046 horizon year, consistent with the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) Travel Demand Model; refer to Section 3.14, Transportation.

As shown in the two tables above, implementation of the proposed Project would result in an approximately 47.8 percent increase in VMT, which is greater than the projected 18.2 percent increase in combined population and jobs, relative to the two scenarios. Because the growth rate associated with the proposed General Plan is anticipated to be slower than the VMT increase associated with it, the proposed Project is anticipated to result in VMT increases on a per service population basis. This is largely driven by the relatively longer distances traveled per day by residential uses compared with commercial or other job-generating uses. Since Mountain House, under buildout of the General Plan, would generate a larger service population (driven by increases in residences) compared with what is anticipated under the existing Master Plan, the VMT increase associated with the General Plan would be greater than the increase in service population, as shown in Table 3.3-6 and Table 3.3-7.

The proposed General Plan includes numerous goals, policies and implementation actions which would further the fundamental goals of the SJVAPCD in reducing emissions of criteria pollutants associated with VMT, reducing building energy usage, and increasing opportunities for transit ridership in Mountain House and the surrounding areas. The list below provides those General Plan policies and actions that would work to further reduce criteria pollutant emissions, including City review of projects for conformance with applicable air quality plans and regulations, conducting comprehensive land use planning, reducing energy demands, and reducing VMT by providing additional pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities and opportunities, promoting non-vehicle travel modes, increasing regional connectivity, implementing a bicycle and trail network, and ensuring regional coordination on trip and VMT reduction efforts. For example, proposed Land Use Element Policy LU-1.2 directs the City to ensure that land use decisions consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. Policy LU-2.4 promotes targeted infill development by directing the City to allow and encourage infill development at densities consistent with applicable land use designations, and to ensure that design review for infill projects is not used as a basis for reducing density or intensity below what is allowed by the applicable land use designation. Proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-1.6 directs the City to implement a safe, accessible, and well-maintained bicycle and trail network that links neighborhoods with parks, open space areas, recreational trails, schools, and community destinations. Policy RM-6.1 requires new development and City operations to incorporate all applicable energy efficiency requirements and energy-saving design features. Other goals, policies, and actions that would further the fundamental goals of the SJVAPCD are provided below.

Compliance with the applicable policies and actions in the proposed General Plan, as well as the Municipal Code, applicable CARB and SJVAPCD rules and regulations, and Title 24 energy efficiency standards, would reduce potential air quality emissions associated with the construction and

operation of future development projects implemented under the General Plan, including criteria pollutants for which the SJVAB is in non-attainment. Furthermore, future individual projects implemented under the General Plan will be required to comply with CEQA requirements and provide their own environmental assessments to determine air quality impacts from the construction and operation of their projects. However, even with implementation of the General Plan policies and actions and applicable CARB and SJVAPCD rules and regulations that would reduce criteria pollutant emissions, since the proposed General Plan would increase VMT at a rate faster than the combined increase in jobs and population growth, this impact is considered ***significant and unavoidable***. There is no additional feasible mitigation available that would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. The land use approach taken by the General Plan minimizes urban sprawl by promoting a compact land use pattern with an emphasis on complete neighborhoods, targeted infill development, mixed-use design integration, and pedestrian-friendly environments, among other smart growth features. However, given the increase in residential units associated with buildout of the General Plan compared with the anticipated buildout associated with the existing Master Plan, VMT associated with buildout of the General Plan would be larger than the increase in service population between these two scenarios.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-1: Comprehensive Land Use Planning. A balanced land use pattern that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options, offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities, and promoting a robust local economy.

Policy LU-1.2: Complete Neighborhoods. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.3: Comprehensive Land Use Analysis. Land use decisions should include evaluation of both fiscal impacts (costs and revenues to the City) and qualitative community benefits, including public health, environmental quality, housing affordability, and equitable access to services, to ensure long-term community sustainability.

Policy LU-1.5: Town Center. Create opportunities for mixed-use development and pedestrian-friendly design within the Town Center to enable residents to live close to businesses and employment, improving multi-modal travel and increasing social interaction.

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.4: Targeted Infill Development. Allow and encourage infill development at densities consistent with applicable land use designations. Design review for infill projects shall focus on compatibility of building materials, landscaping, and architectural quality, and shall not be used as a basis for reducing density or intensity below what is allowed by the applicable land use designation.

Policy LU-2.5: Land Use Compatibility. The City shall require that land use decisions and development approvals include analysis of compatibility between adjacent land uses, with particular attention to potential nuisance impacts (noise, odor, light, vibration, and truck traffic) on sensitive receptors including residences, schools, daycare centers, and medical facilities. The City shall require appropriate buffers, setbacks, landscaping, hours of operation restrictions, or architectural treatments to ensure compatibility and protect sensitive receptors from significant adverse impacts.

Policy LU-2.6: Mixed-Use Design Integration. Require residential and non-residential portions of mixed-use buildings and sites to be well-integrated through site and building design that ensures compatibility among different uses on the same site.

Policy LU-3.2: Pedestrian-Friendly Environments. Prioritize pedestrian-oriented design and connectivity in new developments by incorporating tree-lined sidewalks, active street fronts, and human-scale building frontages to create visually appealing, safe environments with seamless access to the surrounding street network.

Policy LU-3.6: Sustainable Design. Promote environmentally responsive design by integrating natural elements, such as drought tolerant landscaping, efficient irrigation systems, and energy-efficient building materials and design, into public and private spaces.

Circulation Element

Goal CIR-1: Safe and Complete Streets. A safe and efficient roadway system that accommodates all users and provides connections between neighborhoods, employment areas, and regional transportation corridors.

Policy CIR-1.1: Multimodal Street Network. The City shall design and maintain a multimodal street network that accommodates motorists and freight vehicles while ensuring safe and accessible travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-1.2: Complete Streets. The City shall plan, design, construct, and maintain transportation facilities as Complete Streets that provide safe, accessible, and convenient travel for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets features shall be incorporated into all new roadway construction and significant reconstruction projects.

Policy CIR-1.6: Connectivity. Maintain strong connectivity within the roadway network to distribute traffic and reduce congestion.

Policy CIR-1.7: Traffic Calming. Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods and near schools to promote safety and minimize cut-through traffic on local streets.

Policy CIR-1.8: Truck Routes. Maintain a network of designated local truck routes to facilitate goods movement to regional roads and to discourage the use of residential roads.

Policy CIR-1.9: Accessibility. Ensure transportation facilities remain accessible to mobility-impaired and visually impaired users, such as individuals with disabilities and seniors.

Action CIR-1c: Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods, including roundabouts, curb extensions, speed feedback signs, median islands, and raised crosswalks. Priority should be given to neighborhoods with a demonstrated need based on public outreach and other criteria that may include safety data, vehicle speeds/volumes, and pedestrian activity.

Action CIR-1g: Monitor traffic volumes and safety conditions through monitored TDMs along major corridors and update improvement priorities as needed.

Action CIR-1h: Review and update the City's designated truck routes as needed while considering the potential mobility conflicts and the location of sensitive land uses.

Goal CIR-2: Connected Active Transportation. A safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle network linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, commercial areas, and community destinations.

Policy CIR-2.1: Pedestrian Network. Develop and maintain a continuous pedestrian network that enhances walkability through safe and attractive pedestrian infrastructure.

Policy CIR-2.2: Bicycle Network. Expand high-quality bicycle infrastructure to support riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-2.5: Bicycle Facilities. Provide secure bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities at key destinations and qualifying private development projects.

Policy CIR-2.6: Multi-Use Trails Network. Expand and enhance the City's active transportation network by providing multi-use trails along creek and utilities corridors and open space areas.

Policy CIR-2.7: Walkable Neighborhoods. Encourage development patterns that support walkable neighborhoods.

Action CIR-2a: Continue to implement and periodically update the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

Action CIR-2b: Construct bicycle lanes and shared-use paths along key corridors, including Central Parkway, Great Valley Parkway, De Anza Boulevard, Arturo Boulevard, and Mustang Way.

Action CIR-2c: Improve pedestrian crossings near schools, parks, and community facilities.

Action CIR-2d: Install bicycle parking, lighting, and wayfinding signage at major destinations.

Action CIR-2e: Explore opportunities to incorporate multi-use trail connections along Mountain House Creek and open space corridors.

Action CIR-2f: Pursue State and federal funding programs for active transportation improvements such as those identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Goal CIR-3: Transit and Regional Connectivity: Improve connections between Mountain House and regional transportation systems while expanding local transit opportunities.

Policy CIR-3.1: Regional Transit Service. Support regional transit service connecting Mountain House with surrounding communities.

Policy CIR-3.2: Transit-Supportive Development. Encourage transit-supportive development in the Town Center and near major activity centers.

Policy CIR-3.3: First- and Last-Mile Connections. Improve first- and last-mile connections between neighborhoods and transit services.

Policy CIR-3.4: Mobility Hubs. Support the development of mobility hubs to serve as centralized, convenient points linking a variety of transportation options

Policy CIR-3.5: Regional Coordination. Coordinate with regional transit providers to expand transit service in Mountain House.

Policy CIR-3.6: Innovation. Support innovative transit options including micro-transit and on-demand services.

Action CIR-3a: Coordinate with regional transportation providers to expand transit service and provide enhanced amenities for safe and comfortable transit access.

Action CIR-3b: Identify and plan for mobility hub locations within the Town Center, adjacent to I -205 and major activity centers.

Action CIR-3c: Improve first- and last-mile connections through sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and wayfinding.

Action CIR-3d: Evaluate the feasibility of local shuttle, circulator services, or autonomous shuttle.

Action CIR-3e: Advocate for the development of a regional mobility hub in Mountain House that includes park-and-ride facilities serving regional transit routes.

Action CIR-3f: Partner with neighboring jurisdictions and regional transit providers to expand regional rail and bus transit projects serving Mountain House to include ACE and Valley Link.

Goal CIR-4: Sustainable Mobility: Promote transportation choices that reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and support environmental sustainability.

Policy CIR-4.1: Compact Development Patterns. Coordinate land use and transportation planning to support compact development patterns.

Policy CIR-4.2: Transportation Demand Management. The City shall continue to implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program consistent with the requirements of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and regional air quality plans. The TDM program shall include measures such as carpooling, vanpooling, telecommuting, transit subsidies, and bicycle facilities. The City shall continue to require TDM programs for major employers and large development projects as a condition of approval.

Policy CIR-4.3: Reduce VMT. Incorporate Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction strategies into land use and transportation decisions, including promoting infill development, mixed-use projects, transit-oriented design, and pedestrian-friendly environments that reduce the need for vehicle travel. New development projects shall be evaluated for VMT performance consistent with Action CIR-4a and State CEQA guidelines.

Policy CIR-4.4: Shared Mobility. Promote shared mobility services.

Policy CIR-4.5: Reduce GHG Emissions. Support strategies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Action CIR-4a: Require proposed development projects that could have a potentially significant VMT impact to consider reasonable and feasible project modifications, transportation demand management programs, and other measures during the project design and environmental review stage of project development that would reduce VMT effects in a manner consistent with State guidance on VMT reduction.

Action CIR-4b: Require new development to incorporate electric vehicle charging in accordance with the California Green Building Standards Code. Explore opportunities to install electric vehicle charging stations at public facilities.

Action CIR-4c: As need for transit grows, review and consider alternatives to conventional transit systems, such as smaller shuttle buses (micro-transit), on-demand transit services, or transportation networking company services that connect neighborhood centers to local and regional activity centers with greater cost efficiencies.

Action CIR-4d: As new and evolving transportation technologies and mobility services (e.g. autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, electric bicycles and scooters, micro-mobility options, transportation network companies, and smart cities infrastructure) are implemented and used by the public, review and update City policies and plans to maximize the benefit to the public of such technologies and services without adversely affecting the City's transportation network. Updates to the City's policies and plans may cover topics such as electric vehicle charging stations, smart parking sensors and curb space management, changes in parking supply requirements, policies regarding electric bicycle and scooter use, autonomous shuttle service, etc.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-1.6: Bicycle and Trail Network. Encourage a safe, accessible, and well-maintained bicycle and trail network that links neighborhoods with parks, open space areas, recreational trails, schools, and community destinations.

Goal RM-5: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions that support a healthier and more resilient community.

Policy RM-5.1: Regional Cooperation. Support regional efforts by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, California Air Resources Board, San Joaquin Council of Governments, regional transit providers, utilities, and other agencies to improve regional air quality and support implementation of greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies.

Policy RM-5.2: Sensitive Receptor Protection. Protect sensitive receptors from exposure to substantial pollutant concentrations, toxic air contaminants, particulate matter, and objectionable odors by enforcing minimum separation buffers between sensitive land uses and major pollution sources, consistent with California Air Resources Board (CARB) and San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) guidelines. Individual projects that could pose potential health risks shall perform prioritization screening and/or prepare a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) following SJVAPCD methodologies. If an individual project HRA identifies health risks exceeding applicable SJVAPCD significance thresholds, the project shall incorporate appropriate mitigation to reduce impacts to a less than significant level prior to project approval.

Policy RM-5.3: Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Support the implementation of regional and Statewide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals through coordination with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, and other responsible agencies. Align local planning efforts with applicable State climate laws and regional planning frameworks by incorporating greenhouse gas reduction strategies into City plans, programs, and development review processes.

Policy RM-5.4: Community Design. Promote land use patterns and community design that reduce vehicle trip lengths and support convenient access between neighborhoods, schools, parks, employment areas, and services.

Policy RM-5.5: Clean Air Funding Opportunities. Pursue grant opportunities and strategic partnerships to fund and implement clean air and greenhouse gas reduction projects, including initiatives for community greening, zero-emission transportation, and building efficiency improvements.

Policy RM-5.6: Alternative Transportation. Promote transportation options such as walking, bicycling, transit, ridesharing, and other alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel in order to reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality.

Policy RM-5.7: Carbon Reduction. Expand the number of parks and trees in Mountain House to provide a larger carbon sink or area containing natural sources that retain more carbon than what those sources emit.

Policy RM-5.8: Public Education. Promote public awareness and community participation in efforts that improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and encourage sustainable transportation and energy use practices.

Action RM-5a: Review development applications, infrastructure projects, and planning efforts for consistency with applicable air quality and greenhouse gas requirements during discretionary project review and the CEQA process. Where appropriate, require project applicants to prepare technical analyses that address:

1. Construction and operational air pollutant emissions;
2. Potential exposure of sensitive receptors to roadway, stationary-source, and other pollutant sources;
3. Consistency with applicable greenhouse gas reduction requirements, plans, and thresholds; and
4. Feasible mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, or reduce identified impacts.

Action RM-5b: Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin Council of Governments, and other relevant agencies to align local planning efforts with regional air quality and greenhouse reduction targets, ensuring the City remains compliant with State requirements and identifying grant funding opportunities.

Action RM-5c: Review new development proposals for compliance with California Code of Regulations Title 24 standards and applicable State and local energy efficiency requirements as part of the City's development review process.

Action RM-5d: Review available grant programs and partnership opportunities annually to identify funding sources for community greening, zero-emission transportation infrastructure, building efficiency improvements, and other projects that improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Action RM-5e: Prepare and distribute educational materials on sustainable transportation choices, energy-efficient practices, and available incentive programs that support lower emissions and improved environmental quality.

Action RM-5f: Review City development standards, circulation improvements, and capital projects annually to identify opportunities to support walking, bicycling, transit access, electric vehicle infrastructure, and other measures that reduce vehicle emissions and greenhouse gas emissions.

Goal RM-6: Energy Resources: Reliable, efficient, and resilient energy systems that support long-term growth and sustainability.

Policy RM-6.1: Energy Compliance and Efficiency. Require new development and City operations to incorporate all applicable energy efficiency requirements and energy-saving design features.

Policy RM-6.2: Renewable Energy and Storage. Encourage the installation of renewable energy systems and battery storage, where feasible, and streamline permitting for rooftop solar and other clean energy technologies consistent with safety and design requirements.

Policy RM-6.3: Resilient Energy for Critical Facilities. Support resilient energy solutions for critical facilities and community-serving sites, including backup power, microgrids, and other measures that maintain essential services during outages and emergencies.

Policy RM-6.4: Cooling Landscapes. Promote landscaping and site improvements that reduce building energy use, provide shade, and improve outdoor comfort while supporting water-efficient and sustainable site design.

Policy RM-6.5: EV Infrastructure. Require electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in new development projects consistent with the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). The City shall encourage installation of EV charging at existing public facilities and private commercial centers and shall coordinate with utilities to support adequate electrical grid capacity for EV charging.

Policy RM-6.6: Building Electrification. Support new development and building improvements that incorporate electrification and other clean energy technologies over time.

Action RM-6a: Review development proposals to ensure that new residential and nonresidential development complies with applicable State and local energy efficiency requirements, including Energy Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6) and CALGreen (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11) standards and other adopted energy conservation requirements.

Action RM-6b: Coordinate annually with Modesto Irrigation District, PG&E, and other relevant agencies to review projected energy demand, service reliability, renewable energy opportunities, and infrastructure needs for existing neighborhoods, future growth areas, and critical facilities.

Action RM-6c: Apply landscaping and site design standards during project review that promote shade trees, cooling landscape features, and water-efficient planting to reduce heat gain and improve energy performance.

Action RM-6d: Maintain and periodically update City regulations, permitting materials, application checklists, and public information resources to support rooftop solar, battery storage, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and other clean energy improvements consistent with applicable safety and design requirements.

Action RM-6e: Evaluate City-owned and community-serving facilities on a regular basis to identify feasible energy efficiency upgrades, shade and landscape improvements, backup power systems, renewable energy installations, battery storage, and electrification measures for future budgeting and capital improvement planning.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Pollution Exposure & Air Quality. Improved air quality and reduced pollution exposure for all.

Policy EJ-1.1: Emission Sources. Encourage feasible measures to reduce emissions from transportation, construction, agricultural activities, and other pollution-generating sources, and promote land use planning, site design, and operational practices that minimize exposure to ozone, particulate matter, pesticides, and other harmful pollutants, especially near sensitive receptors.

Policy EJ-1.2: Sensitive Receptors. Ensure land use planning, development review, and site design protect homes, schools, parks, childcare facilities, and other sensitive receptors from major sources of pollution exposure.

Policy EJ-1.3: Regional Coordination. Coordinate with San Joaquin County and applicable agencies to address key pollution exposure concerns, including regional air quality, pesticide use, drinking water contaminants, groundwater threats, hazardous waste, and impaired water bodies.

Policy EJ-1.4: Green Infrastructure. Promote tree planting, landscaping, and green infrastructure that improve air quality, provide buffering, reduce heat, and support healthier neighborhoods.

Policy EJ-1.7: Truck Routes. The City shall not designate truck routes on non-arterial residential streets. When evaluating truck route designations, the City shall consider the potential for disproportionate noise, air quality, and safety impacts on residents, and shall require feasible mitigation for new freight corridors that would pass within 500 feet of sensitive receptors.

Action EJ-1a: During development review, require discretionary development, infrastructure, and long-range planning projects to evaluate construction and operational emissions, exposure of sensitive receptors, and include feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality and pollution exposure impacts, as appropriate.

Action EJ-1b: Coordinate with San Joaquin County and other applicable agencies to share information regarding pesticide use, poor air quality conditions, and other pollution exposure risks, and provide residents with accessible guidance on practical measures to reduce exposure.

Action EJ-1c: Identify priority areas for tree planting, landscape buffers, and green infrastructure near residential neighborhoods, schools, parks, high-traffic corridors, and agricultural edges to improve air quality, reduce heat, and provide separation from pollution sources.

Goal EJ-6: Unique or Compounded Health Risks: A healthier and more resilient community with reduced exposure to environmental hazards.

Policy EJ-6.1: Vulnerability Planning. Incorporate health, environmental, and infrastructure vulnerability considerations into City planning and decision-making, using available data to identify overlapping risks and prioritize mitigation, adaptation, and emergency response actions for vulnerable populations.

Policy EJ-6.3: Smoke and Air Quality. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, San Joaquin County Health Care Services Agency, and local schools and community facility operators on preparedness for wildfire smoke, ozone, particulate matter, and other poor air quality events, including public alerts, exposure-reduction guidance, and identification of clean indoor air spaces or community facilities where feasible.

Action EJ-6b: Maintain and update public information on extreme heat safety, wildfire smoke exposure, flooding preparedness, drinking water quality, and hazardous materials incidents, including clear guidance on how residents can reduce exposure and access assistance.

Action EJ-6d: Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, and water and health agencies to review preparedness procedures for air quality emergencies, extreme heat events, flooding, and hazardous materials incidents.

MITIGATION MEASURES

There is no feasible mitigation for this impact.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significant and Unavoidable.

Impact 3.3-2: General Plan implementation could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (Less Than Significant)

The SJVAPCD has identified local community risks from air pollutants to include exposure to TACs and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations. TACs are a defined set of airborne pollutants that may pose a present or potential hazard to human health and $PM_{2.5}$ is known to cause a wide range of health effects (e.g., aggravating asthma and bronchitis, causing visits to the hospital for respiratory and cardiovascular systems, and contributing to heart attacks and deaths). Common stationary source types of TAC and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions include gasoline stations, dry cleaners, and diesel backup generators, which are subject to SJVAPCD permit requirements. The other, often more significant, common source type is on-road motor vehicles on freeways and roads such as trucks and cars, and off-road sources such as construction equipment, ships, and trains. Implementation of the proposed General Plan would have the potential of introducing new sources of TAC and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions within the Planning Area as well as siting new sensitive receptors, such as new homes, in proximity to existing sources of TAC and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions.

The *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective*, adopted by CARB, May 2005, was prepared to address the siting of sensitive land uses in close proximity to sources of TAC emissions, which would include the following sources within the context of the City:

- Within 500 feet of Interstate 205;
- Within 300 feet of dry cleaning operations that use perchloroethylene; and
- Within 50 feet of a typical gas station.

Health risks associated with TACs are most pronounced in the areas adjacent to freeway segments. Regardless of the existing health risks associated with TACs, the SJVAPCD CEQA Guidelines provide recommendations for all communities to ensure reduced health risks associated with TACs.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and programs aimed to limit exposure of sensitive receptors in the Planning Area to TAC and PM concentrations. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-5.2 protects sensitive receptors by requiring the enforcement of minimum separation buffers between sensitive land uses and major pollution sources, consistent with CARB and SJVAPCD guidelines. It also requires that individual projects that could pose potential health risks perform prioritization screening and/or prepare a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) following SJVAPCD methodologies. If an individual project HRA identifies health risks exceeding applicable SJVAPCD significance thresholds, the project shall incorporate appropriate mitigation to reduce impacts to a less than significant level prior to project approval.

Proposed Environmental Justice Element Policy EJ-1.2 ensures that land use planning, development review, and site design protect homes, schools, parks, childcare facilities, and other sensitive receptors from major sources of pollution exposure. Additionally, Policy EJ-1.7 directs the City to not designate truck routes on non-arterial residential streets. Additionally, this policy requires that, when evaluating truck route designations, the City must consider the potential for disproportionate air quality impacts on residents, and shall require feasible mitigation for new freight corridors that would pass within 500 feet of sensitive receptors.

Additionally, Policy EJ-1.1 encourages feasible measures to reduce emissions from transportation, construction, agricultural activities, and other pollution-generating sources, and promotes land use planning, site design, and operational practices that minimize exposure to ozone, particulate matter, pesticides, and other harmful pollutants, especially near sensitive receptors. Action EJ-1a requires, during development review, to require discretionary development, infrastructure, and long-range planning projects to evaluate construction and operational emissions, exposure of sensitive receptors, and include feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality and pollution exposure impacts, as appropriate.

The Project does not propose any site-specific development project. Future individual projects implemented under the proposed General Plan would be required to provide their own environmental assessments to determine health impacts from the construction and operation of their projects. In the event that future individual projects may result in TAC exposure to sensitive receptors, these future projects would be required to implement mitigation measures to reduce the impact to a less than significant level, consistent with SJVAPCD requirements (refer to proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-5.2).

Compliance with the applicable policies and actions in the proposed General Plan, as well as the Municipal Code and applicable CARB and SJVAPCD rules and regulations, would minimize the potential exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of TACs and DPM within the Planning Area. Furthermore, future individual projects implemented under the General Plan will be required to comply with CEQA requirements and provide their own environmental assessments to determine health impacts from the construction and operation of their projects. In the event that future individual projects may result in exposure to TACs by sensitive receptors, these future projects would be required to analyze TAC impacts on an individual project level, per SJVAPCD requirements, and in accordance with California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) guidance. As such, Project impacts related to the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-5.2: Sensitive Receptor Protection. Protect sensitive receptors from exposure to substantial pollutant concentrations, toxic air contaminants, particulate matter, and objectionable odors by enforcing minimum separation buffers between sensitive land uses and major pollution sources, consistent with California Air Resources Board (CARB) and San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) guidelines. Individual projects that could pose potential health risks shall perform prioritization screening and/or prepare a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) following SJVAPCD methodologies. If an individual project HRA identifies health risks exceeding applicable SJVAPCD significance thresholds, the project shall incorporate appropriate mitigation to reduce impacts to a less than significant level prior to project approval.

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-1.1: Emission Sources. Encourage feasible measures to reduce emissions from transportation, construction, agricultural activities, and other pollution-generating sources, and promote land use planning, site design, and operational practices that minimize exposure to ozone, particulate matter, pesticides, and other harmful pollutants, especially near sensitive receptors.

Policy EJ-1.2: Sensitive Receptors. Ensure land use planning, development review, and site design protect homes, schools, parks, childcare facilities, and other sensitive receptors from major sources of pollution exposure.

Policy EJ-1.7: Truck Routes. The City shall not designate truck routes on non-arterial residential streets. When evaluating truck route designations, the City shall consider the potential for disproportionate noise, air quality, and safety impacts on residents, and shall require feasible mitigation for new freight corridors that would pass within 500 feet of sensitive receptors.

Action EJ-1a: During development review, require discretionary development, infrastructure, and long-range planning projects to evaluate construction and operational emissions,

exposure of sensitive receptors, and include feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality and pollution exposure impacts, as appropriate.

Action EJ-1b: Coordinate with San Joaquin County and other applicable agencies to share information regarding pesticide use, poor air quality conditions, and other pollution exposure risks, and provide residents with accessible guidance on practical measures to reduce exposure.

Action EJ-1c: Identify priority areas for tree planting, landscape buffers, and green infrastructure near residential neighborhoods, schools, parks, high-traffic corridors, and agricultural edges to improve air quality, reduce heat, and provide separation from pollution sources.

Goal EJ-6: Unique or Compounded Health Risks: A healthier and more resilient community with reduced exposure to environmental hazards.

Policy EJ-6.1: Vulnerability Planning. Incorporate health, environmental, and infrastructure vulnerability considerations into City planning and decision-making, using available data to identify overlapping risks and prioritize mitigation, adaptation, and emergency response actions for vulnerable populations.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant.

Impact 3.3-3: General Plan implementation would not result in other emissions such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people (Less than Significant)

Objectionable odors can be generated from certain types of commercial and/or industrial land uses. Common sources of odors include wastewater treatment plants, landfills, composting facilities, refineries, and chemical plants. In general, residential land uses are not associated with odor generation, but they do serve as sensitive receptors. Odors rarely have direct health impacts, but they can be very unpleasant and can lead to concern over possible health effects among the public.

With respect to other emissions, future development under the proposed General Plan would be required to comply with all applicable SJVAPCD rules and regulations and the proposed General Plan policies and actions. While the Project does not propose any site-specific development projects, future projects implemented under the General Plan that could generate odor impacts on sensitive receptors would be required to undergo an analysis consistent with the SJVAPCD's GAMAQI. It should be noted that while the Project doesn't propose any site-specific development, it does identify areas for public and quasi-public facilities, which could include new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities, composting facilities, and other potential odor sources. Similarly, lands designated for commercial and industrial uses could include new or expanded uses that could result in odors, including chemical manufacturing, materials manufacturing, food and beverage

processing, and other uses that may involve odors. Existing agricultural uses within the Planning Area and vicinity may also include on-site processing or confined animal facilities that may result in odors; however, it should be noted that the Project does not propose new agricultural uses. Individual projects that have the potential to generate significant objectionable odors would be reviewed for compliance with the performance standards outlined in Section 9-10-704, *Odor*, of the Municipal Code and required to undergo individual CEQA review, as applicable.

In addition, the General Plan policies and actions listed below would further minimize the potential for other emissions (such as odors) to adversely affect a substantial number of people. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-5.2 protects sensitive receptors from exposure to substantial pollutant concentrations, toxic air contaminants, particulate matter, and objectionable odors by requiring the enforcement of minimum separation buffers between sensitive land uses and major pollution sources, consistent with CARB and SJVAPCD guidelines. It also requires that individual projects that could pose potential health risks perform prioritization screening and/or prepare a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) following SJVAPCD methodologies. If an individual project HRA identifies health risks exceeding applicable SJVAPCD significance thresholds, the project shall incorporate appropriate mitigation to reduce impacts to a less than significant level prior to project approval. Action RM-5a directs the City to review development applications, infrastructure projects, and planning efforts for consistency with applicable air quality and greenhouse gas requirements during discretionary project review and the CEQA process. Action RM-5b requires coordination with the SJVAPCD, SJCOG, and other relevant agencies to align local planning efforts with regional air quality and greenhouse reduction targets, ensuring the City remains compliant with State requirements and identifying grant funding opportunities. Proposed Environmental Justice Policy EJ-1.2 directs the City to ensure land use planning, development review, and site design protect homes, schools, parks, childcare facilities, and other sensitive receptors from major sources of pollution exposure. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan would have a ***less than significant*** impact relative to this topic.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-5: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions that support a healthier and more resilient community.

Policy RM-5.1: Regional Cooperation. Support regional efforts by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, California Air Resources Board, San Joaquin Council of Governments, regional transit providers, utilities, and other agencies to improve regional air quality and support implementation of greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies.

Policy RM-5.2: Sensitive Receptor Protection. Protect sensitive receptors from exposure to substantial pollutant concentrations, toxic air contaminants, particulate matter, and objectionable odors by enforcing minimum separation buffers between sensitive land uses and major pollution sources, consistent with California Air Resources Board (CARB) and San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) guidelines. Individual projects that could pose potential health risks shall perform

prioritization screening and/or prepare a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) following SJVAPCD methodologies. If an individual project HRA identifies health risks exceeding applicable SJVAPCD significance thresholds, the project shall incorporate appropriate mitigation to reduce impacts to a less than significant level prior to project approval.

Action RM-5a: Review development applications, infrastructure projects, and planning efforts for consistency with applicable air quality and greenhouse gas requirements during discretionary project review and the CEQA process. Where appropriate, require project applicants to prepare technical analyses that address:

1. Construction and operational air pollutant emissions;
2. Potential exposure of sensitive receptors to roadway, stationary-source, and other pollutant sources;
3. Consistency with applicable greenhouse gas reduction requirements, plans, and thresholds; and
4. Feasible mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, or reduce identified impacts.

Action RM-5b: Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin Council of Governments, and other relevant agencies to align local planning efforts with regional air quality and greenhouse reduction targets, ensuring the City remains compliant with State requirements and identifying grant funding opportunities.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Pollution Exposure & Air Quality. Improved air quality and reduced pollution exposure for all.

Policy EJ-1.1: Emission Sources. Encourage feasible measures to reduce emissions from transportation, construction, agricultural activities, and other pollution-generating sources, and promote land use planning, site design, and operational practices that minimize exposure to ozone, particulate matter, pesticides, and other harmful pollutants, especially near sensitive receptors.

Policy EJ-1.2: Sensitive Receptors. Ensure land use planning, development review, and site design protect homes, schools, parks, childcare facilities, and other sensitive receptors from major sources of pollution exposure.

Policy EJ-1.3: Regional Coordination. Coordinate with San Joaquin County and applicable agencies to address key pollution exposure concerns, including regional air quality, pesticide use, drinking water contaminants, groundwater threats, hazardous waste, and impaired water bodies.

Policy EJ-1.7: Truck Routes. The City shall not designate truck routes on non-arterial residential streets. When evaluating truck route designations, the City shall consider the potential for disproportionate noise, air quality, and safety impacts on residents, and shall require feasible mitigation for new freight corridors that would pass within 500 feet of sensitive receptors.

Action EJ-1a: During development review, require discretionary development, infrastructure, and long-range planning projects to evaluate construction and operational emissions, exposure of sensitive receptors, and include feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality and pollution exposure impacts, as appropriate.

Action EJ-1b: Coordinate with San Joaquin County and other applicable agencies to share information regarding pesticide use, poor air quality conditions, and other pollution exposure risks, and provide residents with accessible guidance on practical measures to reduce exposure.

Goal EJ-6: Unique or Compounded Health Risks: A healthier and more resilient community with reduced exposure to environmental hazards.

Policy EJ-6.1: Vulnerability Planning. Incorporate health, environmental, and infrastructure vulnerability considerations into City planning and decision-making, using available data to identify overlapping risks and prioritize mitigation, adaptation, and emergency response actions for vulnerable populations.

Policy EJ-6.3: Smoke and Air Quality. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, San Joaquin County Health Care Services Agency, and local schools and community facility operators on preparedness for wildfire smoke, ozone, particulate matter, and other poor air quality events, including public alerts, exposure-reduction guidance, and identification of clean indoor air spaces or community facilities where feasible.

Action EJ-6b: Maintain and update public information on extreme heat safety, wildfire smoke exposure, flooding preparedness, drinking water quality, and hazardous materials incidents, including clear guidance on how residents can reduce exposure and access assistance.

Action EJ-6d: Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, and water and health agencies to review preparedness procedures for air quality emergencies, extreme heat events, flooding, and hazardous materials incidents.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

3.3.4 REFERENCES

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This section describes biological resources in the Planning Area. This section provides a background discussion of the bioregions, regionally important habitat and wildlife, special status species, and wildlife movement corridors found in Mountain House and the vicinity. This section is organized with an environmental setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis.

There were no comments received during the NOP comment period related to this environmental topic.

KEY TERMS

The following key terms are used throughout this section to describe biological resources and the framework that regulates them:

Hydric Soils. One of the three wetland identification parameters, according to the Federal definition of a wetland, hydric soils have characteristics that indicate they were developed in conditions where soil oxygen is limited by the presence of saturated soil for long periods during the growing season. There are approximately 2,000 named soils in the United States that may occur in wetlands.

Sensitive Natural Community. A sensitive natural community is a biological community that is regionally rare, provides important habitat opportunities for wildlife, is structurally complex, or is in other ways of special concern to local, State, or Federal agencies. CEQA identifies the elimination or substantial degradation of such communities as a significant impact. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) tracks sensitive natural communities in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB).

Special-Status Species. Special-status species are those plants and animals that, because of their recognized rarity or vulnerability to various causes of habitat loss or population decline, are recognized by Federal, State, or other agencies. Some of these species receive specific protection that is defined by Federal or State endangered species legislation. Others have been designated as "sensitive" on the basis of adopted policies and expertise of State resource agencies or organizations with acknowledged expertise, or policies adopted by local governmental agencies such as counties, cities, and special districts to meet local conservation objectives. These species are referred to collectively as "special status species" in this report, following a convention that has developed in practice but has no official sanction. For the purposes of this assessment, the term “special status” includes those species that are:

- Federally listed or proposed for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 17.11-17.12);
- Candidates for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act (61 FR 7596-7613);
- State listed or proposed for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (14 CCR 670.5);
- Species listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the CDFW as a species of concern (USFWS), rare (CDFW), or of special concern (CDFW);
- Fully protected animals, as defined by the State of California (California Fish and Game Code Section 3511, 4700, and 5050);
- Species that meet the definition of threatened, endangered, or rare under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines Section 15380);
- Plants listed as rare or endangered under the California Native Plant Protection Act (California Fish and Game Code Section 1900 et seq.); and

- Plants listed by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) as rare, threatened, or endangered (List 1A and List 2 status plants in Skinner and Pavlik 1994).

Wetlands. Wetlands are ecologically complex habitats that support a variety of both plant and animal life. The Federal government defines wetlands as "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions" [33 C.F.R. §328.3(b)]. Wetlands require wetland hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic vegetation. Examples of wetlands include freshwater marsh, seasonal wetlands, and vernal pool complexes that have a hydrologic link to Waters of the U.S.

3.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

REGIONAL SETTING

Mountain House lies near the southwestern edge of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta), just northeast of the Altamont Hills, in an area characterized by generally flat topography. The Delta, together with the Suisun Marsh, are part of the largest estuary on the west coast of the Americas.[1] The Delta's system of channels, bays, and sloughs connects the upper watersheds of the Sacramento Valley, the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and the great Central Valley to Suisun Marsh, the San Francisco Bay, and marine environments of the Pacific Ocean. Functioning as a vital ecological corridor, the Delta connects terrestrial wildlife populations between the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys. It also provides critical nursery habitat for fish, essential wintering and nesting grounds for waterfowl and waterbirds, and supporting habitat for a variety of sensitive plant and animal species.

Large-scale levee construction, draining of wetlands, forest clearing, and grazing that began in the Delta in the mid-1800s have profoundly altered the region's natural ecology. Within the Planning Area, much of the natural landscape had been converted to agricultural uses prior to the adoption of the Mountain House Master Plan in 1994.[2] The Planning Area has undergone a significant transformation since the 1990s as a result of development consistent with the Mountain House Master Plan and now consists primarily of developed and planned urban uses. The landscape surrounding the Planning Area consists primarily of grassland, farmland, and developed uses.

Mountain House Creek is the primary local drainage feature within the Planning Area and flows generally southwest to northeast before discharging to Old River, located along the northern boundary of the Planning Area. Prior to development of Mountain House, Mountain House Creek was a naturally ephemeral stream that had been substantially modified for agricultural drainage; however, the creek corridor has since been restored in portions of the Planning Area. Other waterbodies in the Planning Area include Dry Creek, a smaller stream parallel to and approximately 8,000 feet northwest of Mountain House Creek, and a number of small drainage ditches, lakes, and ponds north of Byron Road. Notable waterbodies surrounding the Planning Area include the Westside Irrigation District Canal (also known as

[1] Delta Stewardship Council. The Delta Plan. Amended June 2022. Available at: https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/delta-plan/. Accessed June 2026.

[2] BASELINE Environmental Consulting, Final Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 90020776), Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plan I, September 1994.

Wicklund Cut), an irrigation channel connecting to Old River that forms the northeastern boundary of the Planning Area; the Delta Mendota Canal and California Aqueduct, located west-southwest of the Planning Area; and the Clifton Court Forebay, a man-made reservoir located approximately one-mile northwest of the Planning Area.

CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE HABITAT RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM

The California Wildlife Habitat Relationship (CWHR) habitat classification scheme has been developed to support the CWHR System, a wildlife information system and predictive model for California's regularly occurring birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. At present, there are 59 wildlife habitats in the CWHR System, including 27 tree, 12 shrub, 6 herbaceous, 4 aquatic, 8 agricultural, 1 developed, and 1 non-vegetated. According to the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship System there are 9 cover types (wildlife habitat classifications) in the Planning Area out of 59 found in the State. These include Annual Grassland, Barren, Deciduous Orchard, Eucalyptus, Fresh Emergent Wetland, Riverine/Lacustrine, Saline Emergent Wetland, Urban, and Valley Foothill Riparian.

Table 3.4-1 identifies the area by acreage for each cover type (classification) found in the Planning Area and Figure 3.4-1 illustrates the location of each cover type. As shown, the Planning Area consists primarily of Annual Grassland and Urban cover types. A brief description of each cover type, as identified by the CWHR System, follows.

TABLE 3.4-1: COVER TYPES - CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE HABITAT RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM

Cover Type	City (Acres)	SOI (Acres)	Planning Area (Acres)
Annual Grassland	2,165.0	64.3	2,229.2
Barren	40.8	0.0	40.8
Deciduous Orchard	417.7	239.4	657.1
Eucalyptus	0.4	0.0	0.4
Fresh Emergent Wetland	49.9	0.2	50.1
Riverine/Lacustrine	90.0	5.3	95.3
Saline Emergent Wetland	3.2	0.0	3.2
Urban	1,642.5	54.3	1,696.8
Valley Foothill Riparian	10.0	9.2	19.2

Source: CASIL GIS Data, California Wildlife Habitat Relationship System, 2025.

Developed Cover Types

Deciduous orchards are typically open single species tree dominated habitats. Depending on the tree type and pruning methods they are usually low, bushy trees with an open understory to facilitate harvest. Trees range in height at maturity for many species from 15 to 30 ft, but may be 10 ft or less depending on the species. Crowns usually touch, and are usually in a linear pattern. Spacing between trees is uniform depending on desired spread of mature trees. The understory is usually composed of low-growing grasses, legumes, and other herbaceous plants, but may be managed to prevent understory growth totally or partially, such as along tree rows. Deciduous orchards can be found on flat alluvial soils in the valley floors, in rolling foothill areas, or on relatively steep slopes. Though some deciduous orchards are non-irrigated, most are irrigated. Some flat soils are flood irrigated, but many deciduous orchards are sprinkler irrigated.

Large numbers of orchards are irrigated by drip or trickle irrigation systems. Most deciduous orchards are in valley or foothill areas, with a few, such as, apples and pears, up to 3,000 feet elevation. Within the Planning Area, there are 657.1 acres of deciduous orchard habitat.

Urban habitats are not limited to any particular physical setting. Three urban categories relevant to wildlife are distinguished: downtown, urban residential, and suburbia. The heavily-developed downtown is usually at the center, followed by concentric zones of urban residential and suburbs. There is a progression outward of decreasing development and increasing vegetative cover. Species richness and diversity is extremely low in the inner cover. The structure of urban vegetation varies, with five types of vegetative structure defined: tree grove, street strip, shade tree/lawn, lawn, and shrub cover. A distinguishing feature of the urban wildlife habitat is the mixture of native and exotic species. Within the Planning Area, there are 1,696.8 acres of urban habitat.

Herbaceous Cover Types

Annual Grassland habitat occurs mostly on flat plains to gently rolling foothills. Climatic conditions are typically Mediterranean, with cool, wet winters and dry, hot summers. The length of the frost-free season averages 250 to 300 days. Annual precipitation is highest in northern California. Within the Planning Area, there are 2,229.2 acres of annual grassland habitat.

Fresh emergent wetland habitats occur on virtually all exposures and slopes, provided a basin or depression is saturated or at least periodically flooded. They are most common on level to gently rolling topography. They are found in various depressions or at the edge of rivers or lakes. Soils are predominantly silt and clay, although coarser sediments and organic material may be intermixed. In some areas organic soils (peat) may constitute the primary growth medium. Climatic conditions are highly variable and range from the extreme summer heat to winter temperatures well below freezing. Within the Planning Area, there are 50.1 acres of fresh emergent wetland habitat.

Saline emergent wetland habitats occur along the margins of bays, lagoons, and estuaries sheltered from excessive wave action. At their lower margin they are exposed once every 24 hours; whereas, at their upper margin, submergence is short and infrequent, followed by weeks or months of continuous exposure. Soil salinity varies from that of seawater or greater because of lagoon closure and evaporation, particularly in the south, to brackish at sites influenced by heavy precipitation and run-off. Soil consists of thin veneers (0.2 to 1.8 m, or 0.7-5.9 ft) of fine silts, clays, and scattered plant remains. Grain size increases at higher elevations in the south. Soil moisture decreases with increasing elevation; whereas soil organic content appears to increase in the north and decrease in the south. Average rainfall ranges from 8 inches in the extreme south to 80 in in the extreme north. Within the Planning Area there are 3.2 acres of Saline emergent wetland.

Tree Dominated Cover Types

Valley-foothill riparian habitats are found in valleys bordered by sloping alluvial fans, slightly dissected terraces, lower foothills, and coastal plains. They are generally associated with low velocity flows, flood plains, and gentle topography. Valleys provide deep alluvial soils and a high water table. The substrate is coarse, gravelly, or rocky soils more or less permanently moist, but probably well aerated. Frost and short periods of freezing occur in winter (200 to 350 frost-free days). This habitat is characterized by hot, dry

summers and mild and wet winters. Temperatures range from 75 to 102 °F in the summer to 29 to 44 F in the winter. Average precipitation ranges from 6-30 inches, with little or no snow. The growing season is 7 to 11 months. Within the Planning Area, there are 19.2 acres of valley-foothill riparian habitat.

Eucalyptus habitats range from single-species thickets with little or no shrubby understory to scattered trees over a well-developed herbaceous and shrubby understory. In most cases, eucalyptus forms a dense stand with a closed canopy. Stand structure for this habitat may vary considerably because most eucalyptus have been planted into either rows for wind protection or dense groves for hardwood production and harvesting. Eucalyptus is often found in monotypic stands. The genus is composed of over 150 species with high morphological diversity. Thus, habitat structure may be affected if more than two or three species coexist. Tree size may vary considerably depending on spacing and species. Typically, trees may range in height from 26 to 40 m (87 to 133 ft) and have diameters (dbh) of 21.8 to 38.4 cm (8.6 to 15.1 in) (Walters 1980), with most growth occurring in the first 15 years. Trees in excess of 46 to 80 m (152 to 264 ft) are not uncommon. Within the SOI, there are 0.4 acres of eucalyptus habitat.

Other Habitats

Barren habitat is defined by the absence of vegetation. Any habitat with <2% total vegetation cover by herbaceous, desert, or non-wildland species and <10% cover by tree or shrub species is defined this way. The physical settings for permanently barren habitat represent extreme environments for vegetation. An extremely hot or cold climate, a near-vertical slope, an impermeable substrate, constant disturbance by either human or natural forces, or a soil either lacking in organic matter or excessively saline can each contribute to a habitat being inhospitable to plants. Within the Planning Area, there are 40.8 acres of barren habitat.

Riverine habitats can occur in association with many terrestrial habitats. Riverine habitats are found adjacent to many rivers and streams. Riverine habitats are also found contiguous to lacustrine and fresh emergent wetland habitats. This habitat requires intermittent or continually running water generally originating at some elevated source, such as a spring or lake, and flows downward at a rate relative to slope or gradient and the volume of surface runoff or discharge. Velocity generally declines at progressively lower altitudes, and the volume of water increases until the enlarged stream finally becomes sluggish. Over this transition from a rapid, surging stream to a slow, sluggish river, water temperature and turbidity will tend to increase, dissolved oxygen will decrease, and the bottom will change from rocky to muddy. Lacustrine habitats are inland depressions or dammed riverine channels containing standing water. They may vary from small ponds less than one hectare to large areas covering several square kilometers. Depth can vary from a few centimeters to hundreds of meters. Typical lacustrine habitats include permanently flooded lakes and reservoirs (e.g., Lake Tahoe and Shasta Lake), intermittent lakes (e.g., playa lakes) and ponds (including vernal pools) so shallow that rooted plants can grow over the bottom. Most permanent lacustrine systems support fish life; intermittent types usually do not. Within the Planning Area, there are 95.3 acres of riverine and lacustrine habitat.

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

The following discussion is based on a background search of special-status species that are documented in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). The background search was regional in scope and focused on the documented occurrences within a 1-mile and 9-Quad search area of the Planning Area.

Special-Status Plants

The search revealed documented occurrences of three special status plant species within a 1-mile radius of the Planning Area and 40 special status plant species within a 9-Quad search of the Planning Area. Tables 3.4-2 and 3.4-3 provide a list of the special-status plant species that are documented within the 1-mile and 9-Quad search area. Both tables include the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) ranking, which is a list of plant species native to California that have low numbers, limited distribution, or are otherwise threatened with extinction. Figure 3.4-2 illustrates the special status species located within a 9-Quad search of the Planning Area.

TABLE 3.4-2: SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS PRESENT OR POTENTIALLY PRESENT (ONE MILE)

Plant Species	Common Name	Federal Status	California Status	CNPS Ranking
Tropidocarpum capparideum	caper-fruited tropidocarpum	None	None	1B.1
Lilaeopsis masonii	Mason's lilaeopsis	None	Rare	1B.1
Hibiscus lasiocarpos var. occidentalis	woolly rose-mallow	None	None	1B.2

Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, CNDDB, 2025.
Key for CNPS Data:
1A Plants presumed extinct in California
1B.1 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California
1B.2 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; fairly threatened in California
4.2 Plants of limited distribution; fairly threatened in California
4.3 Plants of limited distribution; not very threatened in California

TABLE 3.4-3: SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS PRESENT OR POTENTIALLY PRESENT (9 QUAD)

Plant Species	Common Name	Federal Status	California Status	Plant Ranking
Astragalus tener var. tener	alkali milk-vetch	None	None	1B.2
Oenothera deltoides ssp. howellii	Antioch Dunes evening-primrose	Endangered	Endangered	1B.1
Blepharizonia plumosa	big tarplant	None	None	1B.1
Balsamorhiza macrolepis	big-scale balsamroot	None	None	1B.2
Cicuta maculata var. bolanderi	Bolander's water-hemlock	None	None	2B.1
Hesperolinon breweri	Brewer's western flax	None	None	1B.2
Carex comosa	bristly sedge	None	None	2B.1
Atriplex depressa	brittlescale	None	None	1B.2
Puccinellia simplex	California alkali grass	None	None	1B.2
Tropidocarpum capparideum	caper-fruited tropidocarpum	None	None	1B.1
Ravenella exigua	chaparral harebell	None	None	1B.2

Plant Species	Common Name	Federal Status	California Status	Plant Ranking
Senecio aphanactis	chaparral ragwort	None	None	1B.2
Centromadia parryi ssp. congdonii	Congdon's tarplant	None	None	1B.1
Arctostaphylos manzanita ssp. laevigata	Contra Costa manzanita	None	None	1B.2
Eryngium racemosum	Delta button-celery	None	Endangered	1B.1
Limosella australis	Delta mudwort	None	None	2B.1
Lathyrus jepsonii var. jepsonii	Delta tule pea	None	None	1B.2
Eschscholzia rhombipetala	diamond-petaled California poppy	None	None	1B.1
Plagiobothrys glaber	hairless popcornflower	None	None	1A
Atriplex cordulata var. cordulata	heartscale	None	None	1B.2
Chloropyron molle ssp. hispidum	hispid salty bird's-beak	None	None	1B.1
Delphinium californicum ssp. interius	Hospital Canyon larkspur	None	None	1B.2
Amsinckia grandiflora	large-flowered fiddleneck	Endangered	Endangered	1B.1
Caulanthus lemmonii	Lemmon's jewelflower	None	None	1B.2
Atriplex minuscula	lesser saltscale	None	None	1B.1
Deinandra bacigalupii	Livermore tarplant	None	Endangered	1B.1
Spergularia macrotheca var. longistyla	long-styled sand-spurrey	None	None	1B.2
Scutellaria galericulata	marsh skullcap	None	None	2B.2
Lilaeopsis masonii	Mason's lilaeopsis	None	Rare	1B.1
Calochortus pulchellus	Mt. Diablo fairy-lantern	None	None	1B.2
Chloropyron palmatum	palmate-bracted bird's-beak	Endangered	Endangered	1B.1
Delphinium recurvatum	recurved larkspur	None	None	1B.2
Trifolium hydrophilum	saline clover	None	None	1B.2
Extriplex joaquinana	San Joaquin spearscale	None	None	1B.2
Navarretia nigelliformis ssp. radians	shining navarretia	None	None	1B.2
Madia radiata	showy golden madia	None	None	1B.1
Eryngium spinosepalum	spiny-sepaled button-celery	None	None	1B.2
Fritillaria agrestis	Stinkbells	None	None	4.2
Symphyotrichum lentum	Suisun Marsh aster	None	None	1B.2
Hibiscus lasiocarpos var. occidentalis	woolly rose-mallow	None	None	1B.2

Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, CNDDB, 2025.

Key for CNPS Data:

1A Plants presumed extinct in California

1B.1 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California

1B.2 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; fairly threatened in California

4.2 Plants of limited distribution; fairly threatened in California

4.3 Plants of limited distribution; not very threatened in California

Special Status Animals

The search revealed documented occurrences of 50 special status animal species within a 9-Quad search of the Planning Area, including four amphibians, 16 birds, four crustaceans, four fish, six insects, eight mammals, and seven reptiles. Of these species, 15 are documented within one mile of the Planning Area, including one amphibian, six birds, two fish, one insect, two mammals, one mollusk, and two reptiles. Tables 3.4-4 and 3.4-5 provide a list of the special-status animal species that are documented within one mile and 9-Quad of the Planning Area, respectively, and current protective status. Figure 3.4-2 illustrates the special status species located within a 9-Quad search of the Planning Area.

TABLE 3.4-4: SPECIAL STATUS ANIMALS PRESENT OR POTENTIALLY PRESENT (ONE MILE)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	California Status
Athene cunicularia	burrowing owl	None	Candidate Endangered
Eremophila alpestris actia	California horned lark	None	None
Rana draytonii	California red-legged frog	Threatened	None
Phrynosoma blainvillii	coast horned lizard	None	None
Hygrotus curvipes	curved-foot hygrotus diving beetle	None	None
Acipenser medirostris pop. 1	green sturgeon - southern DPS	Threatened	None
Lanius ludovicianus	loggerhead shrike	None	None
Circus hudsonius	northern harrier	None	None
Actinemys marmorata	northwestern pond turtle	Proposed Threatened	None
Vulpes macrotis mutica	San Joaquin kit fox	Endangered	Threatened
Perognathus inornatus	San Joaquin pocket mouse	None	None
Melospiza melodia pop. 1	song sparrow ("Modesto" population)	None	None
Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus pop. 11	steelhead - Central Valley DPS	Threatened	None
Buteo swainsoni	Swainson's hawk	None	Threatened
Gonidea angulata	western ridged mussel	None	None

Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, CNDDB, 2025.

TABLE 3.4-5: SPECIAL STATUS ANIMALS PRESENT OR POTENTIALLY PRESENT (9 QUAD)

Animal Species	Common Name	Federal Status	California Status
Masticophis lateralis euryxanthus	Alameda whipsnake	Threatened	Threatened
Taxidea taxus	American badger	None	None
Perdita scitula antiochensis	Antioch andrenid bee	None	None
Athene cunicularia	burrowing owl	None	Candidate Endangered
Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus	California black rail	None	Threatened
Arizona elegans occidentalis	California glossy snake	None	None
Eremophila alpestris actia	California horned lark	None	None
Linderiella occidentalis	California linderiella	None	None

Animal Species	Common Name	Federal Status	California Status
Rana draytonii	California red-legged frog	Threatened	None
Ambystoma californiense pop. 1	California tiger salamander - central California DPS	Threatened	Threatened
Phrynosoma blainvillii	coast horned lizard	None	None
Accipiter cooperii	Cooper's hawk	None	None
Bombus crotchii	Crotch's bumble bee	None	Candidate Endangered
Hygrotus curvipes	curved-foot hygrotus diving beetle	None	None
Hypomesus transpacificus	Delta smelt	Threatened	Endangered
Thaleichthys pacificus	Eulachon	Threatened	None
Buteo regalis	ferruginous hawk	None	None
Rana boylii pop. 4	foothill yellow-legged frog - central coast DPS	Threatened	Endangered
Thamnophis gigas	giant gartersnake	Threatened	Threatened
Aquila chrysaetos	golden eagle	None	None
Ammodramus savannarum	grasshopper sparrow	None	None
Ardea herodias	great blue heron	None	None
Lasiurus cinereus	hoary bat	None	None
Vireo bellii pusillus	least Bell's vireo	Endangered	Endangered
Lanius ludovicianus	loggerhead shrike	None	None
Spirinchus thaleichthys pop. 2	longfin smelt - San Francisco Bay-Delta DPS	Endangered	Threatened
Branchinecta longiantenna	longhorn fairy shrimp	Endangered	None
Branchinecta mesovallensis	midvalley fairy shrimp	None	None
Lytta molesta	molestan blister beetle	None	None
Anniella pulchra	Northern California legless lizard	None	None
Actinemys marmorata	northwestern pond turtle	Proposed Threatened	None
Antrozous pallidus	pallid bat	None	None
Falco mexicanus	prairie falcon	None	None
Sylvilagus bachmani riparius	riparian brush rabbit	Endangered	Endangered
Masticophis flagellum ruddocki	San Joaquin coachwhip	None	None
Vulpes macrotis mutica	San Joaquin kit fox	Endangered	Threatened
Perognathus inornatus	San Joaquin pocket mouse	None	None
Asio flammeus	short-eared owl	None	None
Melospiza melodia pop. 1	song sparrow ("Modesto" population)	None	None
Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus pop. 11	steelhead - Central Valley DPS	Threatened	None
Buteo swainsoni	Swainson's hawk	None	Threatened
Corynorhinus townsendii	Townsend's big-eared bat	None	None
Agelaius tricolor	tricolored blackbird	None	Threatened

Animal Species	Common Name	Federal Status	California Status
Desmocerus californicus dimorphus	valley elderberry longhorn beetle	Threatened	None
Branchinecta lynchi	vernal pool fairy shrimp	Threatened	None
Bombus occidentalis	western bumble bee	None	Candidate Endangered
Eumops perotis californicus	western mastiff bat	None	None
Gonidea angulata	western ridged mussel	None	None
Spea hammondii	western spadefoot	Proposed Threatened	None
Elanus leucurus	white-tailed kite	None	None

Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, CNDDB, 2025.

Sensitive Natural Communities

The CDFW considers sensitive natural communities to have significant biotic value, with species of plants and animals unique to each community. The CNDDB search revealed the following nine sensitive natural communities within a Nine-Quad search area: Alkali Meadow, Alkali Seep, Cismontane Alkali Marsh, Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh, Great Valley Valley Oak Riparian Forest, Northern Claypan Vernal Pool, Sycamore Alluvial Woodland, Valley Needlegrass Grassland, and Valley Sink Scrub. All of these community types were once more widely distributed throughout California, but have been modified or destroyed by grazing, cultivation, and urban development. Since the remaining examples of these sensitive natural communities are under continuing threat from future development, CDFW considers them highest inventory priorities for future conservation. Of these sensitive natural communities documented within proximity of Mountain House, only two (Northern Claypan Vernal Pool and Valley Sink Scrub) are located within one mile of the Planning Area.

WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CORRIDORS

Wildlife movement corridors are a strip of natural habitat connecting populations of wildlife otherwise separated by cultivated land, roads, or other barriers. The Conservation Analysis Unit within CDFW develops and maintains spatial data and models of wildlife movement, corridors, and habitat connectivity across California. These maps and models are used by scientists and decision-makers to inform how to best conserve habitat connectivity, or the ability of species and ecological processes to move through the landscape.

Terrestrial Connectivity

The Terrestrial Connectivity dataset is one of the key components of the CDFW's Areas of Conservation Emphasis (ACE) suite of terrestrial conservation information. The Terrestrial Connectivity dataset summarizes information on terrestrial connectivity by ACE hexagon including the presence of mapped corridors or linkages and the juxtaposition to large, contiguous, natural areas.

According to the California Terrestrial Habitat Connectivity map, as shown on Figure 3.4-3, there are no Essential Connectivity areas within the Planning Area.

California Fish Passage Assessment

The Passage Assessment Database (PAD) is an ongoing map-based inventory of known and potential barriers to anadromous fish in California. PAD compiles data from more than one hundred agencies, organizations and landowners throughout California, and allows past and future barrier assessments to be standardized and stored at one place. The inventory is to be used to identify barriers suitable for removal or modification to enhance aquatic and riparian habitat.[3]

Table 3.4-6 shows the PAD areas within and nearby the Planning Area. The majority of the PAD sites are located along the northern border along Old River and are mostly unscreened, meaning that there is no fish-protection device to screen the diversion and fish can be entrained (i.e., sucked into the diversion, resulting in their physical injury, mortality, or loss from the main population). There is one PAD site (700213) identified as a partial barrier where a pumping plant affects Delta flow conditions by creating reverse flow conditions in Old and Middle Rivers, and by effectively pulling Sacramento River water down into the central Delta. Additionally, there are a number of identified road crossings along I-205 that are either not a barrier, have an unknown passage status, or are unassessed.

TABLE 3.4-6 CALIFORNIA FISH PASSAGE ASSESSMENT

PAD ID	Stream Name	Tributary	Site Name	Type	Barrier Status
700213	Old River	San Joaquin River	Central Valley Project-Tracy F.F. (C.W. Jones)	Diversion	Screened
702085	Grant Line Canal	Old River	Union Island	Diversion	Unscreened
702086	Grant Line Canal	Old River	Union Island	Diversion	Unscreened
702087	Grant Line Canal	Old River	Union Island	Diversion	Unscreened
702088	Grant Line Canal	Old River	Union Island	Diversion	Unscreened
702123	Old River	San Joaquin River	Vertical Pump	Diversion	Unscreened
702124	Kennedy Cut	Old River	Centrifugal Pump	Diversion	Unscreened
702125	Kennedy Cut	Old River	Vertical Pump	Diversion	Unscreened
702126	Kennedy Cut	Old River	Trustee Of M&O Furtado	Diversion	Unscreened
702127	Old River	San Joaquin River	Fabian Tract	Diversion	Unscreened
702128	Old River	San Joaquin River	Fabian Tract	Diversion	Unscreened
702129	Old River	San Joaquin River	Fabian Tract	Diversion	Unscreened
702130	Old River	San Joaquin River	Fabian Tract	Diversion	Unscreened
702131	Old River	San Joaquin River	Fabian Tract	Diversion	Unscreened
702132	Old River	San Joaquin River	Ralph Grunauer Jr. et al.	Diversion	Unscreened
702133	Old River	San Joaquin River	Ralph Grunauer Jr. et al.	Diversion	Unscreened
702148	Old River	San Joaquin River	El Pescadero?	Diversion	Unscreened
702149	Old River	San Joaquin River	El Pescadero?	Diversion	Unscreened
702150	Old River	San Joaquin River	El Pescadero?	Diversion	Unscreened
702151	Old River	San Joaquin River	El Pescadero?	Diversion	Unscreened
702152	Old River	San Joaquin River	El Pescadero?	Diversion	Unscreened

[3] State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2025, Passage Assessment Database. Available at: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/pad/home.

PAD ID	Stream Name	Tributary	Site Name	Type	Barrier Status
702153	Old River	San Joaquin River	El Pescadero?	Diversion	Unscreened
702154	Old River	San Joaquin River	Wicklund Pumping Station	Diversion	Unscreened
712741	Old River	San Joaquin River	Temporary rock barrier - Old River at Tracy	Dam	Temporal
760941	unnamed	155 Canal	corrugated metal pipe culvert	Road crossing	Unknown
760942	Governor Edmund G Brown California Aqueduct	O'Neill Forebay	bridge without passage constraints	Road crossing	Not a barrier
760954	unnamed	155 Canal	arch culvert	Road crossing	Not a barrier
763934	unnamed	Patterson Pass Aqueduct	Estimated Hwy 205 Xing	Road crossing	Unassessed

Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Fish Passage Assessment, 2023.

3.4.2 REGULATORY SETTING

There are a number of regulatory agencies whose responsibility includes the oversight of the natural resources of the State and nation including the CDFW, the USFWS, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the National Marine Fisheries Service. These agencies often respond to declines in the quantity of a particular habitat or plant or animal species by developing protective measures for those species or habitat type. The following is an overview of the federal, State, and local regulations that are applicable to implementing the General Plan.

FEDERAL

Federal Endangered Species Act

Federally listed threatened and endangered species and their habitats are protected under provisions of FESA of 1973. FESA Section 9 prohibits "take" of threatened or endangered species. "Take" under the FESA is defined as to "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any of the specifically enumerated conduct." The presence of any Federally threatened or endangered species that are in a project area generally imposes severe constraints on development, particularly if development would result in "take" of the species or its habitat. Under the regulations of the FESA, the USFWS may authorize "take" when it is incidental to, but not the purpose of, an otherwise lawful act.

"Harm" has been defined by the regulations of the USFWS to include types of "significant habitat modification or degradation." The U.S. Supreme Court, in *Babbit v. Sweet Home*, 515 U.S. 687, ruled that "harm" may include habitat modification "...where it actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding or sheltering." Activities that may result in "take" of individuals are regulated by USFWS.

Under the FESA, "Critical Habitat" is also designated at the time of listing or within one year of listing. "Critical Habitat" refers to habitat or a specific geographic area that contains the elements and features

that are essential for the survival and recovery of the species. In the event a project may result in take or in adverse effects to a species' designated Critical Habitat, the project proponent may be required to provide mitigation. If the project has a federal nexus (i.e., occurs on federal land, is issued federal permits, or receives any other federal oversight or funding), the proponent would be required to enter into Section 7 informal and/or formal consultations with the USFWS to obtain, if possible, a biological opinion allowing for incidental take of the species in question. If the project is on private land or would not require any federal permits, the proponent would be required to prepare a habitat management plan to address the impacts.

The FESA defines as "endangered" any plant or animal species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A "threatened" species is a species that is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future. A "proposed" species is one that has been officially proposed by USFWS for addition to the federal threatened and endangered species list.

USFWS produced an updated list of candidate species for listing in June 2002. Candidate species are regarded by USFWS as candidates for addition to the "List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants." Although candidate species are not afforded legal protection under the FESA, they typically receive special attention from Federal and State agencies during the environmental review process.

USFWS also uses the label "species of concern," an informal term that refers to species which might be in need of concentrated conservation actions. As the species of concern designated by USFWS do not receive formal legal protection, the use of the term does not necessarily ensure that the species would be proposed for listing as a threatened or endangered species.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) makes it unlawful to pursue, capture, kill, or possess or attempt to do the same to any migratory bird or part, nest, or egg of any such bird listed in wildlife protection treaties between the United States, Great Britain, Mexico, Japan, and the countries of the former Soviet Union, and authorizes the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to protect and regulate the taking of migratory birds. It establishes seasons and bag limits for hunted species and protects migratory birds, their occupied nests, and their eggs.

Clean Water Act Section 404

Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 requires that a permit be obtained from the USACE prior to the discharge of dredged or fill materials into any "waters of the United States or wetlands." Waters of the United States are broadly defined in the USACE regulations to include navigable waterways, their tributaries, lakes, ponds, and wetlands. Wetlands are defined as "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that normally do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas." Wetlands that are not specifically exempt from Section 404 regulations (such as drainage channels excavated on dry land) are considered to be "jurisdictional wetlands." In *Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (2001) and *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency* (2023), the Court acted to limit the regulatory

jurisdiction of the Corps under CWA Section 404 as it applies to adjacent waters. Specifically, the Court ruled that waters that are non-navigable, isolated, and intrastate are not subject to the USACE jurisdiction. Further, CWA Section 404 jurisdiction extends only to wetlands and waters that have a continuous surface connection to traditional navigable waters. USACE is required to consult with the USFWS, Federal Environmental Protection Agency, and State Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), among other agencies, in carrying out its discretionary authority under Section 404.

USACE grants two types of permits, individual and nationwide. Project-specific individual permits are required for certain activities that may have a potential for more than a minimal impact and necessitate a detailed application. The most common type of permit is a nationwide permit. Nationwide permits authorize activities on a nationwide basis unless specifically limited and are designed to regulate with little delay or paperwork certain activities having minimal impacts. Nationwide permits typically take two to three months to obtain whereas individual permits can take a year or more. To qualify for a nationwide permit, specific criteria must be met. If the criteria restrictions are met, permittees may proceed with certain activities without notifying the USACE. Some nationwide permits require a pre-construction notification before activities can begin.

Clean Water Act Section 401

Applicants for a federal license or permit for activities which may discharge to waters of the U.S. must seek Water Quality Certification from the State or Indian tribe with jurisdiction. The Water Quality Certification is based on a finding that the discharge would meet water quality standards and other applicable requirements. In California, RWQCBs issue or deny Certification for discharges within their geographical jurisdiction. Water Quality Certification must be based on a finding that the proposed discharge would comply with water quality standards, which are defined as numeric and narrative objectives in each RWQCB's Basin Plan. Where applicable, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has this responsibility for projects affecting waters within the jurisdiction of multiple RWQCBs. The RWQCB's jurisdiction extends to all waters of the State and to all waters of the U.S., including wetlands.

CWA Section 401 requires that "any applicant for a Federal permit for activities that involve a discharge to waters of the State, shall provide the Federal permitting agency a certification from the State in which the discharge is proposed that states that the discharge would comply with the applicable provisions under the federal Clean Water Act." Therefore, before USACE would issue a Section 404 permit, applicants must apply for and receive a Section 401 water quality certification from the RWQCB.

STATE

California Endangered Species Act (California Fish and Game Code Section 2050 et seq.)

State-listed threatened and endangered species are protected under provisions of the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Activities that may result in "take" of individuals (defined in CESA as to "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill") are regulated by the CDFW. Habitat degradation or modification is not included in the definition of "take" under CESA.

Nonetheless, CDFW has interpreted a "take" to include the destruction of nesting, denning, or foraging habitat necessary to maintain a viable breeding population of protected species.

The State of California considers an endangered species as one whose prospects of survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy. A threatened species is considered as one present in such small numbers throughout its range that it is likely to become an endangered species in the near future, in the absence of special protection or management. A candidate species is one that is under review by the CDFW for addition to either the list of endangered species or the list of threatened species. A rare species is one that is considered present in such small numbers throughout its range that it may become endangered if its present environment worsens. State threatened and endangered species are fully protected against take, as defined above.

CDFW has also produced a Species of Special Concern list to serve as a species watch list. Species on this list are either of limited distribution or their habitats have been reduced substantially, such that a threat to their populations may be imminent. Species of special concern may receive special attention during environmental review, but they do not have formal statutory protection.

California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA Guidelines Section 15380 independently defines "endangered" and "rare" species separately from the definitions in the CESA. Under CEQA, "endangered" species of plants or animals are defined as those whose survival and reproduction in the wild are in immediate jeopardy, while "rare" species are defined as those who are in such low numbers that they could become endangered if their environment worsens.

Lake and Streambed Alteration Program (California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600 through 1616)

California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600 through 1616 establish a fee-based process to ensure that projects conducted in and around lakes, rivers, or streams do not adversely impact fish and wildlife resources, or, when adverse impacts cannot be avoided, ensures that adequate mitigation and/or compensation is provided.

Fish and Game Code Section 1602 requires any person, state, or local governmental agency or public utility to notify the CDFW before beginning any activity that would do one or more of the following:

- Substantially obstruct or divert the natural flow of a river, stream, or lake;
- Substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake; or
- Deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it can pass into a river, stream, or lake.

Fish and Game Code Section 1602 applies to all perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral rivers, streams, and lakes in the state. CDFW's regulatory authority extends to include riparian habitat (including wetlands) supported by a river, stream, or lake regardless of the presence or absence of hydric soils and saturated soil conditions. Generally, the CDFW takes jurisdiction to the top of bank of the stream or to

the outer limit of the adjacent riparian vegetation (outer drip line), whichever is greater. Notification is generally required for any project that would take place in, or in the vicinity of, a river, stream, lake, or their tributaries. This includes rivers or streams that flow at least periodically or permanently through a bed or channel with banks that support fish or other aquatic life and watercourses having a surface or subsurface flow that support or have supported riparian vegetation.

Native Plant Protection Act (Fish and Game Code Sections 1900 through 1913)

CFGC Sections 1900 through 1913 were developed to preserve, protect, and enhance Rare and Endangered plants in the State of California. The Native Plant Protection Act requires all State agencies to use their authority to carry out programs to conserve Endangered and Rare native plants. Provisions of the Native Plant Protection Act prohibit the taking of listed plants from the wild and require notification of the CDFW at least ten days in advance of any change in land use which would adversely impact listed plants. This allows CDFW to salvage listed plant species that would otherwise be destroyed.

California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, 3513, 4700, 5050, and 5515

CDFW administers the CFGC, and there are particular sections of the CFGC that are applicable to natural resource management. For example, CFGC Section 3503 makes it unlawful to destroy the nests or eggs of any birds that are protected under the MBTA. Furthermore, any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (Birds of Prey, such as hawks, eagles, and owls) are protected under CFGC Section 3503.5 which makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy their nest or eggs. A consultation with CDFW would be required prior to the removal of any bird of prey nest that may occur on a project site. CFGC Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515 list fully protected bird, mammal, reptile and amphibian, and fish species, respectively. CDFW is unable to authorize the issuance of permits or licenses to take these species. Examples of species that are State fully protected include golden eagle and white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*). CFGC Section 3513 makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird as designated in the MBTA or any part of such migratory nongame bird except as provided by rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the MBTA.

California Native Plant Society Rare or Endangered Plant Species

Vascular plants listed as rare or endangered by the CNPS, but which have no designated status under state and federal endangered species legislation are defined as follows:

- California Rare Plant Rank
    1A. Plants Presumed Extirpated in California and either Rare or Extinct Elsewhere
    1B. Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere
    2A. Plants Presumed Extirpated in California, but More Common Elsewhere
    2B. Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but More Common Elsewhere
- Threat Ranks
    1. Seriously threatened in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat)

2. Moderately threatened in California (20 to 80 percent occurrences threatened/moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
3. Not very threatened in California (less than 20 percent of occurrences threatened/low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

LOCAL

San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan

The San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP), administered by the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), provides a countywide framework for balancing open space conservation with the conversion of open space to non-open space uses. The plan is intended to protect covered plant, fish, and wildlife species, preserve landowner property rights, support the regional agricultural economy, maintain multiple-use open space, and accommodate future growth while minimizing costs to project proponents and society. The SJMSCP operates in accordance with Federal Endangered Species Act Section 10(a)(1)(B) and California Endangered Species Act Section 2081(b) incidental take permits and provides a mechanism for compensating for covered habitat conversions associated with activities such as urban development, expansion of urban boundaries, transportation projects, utility installation, school expansions, non-federal flood control projects, new parks and trails, mining, preserve management, and similar public agency projects.

City of Mountain House Municipal Code

Title 9, Division 15, *Natural Resources Regulations*, prescribes regulations for the protection, conservation, and managed use of specified natural resources. Title 9, Division 15, Chapter 2, *Trees*, is intended to preserve the City's tree resources and applies to development projects requiring discretionary approval that have Native Oak Trees, Heritage Oak Trees, or Historical Trees on the property. Removal of protected trees is subject to an approved Improvement Plan and replacement requirements, unless an exemption applies. Title 9, Division 15, Chapter 3, *Riparian Habitat*, is intended to preserve the City's riparian habitat and applies to development projects requiring discretionary approval. Actions that could destroy, eliminate, or degrade riparian habitat are not permitted unless the Review Authority determines that the potential loss is in the public interest and would be mitigated through a Riparian Habitat Mitigation Plan. The chapter also requires the plan to identify existing riparian habitat, affected habitat, retained habitat, and protection methods, and establishes a natural bank buffer for riparian habitat and waterway protection.

3.4.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact on biological resources would occur if implementation of the proposed Project would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;

- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on Federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites;
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; and
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a), Mandatory Findings of Significance, states that a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would have "... *the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened species* ..."

An evaluation of whether an impact on biological resources would be substantial must consider both the resource itself and how that resource fits into a regional and/or local context. Substantial impacts would be those that would substantially diminish or result in the loss of an important biological resource or those that would obviously conflict with federal, State, or local resource conservation plans, goals, or regulations. Impacts are sometimes locally adverse but not significant because, although they would result in an adverse alteration of existing conditions, they would not substantially diminish or result in the permanent loss of an important resource on a population- or region-wide basis.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15380, *Endangered, Rare or Threatened Species*, states that a Lead Agency can consider a non-listed species to be rare, threatened, or endangered for the purposes of CEQA if the species can be shown to meet the criteria in the definition of rare, threatened, or endangered. For the purposes of this discussion, the current scientific knowledge on the population size and distribution for each special-status species was considered according to the definitions for rare, threatened, and endangered listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15380.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.4-1: General Plan implementation could have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Less than Significant)

Approval of the General Plan would not directly approve or entitle any specific development or infrastructure project. However, implementation of the General Plan Land Use Map would accommodate future development, redevelopment, and infrastructure improvements within the Planning Area. Future development projects consistent with the General Plan could result in direct or indirect impacts to special-status plant and wildlife species, including impacts associated with vegetation removal, grading, ground disturbance, tree removal, modification of agricultural or ruderal habitat, disturbance of riparian or aquatic areas, and construction-related noise, lighting, dust, erosion, or runoff. Potential impacts vary according to future proposed projects. Special status species determined to have the potential to occur within the general vicinity of the Planning Area are presented in Tables 3.4-2 through 3.4-5. The following analysis is limited to those species that, based on habitat requirements, have the potential to occur within the Planning Area.

The CNDDB search identified documented occurrences of 40 special status plant species within a 9-Quad search of the Planning Area, including three special status plant species within a 1-mile radius of the Planning Area. Although much of the Planning Area has been developed or historically modified by agricultural activity, the Planning Area still supports habitat suitable for special-status plants.

The CNDDB search identified documented occurrences of 50 special status animal species within a 9-Quad search of the Planning Area, including 15 special status animal species within a 1-mile radius of the Planning Area. The Planning Area contains habitat that could support foraging, nesting, sheltering, dispersal, or movement opportunities for some of these species. This includes both developed and undeveloped land, including, but not limited to, vacant land, agricultural fields, parks, landscaped areas, open space, riparian corridors, and various waterbodies.

Future development projects consistent with the General Plan could result in the direct loss of habitat areas associated with these special status species, since suitable habitat for these species occurs in the region and may occur on future development project sites within the Planning Area. Indirect impacts to special status species could also occur with implementation of the General Plan, including habitat degradation as a result of impacts to water quality, increased human presence, and the loss of foraging habitat. Special status species receive protection from various federal and State laws and regulations, including FESA and CESA. These regulations generally prohibit the taking of a species or direct impact to foraging and breeding habitat without the appropriate permit. The Planning Area is also within an area covered by the SJMSCP, which has been approved and authorized by the CDFW and the USFWS. The SJMSCP provides coverage for impacts to covered species pursuant to FESA and CESA. Implementation of the SJMSCP at a project level for future projects consistent with the General Plan would minimize direct,

indirect, and cumulative impacts to special status species. While participation in the SJMSCP is voluntary, applicants who opt out are required to satisfy applicable FESA, CESA, CEQA, and other applicable local, State, and federal laws and regulations related to special status species.

Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions intended to reduce or avoid impacts to special status species. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-2.2 directs the City to protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements. Policy RM-2.3 directs development to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats, maintain a minimum 50-foot naturalized buffer from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines, and limit land uses within buffers to passive recreation, resource management, and flood control. Policy RM-2.6 directs the City to support the maintenance and enhancement of wildlife movement corridors along creeks, open space areas, and agricultural edges by minimizing barriers and maintaining habitat connectivity where feasible. Action RM-2c states that where sensitive biological habitats are identified on or adjacent to a project site, the project must include mitigation measures consistent with the SJMSCP or equivalent mitigation satisfying FESA, CESA, and CEQA requirements. Action RM-2g directs the City to work with the USACE, USFWS, and CDFW during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources. Action RM-2h requires vegetation and tree removal to occur outside bird nesting season where feasible; or pre-construction surveys within three days of construction if work occurs during nesting season and buffer requirements to ensure the nesting behavior is not adversely affected by construction activity, pursuant to the MBTA.

Future development applications would be reviewed by the City for consistency with the General Plan, the Development Code, CEQA, and applicable federal, State, and local regulatory requirements. Compliance with federal, State, and local regulations, and implementation of the General Plan policies and actions, would ensure that programmatic impacts to candidate, sensitive, or special status species would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-2: A resilient ecosystem that supports diverse wildlife habitats and biological resources, promotes environmental health, and functions as green infrastructure.

Policy RM-2.1: Balanced Open Space System. Support a balanced and integrated open space system that reflects a variety of considerations, including habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, stormwater management, public safety, community health and recreation, aesthetics, and overall community benefit.

Policy RM-2.2: Habitat Conservation. The City shall protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements.

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.
- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.
- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

Policy RM-2.4: Tree Preservation and Native Landscaping. Support the preservation of healthy mature trees where feasible and encourage native, drought-tolerant, and pollinator-friendly landscaping that supports biodiversity and avoids invasive species.

Policy RM-2.6: Wildlife Corridor. Support the maintenance and enhancement of wildlife movement corridors along creeks, open space areas, and agricultural edges by minimizing barriers and maintaining habitat connectivity where feasible.

Policy RM-2.7: Rewilding. Explore rewilding opportunities and other ecological restoration projects aimed at increasing biodiversity and restoring natural processes.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action RM-2a: Prepare and maintain an inventory of significant natural resources, including but not limited to wetlands, riparian corridors, special-status species constraints, wildlife corridors, protected trees, and scenic corridors, to inform development review.

Action RM-2b: Review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements.

Action RM-2c: Where sensitive biological habitats have been identified on or immediately adjacent to a project site, the project shall include appropriate mitigation measures consistent with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) or equivalent mitigation that satisfies all applicable requirements of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Action RM-2e: Identify and document opportunities to enhance habitat connectivity during review of development projects and capital improvement projects.

Action RM-2g: Work closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources.

Action RM-2h: Where feasible, vegetation and tree removal should occur outside of the bird nesting season (February 1 to August 31). If not feasible, the project applicant shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a nesting bird survey no more than three days prior to the commencement of construction activities. The biologist conducting the clearance survey shall document the negative results if no active bird nests are observed on the project site or within the vicinity during the clearance survey with a brief letter report, submitted to the City of Mountain House Community Development Department prior to construction, indicating that no impacts to active bird nests would occur before construction can proceed. If an active avian nest is discovered during the pre-construction clearance survey, construction activities shall stay outside a 300-foot buffer around the active nest. For listed and raptor species, this buffer shall be 500 feet. A biological monitor shall be present to delineate the boundaries of the buffer area and to monitor the active nest to ensure the nesting behavior is not adversely affected by construction activity, pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Prior to the commencement of construction activities and the issuance of any permits, results of the pre-construction survey and any subsequent monitoring shall be provided to the City of Mountain House Community Development Department, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and other appropriate agencies.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant.

Impact 3.4-2: General Plan implementation could have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Less than Significant)

Sensitive natural communities are biological communities that are regionally rare, provide important habitat opportunities for wildlife, are structurally complex, or are otherwise of special concern to federal, State, regional, or local agencies. As described in the Environmental Setting section, sensitive natural communities documented in the regional CNDDB search include the following nine sensitive natural communities within a Nine-Quad search area: Alkali Meadow, Alkali Seep, Cismontane Alkali Marsh, Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh, Great Valley Valley Oak Riparian Forest, Northern Claypan Vernal Pool, Sycamore Alluvial Woodland, Valley Needlegrass Grassland, and Valley Sink Scrub. Of these sensitive natural communities documented within proximity of Mountain House, only two (Northern Claypan Vernal Pool and Valley Sink Scrub) are located within one mile of the Planning Area.

While not always documented as a sensitive natural community by the CNDDB, streams, rivers, wet meadows, and vernal pools are of high concern, because they provide unique aquatic habitat for many endemic species, including special status plants, birds, invertebrates, and amphibians. The Planning Area contains a number of surface water resources, including creeks, drainage ditches, ponds, and wetlands that may qualify as sensitive habitats. Notably, the Planning Area includes Mountain House Creek and Dry Creek and is bordered by Old River to the north. These resources and associated riparian areas are

generally designated for conservation uses and identified as Community Park (P/CP), Regional Park (P/RP), Open Space/Resource Conservation (OS/RC), or Open Space/Other (OS/O) land uses on the General Plan Land Use Map.

Future development projects consistent with the General Plan could result in impacts to riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities. Development accommodated by the General Plan could result in removal of vegetation or further habitat degradation from pollutants transported by urban runoff, changes in vegetation as a result of changes in land use and management practices, as well as altered site hydrology from the construction of adjacent urban development and roadways. Alterations to the flow, bed, channel, or bank of creeks and streams within the Planning Area would affect the ability of riparian corridors to provide habitat for wildlife species that utilize them for feeding, cover, and nesting, and thus could result in a loss of riparian habitat function.

Future development projects would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, regional, and local requirements for the protection of sensitive natural communities, including riparian habitat. These may include, but are not limited to, CFGC Section 1600 et seq., CWA Sections 401 and 404 where jurisdictional waters are present, Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act requirements, the SJMSCP, and Mountain House Municipal Code Title 9, Division 15, Chapter 3, *Riparian Habitat*, which establishes local requirements for riparian habitat protection and requires preparation of a Riparian Habitat Mitigation Plan for discretionary projects with the potential to affect riparian habitat. These existing regulatory requirements would provide a project-level framework for identifying, avoiding, minimizing, and addressing impacts to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities.

In addition, the Mountain House General Plan proposes a number of policies and actions intended to protect sensitive natural communities, including riparian habitat, from adverse effects associated with future development and improvement projects within the Planning Area. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-2.2 directs the City to protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements. Policy RM-2.3 directs development to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats, maintain a minimum 50-foot naturalized buffer from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines, and limit land uses within buffers to passive recreation, resource management, and flood control. Action RM-2c states that where sensitive biological habitats are identified on or adjacent to a project site, the project must include mitigation measures consistent with the SJMSCP or equivalent mitigation satisfying FESA, CESA, and CEQA requirements. Action RM-2g directs the City to work with the USACE, USFWS, and CDFW during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources.

Compliance with federal, State, and local regulations, and implementation of General Plan policies and actions, would reduce potential impacts to protected riparian habitats or sensitive natural communities to a ***less than significant*** level, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-2: A resilient ecosystem that supports diverse wildlife habitats and biological resources, promotes environmental health, and functions as green infrastructure.

Policy RM-2.1: Balanced Open Space System. Support a balanced and integrated open space system that reflects a variety of considerations, including habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, stormwater management, public safety, community health and recreation, aesthetics, and overall community benefit.

Policy RM-2.2: Habitat Conservation. The City shall protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements.

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.
- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.
- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action RM-2a: Prepare and maintain an inventory of significant natural resources, including but not limited to wetlands, riparian corridors, special-status species constraints, wildlife corridors, protected trees, and scenic corridors, to inform development review.

Action RM-2b: Review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements.

Action RM-2c: Where sensitive biological habitats have been identified on or immediately adjacent to a project site, the project shall include appropriate mitigation measures consistent with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) or equivalent mitigation that satisfies all applicable requirements of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Action RM-2g: Work closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) during the discretionary

project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant.

Impact 3.4-3: General Plan implementation could have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means (Less than Significant)

Streams, rivers, wet meadows, and vernal pools (wetlands and jurisdictional waters) are of high concern because they provide unique aquatic habitat (perennial and ephemeral) for many endemic species, including special status plants, birds, invertebrates, and amphibians. These aquatic habitats oftentimes qualify as protected wetlands or jurisdictional waters and are protected from disturbance through the CWA.

As previously discussed, the Planning Area contains several aquatic habitats, including portions of Mountain House Creek and Dry Creek, that may qualify as federally protected wetlands and jurisdictional waters. Section 404 of the CWA requires any project that involves disturbance to a wetland or water of the U.S. to obtain a permit that authorizes the disturbance. If a wetland or jurisdictional water is determined to be present, then a permit must be obtained from the USACE to authorize a disturbance to the wetland. Although subsequent projects may disturb protected wetlands and/or jurisdictional waters, the regulatory process that is established through Section 404 of the CWA ensures that there is "no net loss" of wetlands or jurisdictional waters. If, through the design process, it is determined that a future development project cannot avoid a wetland or jurisdictional water, then the USACE would require that there be an equal amount of wetland created elsewhere to mitigate any loss of wetland.

While approval of the General Plan would not directly approve or entitle any specific development or infrastructure project, future development projects consistent with the General Plan could result in the disturbance or loss of waters of the U.S., including perennial and intermittent drainages, unnamed drainages, vernal pools, freshwater marshes, and other types of seasonal and perennial wetland communities. Wetlands and other waters of the U.S. could be affected through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption (including dewatering), alteration of bed and bank, and other construction-related activities. Indirect impacts could result from adjacent development that leads to habitat modifications such as changes in hydrology and reduction in water quality caused by urban runoff, erosion, and siltation. The implementation of future individual projects would require a detailed and site-specific review of the site to determine the presence or absence of water features. If water features are present and disturbance is required, federal and State laws require measures to reduce, avoid, or

compensate for impacts to these resources. The requirements of these federal and State laws are implemented through the permit process.

Additionally, the General Plan includes policies and actions intended to protect aquatic resources and sensitive natural communities, including wetlands, from adverse effects associated with future development and improvement projects within the Planning Area. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-2.2 directs the City to protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements. Policy RM-2.3 directs development to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats, maintain a minimum 50-foot naturalized buffer from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines, and limit land uses within buffers to passive recreation, resource management, and flood control. Action RM-2c states that where sensitive biological habitats are identified on or adjacent to a project site, the project must include mitigation measures consistent with the SJMSCP or equivalent mitigation satisfying FESA, CESA, and CEQA requirements. Action RM-2g directs the City to work with the USACE, USFWS, and CDFW during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources.

Future development and infrastructure projects would be required to comply with applicable regulatory requirements to avoid or minimize impacts to State or federally protected wetlands. Projects involving discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. may require authorization from the USACE under Section 404 of the CWA. Projects requiring a federal permit or license that may result in a discharge to waters of the U.S. would also require water quality certification under Section 401 of the CWA from the RWQCB. Activities affecting waters of the State may also be subject to Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act requirements, and activities affecting the bed, bank, or channel of a stream or lake may require compliance with CFGC Section 1600 et seq. These permit processes would require site-specific delineation, impact assessment, avoidance and minimization where feasible, and compensatory requirements where impacts cannot be avoided. Compliance with federal, State, and local regulations, and implementation of General Plan policies and actions, would reduce potential impacts to wetlands to a ***less than significant*** level, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-2: A resilient ecosystem that supports diverse wildlife habitats and biological resources, promotes environmental health, and functions as green infrastructure.

Policy RM-2.1: Balanced Open Space System. Support a balanced and integrated open space system that reflects a variety of considerations, including habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, stormwater management, public safety, community health and recreation, aesthetics, and overall community benefit.

Policy RM-2.2: Habitat Conservation. The City shall protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements.

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.
- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.
- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action RM-2a: Prepare and maintain an inventory of significant natural resources, including but not limited to wetlands, riparian corridors, special-status species constraints, wildlife corridors, protected trees, and scenic corridors, to inform development review.

Action RM-2b: Review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements.

Action RM-2c: Where sensitive biological habitats have been identified on or immediately adjacent to a project site, the project shall include appropriate mitigation measures consistent with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) or equivalent mitigation that satisfies all applicable requirements of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Action RM-2g: Work closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant.

Impact 3.4-4: General Plan implementation would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites (Less than Significant)

Wildlife movement corridors are areas that connect habitat areas and allow wildlife to move between otherwise separated habitat patches. These corridors support daily movement, foraging, dispersal, seasonal migration, mate-seeking, genetic exchange, recolonization of habitat, and movement in response to environmental change or natural disturbance. In developed and agricultural landscapes, riparian corridors, drainage channels, wetlands, open space areas, agricultural lands, and aquatic corridors may provide local or regional movement opportunities for wildlife.

The Planning Area consists primarily of developed and planned urban uses consistent with the Mountain House Master Plan. As shown on Figure 3.4-3, the California Terrestrial Habitat Connectivity mapping does not identify Essential Connectivity Areas within the Planning Area. However, the Planning Area contains habitat that could support foraging, nesting, sheltering, dispersal, or movement opportunities for a variety of wildlife species, including, but not limited to, vacant land, agricultural fields, parks, landscaped areas, open space, riparian corridors, and various waterbodies. In particular, the Planning Area contains waterways that connect to the larger Delta and may provide movement habitat for fish and other aquatic species. In addition, agricultural and grassland areas within the Planning Area and vicinity may provide foraging habitat and movement opportunities for raptors, nesting birds, and other wildlife.

While approval of the General Plan would not directly approve or entitle any specific development or infrastructure project, future development projects consistent with the General Plan have the potential to result in direct or indirect impacts to wildlife movement. Direct impacts to wildlife movement corridors generally occur from blockage or interference with the connectivity between blocks of habitat, a decrease in the width of a corridor or linkage that constrains movement, or the loss of visual continuity within a linkage or corridor. Even when not directly constrained by development, corridors are also vulnerable to edge effects and human encroachment as well. Wildlife nursery sites include areas that provide the resources necessary for reproduction of a species, including foraging habitat, breeding habitat and water sources. Direct impacts to nursery sites from future development projects resulting from implementation of the General Plan could include removal of habitat for development and infrastructure. Indirect impacts to nursery sites would have the potential to result from noise, lighting and changes in drainage patterns, introduction of pests or domestic animals, and other edge effects. These impacts can substantially interfere with native wildlife nursery sites. Determining whether or not a specific area is a nursery site requires field surveys, which are often only valid for a given breeding season depending on the wildlife species present. The implementation of future individual projects would require a detailed and site-specific review of the site to determine the presence or absence of wildlife movement corridors and wildlife nursery sites. If found present and disturbance is required, federal and State laws require measures to ensure movement corridors and wildlife nursery sites are not adversely impacted. The requirements of these federal and State laws are implemented through the permit process.

Additionally, the General Plan includes policies and actions intended to protect wildlife movement corridors and wildlife nursery sites from adverse effects associated with future development and

improvement projects within the Planning Area. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-2.2 directs the City to protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements. Policy RM-2.3 directs development to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats, maintain a minimum 50-foot naturalized buffer from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines, and limit land uses within buffers to passive recreation, resource management, and flood control. Policy RM-2.6 directs the City to support the maintenance and enhancement of wildlife movement corridors along creeks, open space areas, and agricultural edges by minimizing barriers and maintaining habitat connectivity where feasible. Action RM-2c states that where sensitive biological habitats are identified on or adjacent to a project site, the project must include mitigation measures consistent with the SJMSCP or equivalent mitigation satisfying FESA, CESA, and CEQA requirements. Action RM-2g directs the City to work with the USACE, USFWS, and CDFW during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources. Action RM-2h requires vegetation and tree removal to occur outside bird nesting season where feasible; or pre-construction surveys within three days of construction if work occurs during nesting season and buffer requirements to ensure the nesting behavior is not adversely affected by construction activity, pursuant to the MBTA. In addition, significant waterways and riparian areas located in the Planning Area are generally designated for conservation uses and identified as Community Park (P/CP), Regional Park (P/RP), Open Space/Resource Conservation (OS/RC), or Open Space/Other (OS/O) land uses on the General Plan Land Use Map.

With compliance with federal, State, and local regulations, and implementation of General Plan policies and actions, future development resulting from implementation of the General Plan would result in a ***less than significant*** impact associated with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or the use of native wildlife nursery sites. No mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-2: A resilient ecosystem that supports diverse wildlife habitats and biological resources, promotes environmental health, and functions as green infrastructure.

Policy RM-2.1: Balanced Open Space System. Support a balanced and integrated open space system that reflects a variety of considerations, including habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, stormwater management, public safety, community health and recreation, aesthetics, and overall community benefit.

Policy RM-2.2: Habitat Conservation. The City shall protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements.

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.
- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.
- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

Policy RM-2.4: Tree Preservation and Native Landscaping. Support the preservation of healthy mature trees where feasible and encourage native, drought-tolerant, and pollinator-friendly landscaping that supports biodiversity and avoids invasive species.

Policy RM-2.6: Wildlife Corridor. Support the maintenance and enhancement of wildlife movement corridors along creeks, open space areas, and agricultural edges by minimizing barriers and maintaining habitat connectivity where feasible.

Policy RM-2.7: Rewilding. Explore rewilding opportunities and other ecological restoration projects aimed at increasing biodiversity and restoring natural processes.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action RM-2a: Prepare and maintain an inventory of significant natural resources, including but not limited to wetlands, riparian corridors, special-status species constraints, wildlife corridors, protected trees, and scenic corridors, to inform development review.

Action RM-2b: Review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements.

Action RM-2c: Where sensitive biological habitats have been identified on or immediately adjacent to a project site, the project shall include appropriate mitigation measures consistent with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) or equivalent mitigation that satisfies all applicable requirements of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Action RM-2e: Identify and document opportunities to enhance habitat connectivity during review of development projects and capital improvement projects.

Action RM-2g: Work closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources.

Action RM-2h: Where feasible, vegetation and tree removal should occur outside of the bird nesting season (February 1 to August 31). If not feasible, the project applicant shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a nesting bird survey no more than three days prior to the commencement of construction activities. The biologist conducting the clearance survey shall document the negative results if no active bird nests are observed on the project site or within the vicinity during the clearance survey with a brief letter report, submitted to the City of Mountain House Community Development Department prior to construction, indicating that no impacts to active bird nests would occur before construction can proceed. If an active avian nest is discovered during the pre-construction clearance survey, construction activities shall stay outside a 300-foot buffer around the active nest. For listed and raptor species, this buffer shall be 500 feet. A biological monitor shall be present to delineate the boundaries of the buffer area and to monitor the active nest to ensure the nesting behavior is not adversely affected by construction activity, pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Prior to the commencement of construction activities and the issuance of any permits, results of the pre-construction survey and any subsequent monitoring shall be provided to the City of Mountain House Community Development Department, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and other appropriate agencies.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant.

Impact 3.4-5: The General Plan would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance (Less than Significant)

The General Plan itself would establish a long-term land use and policy framework for the Planning Area and would not directly approve any specific development, grading, vegetation removal, tree removal, or infrastructure project. Future development consistent with the General Plan would be subject to applicable federal, State, regional, and local policies and regulations related to biological resource protection. Therefore, adoption of the General Plan would not, by itself, conflict with any local biological resource protection ordinance.

The Mountain House Municipal Code includes adopted local regulations that protect biological resources. Title 9, Division 15, Chapter 2, *Trees*, includes provisions to preserve tree resources, including Native Oak Trees, Heritage Oak Trees, and Historical Trees. Title 9, Division 15, Chapter 3, *Riparian Habitat*, includes provisions to preserve riparian habitat and requires preparation of a Riparian Habitat Mitigation Plan for discretionary projects with the potential to affect riparian habitat. These adopted code provisions would apply to qualifying future development projects and provide local procedures for review and mitigation of potential impacts to protected trees and riparian habitat.

In addition, the General Plan includes policies and actions intended to protect biological resources, including trees. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-2.2 directs the City to

protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements. Policy RM-2.3 directs development to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats, maintain a minimum 50-foot naturalized buffer from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines, and limit land uses within buffers to passive recreation, resource management, and flood control. Policy RM-2.4 directs the City to support the preservation of healthy mature trees where feasible and encourage native, drought-tolerant, and pollinator-friendly landscaping that supports biodiversity and avoids invasive species. Policy RM-2.8 directs the City to coordinate with the SJCOG, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations. Action RM-2a directs the City to prepare and maintain an inventory of significant natural resources, including but not limited to wetlands, riparian corridors, special-status species constraints, wildlife corridors, protected trees, and scenic corridors, to inform development review. Action RM-2b directs the City to review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements. Action RM-2c states that where sensitive biological habitats are identified on or adjacent to a project site, the project must include mitigation measures consistent with the SJMSCP or equivalent mitigation satisfying FESA, CESA, and CEQA requirements. Action RM-2g directs the City to work with the USACE, USFWS, and CDFW during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources.

The General Plan provides for the continued implementation of local requirements, including policies and ordinances, related to protection of biological resources. Based on the required compliance with the General Plan and local regulations, impacts are considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation measures are required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-2: A resilient ecosystem that supports diverse wildlife habitats and biological resources, promotes environmental health, and functions as green infrastructure.

Policy RM-2.1: Balanced Open Space System. Support a balanced and integrated open space system that reflects a variety of considerations, including habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, stormwater management, public safety, community health and recreation, aesthetics, and overall community benefit.

Policy RM-2.2: Habitat Conservation. The City shall protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements.

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species

Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.

- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.
- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

Policy RM-2.4: Tree Preservation and Native Landscaping. Support the preservation of healthy mature trees where feasible and encourage native, drought-tolerant, and pollinator-friendly landscaping that supports biodiversity and avoids invasive species.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action RM-2a: Prepare and maintain an inventory of significant natural resources, including but not limited to wetlands, riparian corridors, special-status species constraints, wildlife corridors, protected trees, and scenic corridors, to inform development review.

Action RM-2b: Review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements.

Action RM-2c: Where sensitive biological habitats have been identified on or immediately adjacent to a project site, the project shall include appropriate mitigation measures consistent with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) or equivalent mitigation that satisfies all applicable requirements of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Action RM-2g: Work closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, disturb Waters of the United States or otherwise impact sensitive biological resources.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant.

Impact 3.4-6: General Plan implementation would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan (Less than Significant)

The Planning Area is located within an area covered by the SJMSCP. The SJMSCP is administered by the SJCOG and provides a countywide framework for balancing open space conservation with the conversion of open space to non-open space uses. The SJMSCP provides a mechanism for compensating for covered habitat conversions associated with activities such as urban development, expansion of urban boundaries, transportation projects, utility installation, school expansions, non-federal flood control projects, new parks and trails, mining, preserve management, and similar public agency projects.

The General Plan would not directly approve construction or authorize a specific development project. However, buildout consistent with the General Plan could accommodate future development projects and infrastructure improvements that may constitute covered activities under the SJMSCP. Subsequent projects that participate in the SJMSCP would be required to comply with applicable SJMSCP procedures, including payment of applicable fees, coordination with SJCOG, and satisfaction of applicable conditions for covered species and habitat conversions. While participation in the SJMSCP is voluntary, applicants who opt out would be required to comply independently with applicable federal, State, and local biological resource requirements, including FESA, CESA, CEQA, and other applicable local, State, and federal laws and regulations related to biological resources.

Additionally, the General Plan includes policies and actions that would maintain, protect, and preserve biologically significant habitats where practical, which would serve to maintain consistency with the SJMSCP. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-2.2 directs the City to protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements. Policy RM-2.3 directs development to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats, maintain a minimum 50-foot naturalized buffer from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines, and limit land uses within buffers to passive recreation, resource management, and flood control. Policy RM-2.8 directs the City to coordinate with the SJCOG, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations. Action RM-2b directs the City to review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements. Action RM-2c states that where sensitive biological habitats are identified on or adjacent to a project site, the project must include mitigation measures consistent with the SJMSCP or equivalent mitigation satisfying FESA, CESA, and CEQA requirements.

Because future development under the General Plan would remain subject to SJMSCP requirements where applicable, and because the General Plan would not preclude implementation of the SJMSCP or conflict with any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan, this impact would be ***less than significant*** and no mitigation measures are required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-2.2: Habitat Conservation. The City shall protect sensitive habitats and special-status species in accordance with State and federal resource agency requirements.

Policy RM-2.3: Creek, Wetland, and Riparian Protection. The City shall protect, restore, and enhance the ecological integrity of Mountain House Creek, the Old River corridor, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

- Avoidance First: Development shall be designed to avoid impacts to wetlands and sensitive habitats. Where avoidance is technically infeasible, impacts shall be minimized and mitigated in accordance with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) and applicable State and federal permits.
- Buffer Standards: A minimum 50-foot wide naturalized buffer shall be maintained from the edge of all wetlands and riparian driplines. This buffer shall be increased for habitats of high ecological value as determined by a site-specific biological assessment.
- Use Compatibility: Within habitat buffers, land uses shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., trails, overlooks), resource management, and flood control. Active recreational facilities (e.g., sports fields, paved parking) shall be located outside of these protected buffer zones to minimize light, noise, and runoff intrusion.

Policy RM-2.8: Regulatory Coordination. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, resource agencies, and other responsible entities to implement applicable habitat conservation requirements and other biological resource regulations.

Action RM-2b: Review discretionary development applications for compliance with adopted habitat protection, buffer, and tree preservation requirements.

Action RM-2c: Where sensitive biological habitats have been identified on or immediately adjacent to a project site, the project shall include appropriate mitigation measures consistent with the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) or equivalent mitigation that satisfies all applicable requirements of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant.

3.4.4 REFERENCES

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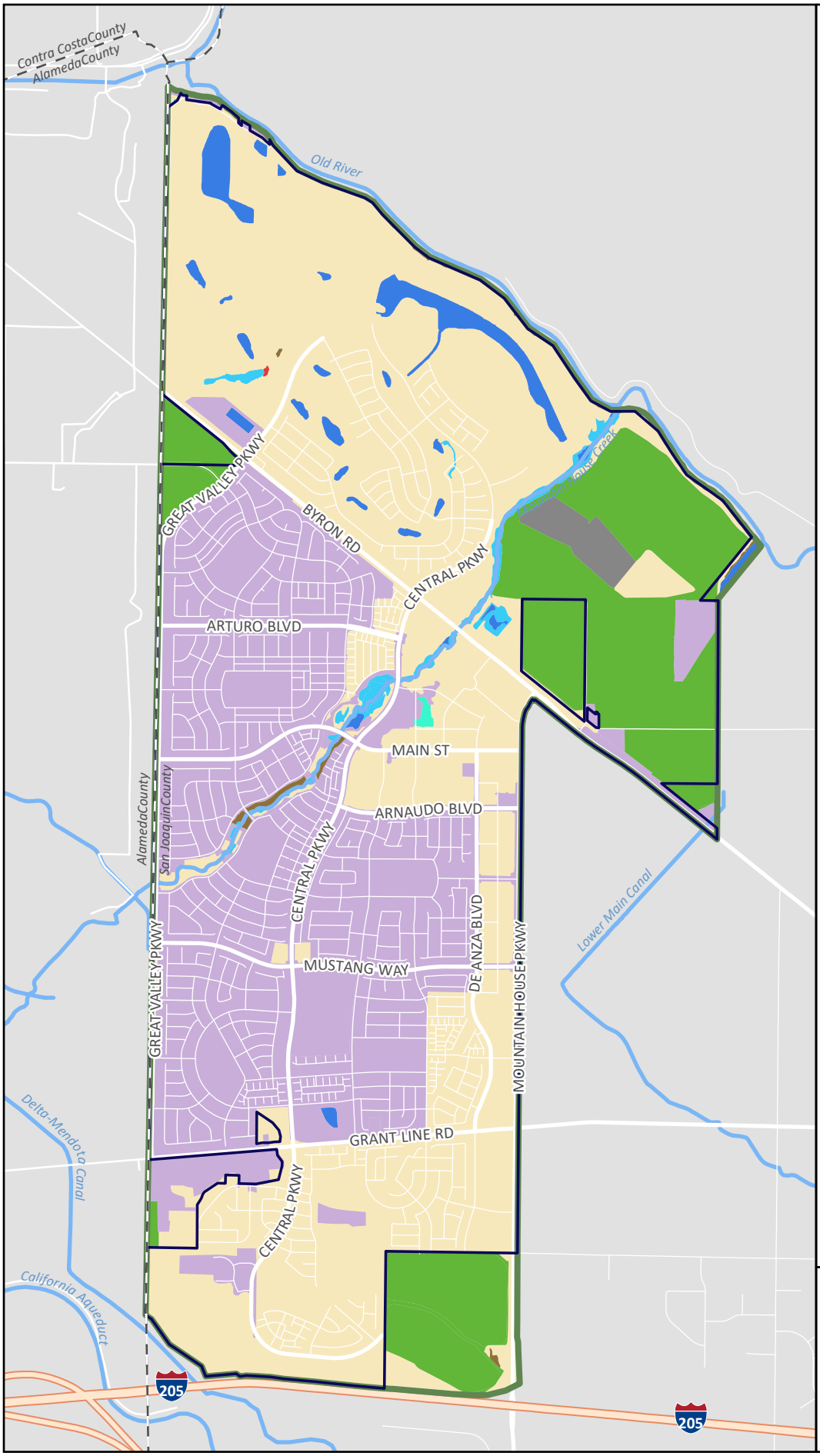

FIGURE 3.4-1.

LAND COVER TYPES

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary
- Annual Grassland
- Barren
- Deciduous Orchard
- Eucalyptus
- Fresh Emergent Wetland
- Riverine/Lacustrine
- Saline Emergent Wetland
- Urban
- Valley Foothill Riparian

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

City of Mountain House

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
July 30, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset; CDFW ds2632 (9-1-2016) and ds2855 (10-1-2019)

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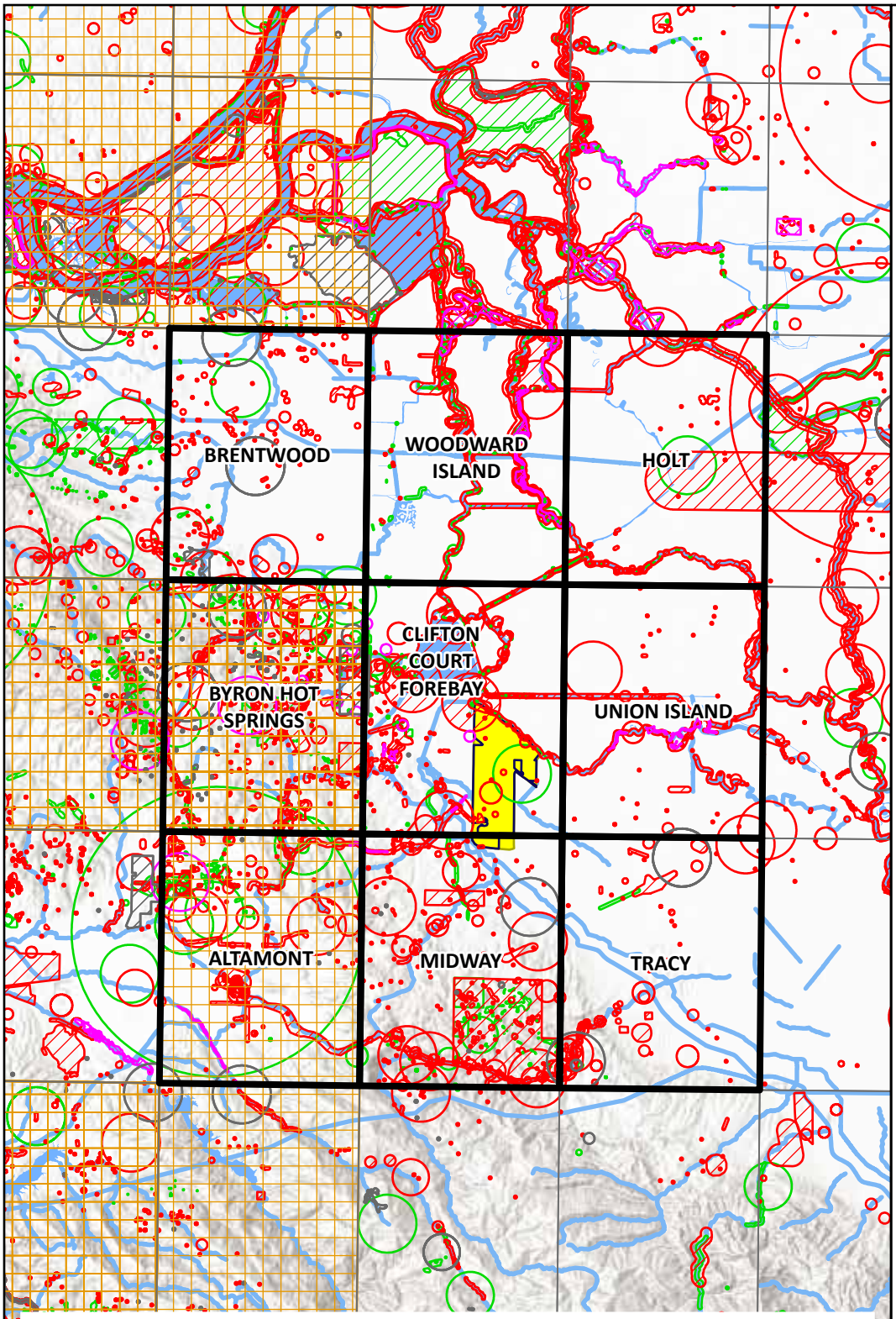
FIGURE 3.4-2.

CALIFORNIA NATURAL DIVERSITY DATABASE: 9-QUAD SEARCH



- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- Water Feature
- USGS 7.5' Quadrangle
- USGS 7.5' Quadrangle Search Area
- Plant (80m)
- Plant (specific)
- Plant (non-specific)
- Plant (circular)
- Animal (80m)
- Animal (specific)
- Animal (non-specific)
- Animal (circular)
- Terrestrial Comm. (specific)
- Terrestrial Comm. (circular)
- Multiple (80m)
- Multiple (specific)
- Multiple (non-specific)
- Multiple (circular)
- Sensitive Environmental Occurrence

0 2½ 5
Miles

Please Note: the occurrences shown on this map represent the known locations of the species listed here as of the date of this version. There may be additional occurrences or additional species within this area which have not been surveyed and/or mapped. Lack of information in the CNDDB about a species or an area can never be used as proof that no special status species occur in an area.

Per CNDDB licensing agreement:
1. special status species occurrences are symbolized using standard CNDDB symbology as provided by State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife
2. data is mapped at a scale of no larger than 1:350,000
3. base reference data is limited

City of Mountain House

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group July 30, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: California Natural Diversity Database 6-27-2025; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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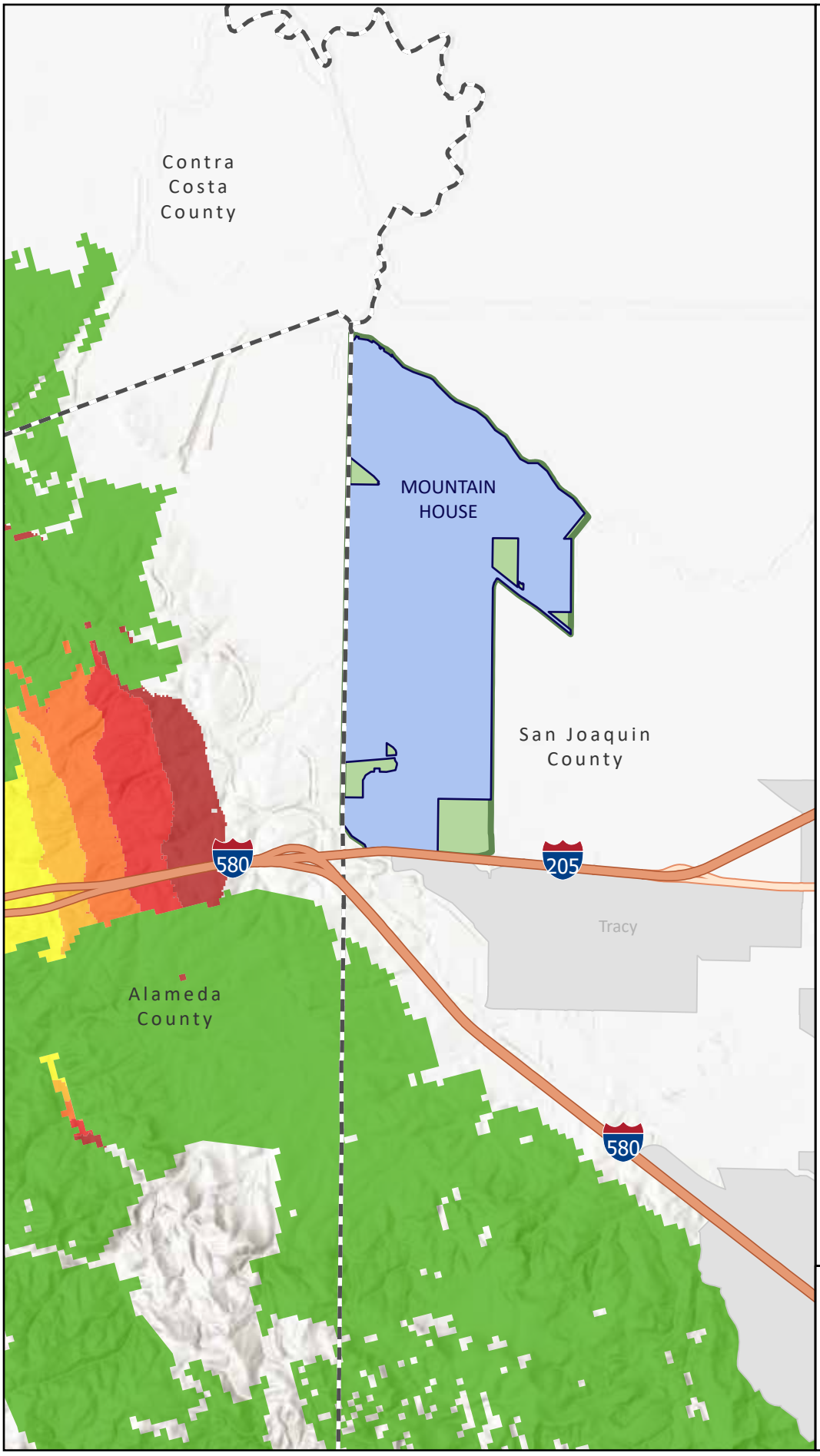

FIGURE 3.4-3.

CALIFORNIA TERRESTRIAL HABITAT CONNECTIVITY

Mountain House City Limits

Sphere of Influence (SOI)

County Boundary

California Essential Habitat Connectivity*

Natural Landscape Blocks

Essential Connectivity Areas

More Permeable

Less Permeable

**The Essential Habitat Connectivity map delineates lands likely important to wildlife movement between large, mostly natural areas at the statewide scale based on available data and assumptions provided in the report. It omits small natural areas and does not reflect movement needs of particular species. It is a decision-support tool to be refined by finer-scale analyses and local linkage designs. DO NOT assume that lands outside Natural Landscape Blocks or Essential Connectivity Areas are unimportant to wildlife populations or movements.*

0 ½ 1
Miles

City of Mountain House

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
July 30, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: California Essential Habitat Connectivity (CEHC) 3-1-2010; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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Cultural resources are defined as buildings, sites, structures, or objects that may have historical, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific importance. Preservation of the city's cultural heritage should be considered when planning for the future.

This section provides a background discussion of the prehistory, ethnology, historical period background, and cultural resources found in Mountain House. This section is organized with an existing setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis. Paleontological resources are discussed in Section 3.6, Geology and Soils, of this Draft EIR.

One comment was received during the NOP comment period regarding this environmental topic; refer to Appendix A. The comment letter from Joshua Nowakowski of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), dated May 15, 2026, outlines CEQA requirements for identifying and protecting tribal cultural resources within the Planning Area. The comment letter recommends early consultation with California Native American Tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Planning Area.

KEY TERMS

The following key terms are used throughout this section to describe cultural and tribal resources and the framework that regulates them:

Archaeology. The study of historic or prehistoric peoples and their cultures by analysis of their artifacts and monuments.

Complex. A patterned grouping of similar artifact assemblages from two or more sites, presumed to represent an archaeological culture.

Ethnography. The study of contemporary human cultures.

Midden. A deposit marking a former habitation site and containing such materials as discarded artifacts, bone and shell fragments, food refuse, charcoal, ash, rock, human remains, structural remnants, and other cultural leavings.

3.5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

PREHISTORY

The Central Valley region was among the first in the state to attract intensive fieldwork, and research has continued to the present day. This has resulted in a substantial accumulation of data.

In the early decades of the 1900s, E.J. Dawson explored numerous sites near Stockton and Lodi, later collaborating with W.E. Schenck.[1] By 1933, the focus of work was directed to the Cosumnes locality,

[1] Schenck, W. Egbert and Elmer Dawson. 1929 Archaeology of the Northern San Joaquin Valley. University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology 25(4):289-413. Berkeley.

where survey and excavation studies were conducted by the Sacramento Junior College.[2] Excavation data, in particular from the stratified Windmiller site (CA-Sac-107), suggested two temporally distinct cultural traditions. Later work at other mounds by Sacramento Junior College and the University of California, Berkeley, enabled the investigators to identify a third cultural tradition, intermediate between the previously postulated Early and Late Horizons. The three-horizon sequence, based on discrete changes in ornamental artifacts and mortuary practices, as well as on observed differences in soils within sites,[3] was later refined by Beardsley (1954). An expanded definition of artifacts diagnostic of each time period was developed, and its application extended to parts of the central California coast. Traits held in common allow the application of this system within certain limits of time and space to other areas of prehistoric central California.

The Windmiller Culture (Early Horizon) is characterized by ventrally-extended burials (some dorsal extensions are known), with westerly orientation of heads; a high percentage of burials with grave goods; frequent presence of red ocher in graves; large projectile points, of which 60 percent are of materials other than obsidian; rectangular *Haliotis* beads; *Olivella* shell beads (types A1a and L); rare use of bone; some use of baked clay objects; and well-fashioned charmstones, usually perforated.

The Cosumnes Culture (Middle Horizon) displays considerable changes from the preceding cultural expression. The burial mode is predominately flexed, with variable cardinal orientation and some cremations present. There are a lower percentage of burials with grave goods, and ocher staining is common in graves. *Olivella* beads of types C1, F and G predominate, and there is abundant use of green *Haliotis* sp. rather than red *Haliotis* sp. Other characteristic artifacts include perforated and canid teeth; asymmetrical and "fishtail" charmstones, usually unperforated; cobble mortars and evidence of wooden mortars; extensive use of bone for tools and ornaments; large projectile points, with considerable use of rock other than obsidian; and use of baked clay.

Hotchkiss Culture (Late Horizon) -- The burial pattern retains the use of the flexed mode, and there is wide spread evidence of cremation, lesser use of red ocher, heavy use of baked clay, *Olivella* beads of Types E and M, extensive use of *Haliotis* ornaments of many elaborate shapes and forms, shaped mortars and cylindrical pestles, bird-bone tubes with elaborate geometric designs, clam shell disc beads, small projectile points indicative of the introduction of the bow and arrow, flanged tubular pipes of steatite and schist, and use of magnesite.[4] The characteristics noted are not all-inclusive, but cover the more important traits.

Schulz (1981), in an extensive examination of the central California evidence for the use of acorns, used the terms Early, Middle and Late Complexes, but the traits attributed to them remain generally the same.[5] While it is not altogether clear, Schulz seemingly uses the term “Complex” to refer to the

[2] Lillard, Jeremiah B. and William K. Purves. 1936 The Archeology of the Deer Creek-Cosumnes Area, Sacramento County, California. Sacramento Junior College, Department of Anthropology Bulletin 1. Sacramento.

[3] Ibid

[4] Moratto, Michael J. 1984 California Archaeology. Academic Press, New York.

[5] Schulz, Peter D. 1981 Osteoarchaeology and Subsistence Change in Prehistoric Central California. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Davis.

particular archeological entities (above called "Horizons") as defined in this region. Ragir's (1972) cultures are the same as Schulz's complexes.

Bennyhoff and Hughes (1984) have presented alternative dating schemes for the Central California Archeological Sequence. The primary emphasis is a more elaborate division of the horizons to reflect what is seen as cultural/temporal changes within the three horizons and a compression of the temporal span.

There have been other chronologies proposed, including Fredrickson (1973), and since it is correlated with Bennyhoff's (1977) work, it does merit discussion. The particular archeological cultural entities Fredrickson has defined, based upon the work of Bennyhoff, are patterns, phases and aspects. Bennyhoff's (1977) work in the Plains Miwok area is the best definition of the Cosumnes District, which likely conforms to Fredrickson's pattern.[6] Fredrickson also proposed periods of time associated heavily with economic modes, which provides a temporal term for comparing contemporary cultural entities. It corresponds with Willey and Phillips' (1958) earlier "tradition", although it is tied more specifically to the archeological record in California.

ETHNOLOGY

The Mountain House Planning Area lies within the northern portion of the ethnographic territory of the Yokuts people. The Yokuts were members of the Penutian language family which held all of the Central Valley, San Francisco Bay Area, and the Pacific Coast from Marin County to near Point Sur. The Yokuts differed from other ethnographic groups in California as they had true tribal divisions with group names.[7,8] Each tribe spoke a particular dialect, common to its members, but similar enough to other Yokuts that they were mutually intelligible.[9]

The Yokuts held portions of the San Joaquin Valley from the Tehachapi range in the south to Stockton in the north. On the north they were bordered by the Plains Miwok, and on the west by the Saclan or Bay Miwok and Costonoan peoples. Although neighbors were often from distinct language families, differences between the people appear to have been more influenced by environmental factors as opposed to linguistic affinities. Thus, the Plains Miwok were more similar to the nearby Yokuts than to foothill members of their own language group. Similarities in cultural inventory co-varied with distance from other groups and proximity to culturally diverse people. The material culture of the southern San Joaquin Yokuts was therefore more closely related to that of their non-Yokuts neighbors than to that of Delta members of their own language group.

Trade was well developed, with mutually beneficial interchange of needed or desired goods. Obsidian, rare in the San Joaquin Valley, was obtained by trade with Paiute and Shoshoni groups on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada, where numerous sources of this material are located, and to some extent from the Napa Valley to the north. Shell beads, obtained by the Yokuts from coastal

[6] Bennyhoff, James A. 1977 Ethnogeography of the Plains Miwok. Center for Archaeological Research at Davis, Publications 5. University of California, Davis.
[7] Kroeber, Alfred L. 1953 Handbook of the California Indians. California Book Company, Ltd., Berkeley.
[8] Latta, F. F. 1949 Handbook of the Yokuts Indians. Bear State Books, Oildale, California.
[9] Kroeber, Alfred L. 1953 Handbook of the California Indians. California Book Company, Ltd., Berkeley.

people, and acorns, rare in the Great Basin, were among many items exported to the east by Yokuts traders.[10]

Economic subsistence was based on the acorn, with substantial dependency on gathering and processing of wild seeds and other vegetable foods. The rivers, streams, and sloughs that formed a maze within the valley provided abundant food resources such as fish, shellfish, and turtles. Game, wild fowl, and small mammals were trapped and hunted to provide protein augmentation of the diet. In general, the eastern portion of the San Joaquin Valley provided a lush environment of varied food resources, with the estimated large population centers reflecting this abundance.[11,12]

The 1833 malaria epidemic that decimated the Indians in the Central Valley played a major role in defining the post-Contact land use pattern of the Indians of the region, as well as impacting Euro-American economic development. The introduction of malaria to central California circa 1831 occurred as a result of expeditions of several fur brigades of the Hudson's Bay Company with infected individuals. The introduction of the disease led to the tremendous epidemic of 1833, resulting in the decimation of the Indian population of the region. An estimated three-quarter of the total Indian population of the region died from the disease in that year.

The Mountain House area was likely occupied by the Northern Valley Yokuts, specifically the Cholbon tribelet. The tribelet's territory apparently extended westward along Old River to just west of Bethany. The Yokuts were a hunter-gatherer American Indian Cholbon tribelet of the Northern Valley that first came into contact with Spanish settlers in the late 18th century. While the Spanish never settled in the region where Mountain House now lies, the land was used for trade routes and agriculture.

HISTORIC PERIOD BACKGROUND

Mountain House became a rest stop during the Gold Rush era. In 1849, Thomas Goodall set up the first “Mountain House” structure—a blue tent that welcomed weary travelers heading east from San Francisco to the Sierra Nevada Foothills. The name Mountain House originates from the Gold Rush era. When miners traveled from San Francisco to the Sierra foothills, they often rested about midway at a house called "Mountain House" at the bottom of a range of hills. The first Mt. House structure took the form of a blue tent and was built in 1849 by Thomas Goodall. With the help of American Indians, Goodall built an adobe house on the site where Mountain House became a rest stop for miners, stockmen, rancheros and immigrants. Simon Zimmerman purchased the stop and through his hard work Mountain House became a famous way station on the road to Stockton.[13]

[10] Davis, James T. 1961 Trade Routes and Economic Exchange among the Indians of California. University of California Archaeological Survey Reports 54:1-71. Berkeley.

[11] Cook, Sherburne F. 1955 The Aboriginal Populations of the San Joaquin Valley, California. University of California Anthropological Records 16(2). Berkeley.

[12] Baumhoff, Martin A. 1963 Ecological Determinants of Aboriginal California Populations. University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology 49(2):155-236. Berkeley.

[13] Mountain House Community Services District, 2013, Mountain House… Where Villages Create a Community. Available at: http://yamata-mhcsdorg-primary.hgsitebuilder.com/about.

In the mid-1850s Mohr's Landing developed around Old River to support commerce and trade. Unfortunately, in the early 1860s flooding of the Old River destroyed Mohr's Landing and a regional farmer, Eric Wicklund, built a new town near the Mountain House site. The town of Wicklund became the transportation and trade center for the area. During the 1870s the arrival of the Central Pacific Railroad allowed faster transportation of goods and Wicklund's commerce faded. In 1878 the first train ran through Bethany Railroad Station and Bethany became a new center for trade. To accommodate growth, the Byron-Bethany Irrigation District was formed in 1916 to transport water, which eased dependency on dry farming. Through the 1920s Bethany grew to include a church, blacksmith shop, general store, bar, dance hall and post office. During this time the Mountain House School was built in the foothills of the region. In 1940 the last remaining structure of Bethany, the Bethany Post Office was torn down. From the 1940s to the 1990s, the Planning Areas was primarily used for agriculture.[14]

In the 1990s, the developer Trimark Communities purchased land and proposed the development that would eventually become Mountain House. In November 1994, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors adopted the Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plan I. In 1996, the Mountain House Community Services District was formed to provide various public services to the community. The Mountain House Specific Plan II and Specific Plan III were adopted in 2005. On July 1, 2024, Mountain House was incorporated as a city.

CULTURAL RESOURCES IN THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE PLANNING AREA

California Historic Resources Inventory System

The California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) maintains a wide range of documents and materials relating to historical resources (e.g., buildings, structures, objects, historic and archaeological sites, landscapes, districts). To understand cultural resources in the Planning Area, the CHRIS Central California Information Center conducted a search for the cultural resources within and in the immediate vicinity of the Planning Area. According to the search, a total of 30 formally recorded cultural resources have been identified within the Planning Area, including: [15]

- One prehistoric archaeological resource, a Native American occupation site;
- Three prehistoric isolated finds of lithic (stone tool) materials;
- Eight historical archaeological resources consisting primarily of historic refuse and/or foundations associated with historic ranching in the area;
- Six resources featuring historic buildings associated with ranching activities; and
- Twelve structures consisting of irrigation systems and canals, roads, and levees

[14] Ibid.

[15] Central California Information Center, California Historical Resources Information System. Letter dated August 17, 2025.

One resource, the Delta-Mendota Canal, is listed in the Office of Historic Preservation Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD) with a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) evaluation of "2S2", an individual property determined eligible for the NRHP by a consensus through the Section 106 process, listed on the California Register of Historical Resources.

NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

As part of the General Plan Project, the City submitted a Tribal Consultation List Request to the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). In a letter dated September 3, 2025, the NAHC provided a list of California Native American tribes and representatives that may have knowledge of cultural resources within or near the Planning Area and reported that its Sacred Lands File (SLF) search yielded negative results.

The City conducted Native American consultations under Senate Bill (SB) 18 (Chapter 905, Statutes of 2004), which requires local governments to consult with tribes prior to making certain planning decisions and requires consultation and notice for a general and specific plan adoption or amendments in order to preserve, or mitigate impacts to, cultural places that may be affected. In addition to SB 18 consultation, the City conducted tribal consultations under the provisions of CEQA (Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 subdivisions (b), (d) and (e)), also known as Assembly Bill (AB) 52, which requires consultation for projects within the City's jurisdiction and within the traditional territory of the tribal organizations who have previously requested AB 52 consultations with the City. On May 19, 2026, the City sent a letter to Native American individuals and/or Tribal Organizations in compliance with AB 52 and SB 18. No responses were received.

3.5.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

National Historic Preservation Act

Enacted in 1966 and amended in 2000, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) declared a national policy of historic preservation and instituted a multifaceted program, administered by the Secretary of the Interior, to encourage the achievement of preservation goals at the federal, State, and local levels. The NHPA authorized the expansion and maintenance of the NRHP, established the position of State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and provided for the designation of State Review Boards, set up a mechanism to certify local governments to carry out the purposes of the NHPA, assisted Native American tribes to preserve their cultural heritage, and created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP).

Section 106 Process

Through regulations associated with the NHPA, an impact to a cultural resource would be considered significant if government action would affect a resource listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP. The NHPA codifies a list of cultural resources found to be significant within the context of national history, as determined by a technical process of evaluation. Resources that have not yet been placed

on the NRHP, and are yet to be evaluated, are afforded protection under the NHPA until shown to be not significant.

Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 800) note that for a cultural resource to be determined eligible for listing in the NRHP, the resource must meet specific criteria associated with historic significance and possess certain levels of integrity of form, location, and setting. The criteria for listing on the NRHP are applied within an analysis when there is some question as to the significance of a cultural resource. The criteria for evaluation are defined as the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. This quality must be present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property is eligible for the NRHP if it is significant under one or more of the following criteria:

- *Criterion A:* It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- *Criterion B:* It is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- *Criterion C:* It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- *Criterion D:* It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criterion D is usually reserved for archaeological resources. Eligible cultural resources must meet at least one of the above criteria and exhibit integrity, measured by the degree to which the resource retains its historical properties and conveys its historical character.

The Section 106 evaluation process does not apply to projects undertaken under City environmental compliance jurisdiction. However, should the undertaking require funding, permits, or other administrative actions issued or overseen by a federal agency, analysis of potential impacts to cultural resources following the Section 106 process would likely be necessary. The Section 106 process typically excludes cultural resources created less than 50 years ago unless the resource is considered highly significant from the local perspective. Finally, the Section 106 process allows local concerns to be voiced, and the Section 106 process must consider aspects of local significance before a significance judgment is rendered.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

Evolving from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects with Guidelines for Applying the Standards that were developed in 1976, the Secretary of the Interior's

Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings were published in 1995 and codified as 36 CFR 67.

Neither technical nor prescriptive, these standards are "intended to promote responsible preservation practices that help protect our Nation's irreplaceable cultural resources." "Preservation" acknowledges a resource as a document of its history over time, and emphasizes stabilization, maintenance, and repair of existing historic fabric. "Rehabilitation" not only incorporates the retention of features that convey historic character, but also accommodates alterations and additions to facilitate continuing or new uses. "Restoration" involves the retention and replacement of features from a specific period of significance. "Reconstruction," the least used treatment, provides a basis for recreating a missing resource. These standards have been adopted, or are used informally, by many agencies at all levels of government to review projects that affect historic resources.

STATE

California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR)

California State law also provides for the protection of cultural resources by requiring evaluations of the significance of prehistoric and historic resources identified in documents prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Under CEQA, a cultural resource is considered an important historical resource if it meets any of the criteria found in Section 15064.5(a) of the CEQA Guidelines. Criteria identified in the CEQA Guidelines are similar to those described under the NHPA. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) maintains the CRHR. Historic properties listed, or formally designated for eligibility to be listed, on The National Register are automatically listed on the CRHR. State Landmarks and Points of Interest are also automatically listed. The CRHR can also include properties designated under local preservation ordinances or identified through local historical resource surveys.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA requires that lead agencies determine whether projects may have a significant effect on archaeological and historical resources. This determination applies to those resources which meet significance criteria qualifying them as "unique," "important," listed on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or eligible for listing on the CRHR. If the agency determines that a project may have a significant effect on a significant resource, the project is determined to have a significant effect on the environment, and these effects must be addressed. If a cultural resource is found not to be significant under the qualifying criteria, it need not be considered further in the planning process.

CEQA emphasizes avoidance of archaeological and historical resources as the preferred means of reducing potential significant environmental effects resulting from projects. If avoidance is not feasible, an excavation program or some other form of mitigation must be developed to mitigate the impacts. In order to adequately address the level of potential impacts, and thereby design appropriate mitigation measures, the significance and nature of the cultural resources must be

determined. The following are steps typically taken to assess and mitigate potential impacts to cultural resources for the purposes of CEQA:

- identify cultural resources;
- evaluate the significance of the cultural resources found;
- evaluate the effects of the project on cultural resources; and
- develop and implement measures to mitigate the effects of the project on cultural resources that would be significantly affected.

In 2015, CEQA was amended to require lead agencies to determine whether projects may have a significant effect on tribal cultural resources. (Public Resources Code [PRC] § 21084.2). To qualify as a tribal cultural resource, the resource must be a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object, which is of cultural value to a California Native American Tribe and is listed, or eligible for listing, on the national, state, or local register of historic resources. Lead agencies may also use their discretion to treat any notable resource as a tribal cultural resource. To determine whether a project may have an impact on a resource, the lead agency is required to consult with any California Native American tribe that requests consultation and is affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project (PRC § 21080.3.1). CEQA requires that a lead agency consider the value of the cultural resource to the tribe and consider measures to mitigate any adverse impact.

California Public Resources Code

Section 5097 of the Public Resources Code specifies the procedures to be followed in the event of the unexpected discovery of historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources, including human remains, historic or prehistoric resources, paleontological resources on nonfederal land. The disposition of Native American burial falls within the jurisdiction of the California NAHC. Section 5097.5 of the Code states the following:

> *No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure or deface any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands. Violation of this section is a misdemeanor.*

California Health and Safety Code

Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code requires that construction or excavation be stopped in the vicinity of discovered human remains until the county coroner can determine whether the remains are those of a Native American. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the coroner must contact the California Native American Heritage Commission. CEQA Guidelines (Section 15064.5) specify the procedures to be followed in case of the discovery of human remains on non-federal land. The disposition of Native American burials falls within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission.

Senate Bill 18 (Burton, Chapter 905, Statutes 2004)

SB 18, authored by Senator John Burton and signed into law by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in September 2004, requires local governments to consult with California Native American tribes to aid in the protection of traditional tribal cultural places through local land use planning. This legislation, which amended §65040.2, §65092, §65351, §65352, and §65560, and added §65352.3, §653524, and §65562.5 to the Government Code, also requires the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (now known as the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation) to include in the General Plan Guidelines advice to local governments for how to conduct these consultations. The intent of SB 18 is to provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning stage, for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts to, cultural places. These consultation and notice requirements apply to adoption and amendment of both general plans (defined in Government Code §65300 et seq.) and specific plans (defined in Government Code §65450 et seq.).

Assembly Bill 978

In 2001, Assembly Bill (AB) 978 expanded the reach of Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 and established a State commission with statutory powers to assure that Federal and State laws regarding the repatriation of Native American human remains and items of patrimony are fully complied with. In addition, AB 978 also included non-Federally recognized tribes for repatriation.

Assembly Bill 52

Assembly Bill (AB) 52, approved in September 2014, creates a formal role for California Native American tribes by creating a formal consultation process and establishing that a substantial adverse change to a tribal cultural resource has a significant effect on the environment. Tribal cultural resources are defined as:

1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
    A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR
    B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k)
2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in PRC Section 5024.1 (c). In applying the criteria set forth in PRC Section 5024.1 (c) the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

A cultural landscape that meets the criteria above is also a tribal cultural resource to the extent that the landscape is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape. In addition, a historical resource described in PRC Section 21084.1, a unique archaeological resource as defined in PRC Section 21083.2(g), or a "non-unique archaeological resource" as defined in PRC Section 21083.2(h) may also be a tribal cultural resource if it conforms with above criteria.

AB 52 requires a lead agency, prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report for a project, to begin consultation with a California

Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project if: (1) the California Native American tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency through formal notification of proposed projects in the geographic area that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the tribe, and (2) the California Native American tribe responds, in writing, within 30 days of receipt of the formal notification, and requests the consultation.

3.5.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project is considered to have a significant impact on cultural or tribal resources if it will:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5;
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5;
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries;
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
    - Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k);
    - A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resources to a California Native American tribe.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.5-1: General Plan implementation could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical or archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 (Less Than Significant Impact)

A substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 as demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of the resource would be materially impaired. As described in Section 3.5.1, the Planning Area contains 30 formally recorded cultural resources, including prehistoric resources, historic archaeological resources, historic ranch-related buildings, roads, levees, irrigation facilities, and the Delta-Mendota Canal, which has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and is listed on the California Register of Historical Resources. These known resources demonstrate that portions of the Planning Area are culturally sensitive, and additional buried or otherwise undocumented resources could also be present.

The proposed General Plan is a policy document that does not include any site-specific designs or proposals and would not itself demolish, relocate, or physically alter any historical or archaeological resource. However, implementation of the General Plan would accommodate future development, infrastructure improvements, and other ground-disturbing activities within the Planning Area. Such actions could adversely affect known historic properties or archaeological deposits, or damage previously unidentified resources encountered during grading, excavation, trenching, or demolition.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would reduce potential impacts to historical or archaeological resources. Policy RM-4.1 requires protection of significant cultural and historic resources, including historic structures, archaeological sites, and infrastructure features that reflect the historic agricultural landscape and transportation corridors of the region. Policy RM-4.2 directs the City to identify, document, and celebrate archaeological, historic, and cultural resources in the Planning Area, and Policy RM-4.6 encourages retention, adaptive reuse, or integration of historic resources into new development where feasible and compatible with the site and surrounding area. Policy RM-4.4 requires inadvertent-discovery construction protocols, including work stoppage, professional evaluation, and appropriate treatment. Action RM-4a requires the City to assess development proposals for potential impacts to cultural resources pursuant to CEQA; Action RM-4b calls for preparation and periodic updating of an inventory of known resources; Action RM-4c requires historic resource studies for structures that may have historic significance; and Action RM-4d requires work stoppage, evaluation by qualified professionals, and appropriate treatment if previously unidentified cultural materials are discovered during ground-disturbing activities.

As part of the development review process, the City would evaluate future projects for conformance with the General Plan and Municipal Code, as well as other applicable State and local regulations related to historic and archaeological resources. Subsequent development and infrastructure projects would also be analyzed for potential environmental impacts, consistent with the requirements of CEQA, as applicable. Through these procedures, the City would have the

opportunity to require surveys, technical studies, redesign, avoidance, preservation in place, adaptive reuse, or other treatment measures before approving later projects. Therefore, through compliance with General Plan policies and actions and existing regulations, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-4.1: Preservation of Significant Resources. Protect significant historic, archaeological, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources.

Policy RM-4.2: Cultural Resources Identification. Seek to identify, document, and celebrate historic, archaeological, and cultural resources in Mountain House.

Policy RM-4.4: Inadvertent Discovery Procedures. Require construction protocols for inadvertent discoveries of archaeological resources, paleontological resources, or cultural materials, including work stoppage, evaluation by qualified professionals, and treatment in coordination with responsible agencies and tribes, as applicable.

Policy RM-4.6: Adaptive Reuse and Integration. Encourage retention, adaptive reuse, or integration of historic resources into new development where feasible and compatible with the project site and surrounding area.

Action RM-4a: Continue to assess development proposals for potential impacts to sensitive historic, archaeological, tribal cultural, and paleontological resources pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Action RM-4b: Prepare and periodically update an inventory of known historic, archaeological, and cultural resources within the Planning Area using information from the California Historical Resources Information System, prior studies, and other available sources to inform land use planning and project review.

Action RM-4c: For structures that potentially have historic significance, the City shall require that a study be conducted by a professional archaeologist or historian to determine the actual significance of the structure and potential impacts of the proposed development in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. The City may require modification of the project and/or mitigation measures to avoid any impact to a historic structure, when feasible, such as retaining or rehabilitating historic buildings or relocating the historic building.

Action RM-4d: If previously unidentified cultural or paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, all work within 50 feet of the discovery shall cease, the Community Development Director shall be notified, the resources shall be examined by a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist for appropriate protection and preservation measures. Construction activities may only resume when appropriate protections are in place and have been approved by the Community Development Director or designee.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.5-2: Implementation of the General Plan could lead to the disturbance of human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries (Less Than Significant Impact)

The Planning Area is located within a region of the northern San Joaquin Valley with a long history of Native American occupation and later historic-era settlement, transportation, and ranching activity. As a result, buried human remains could be encountered during future ground-disturbing activities associated with Project implementation, including remains outside of formal cemeteries.

Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e), and PRC Section 5097.98 mandate the process to be followed in the event of an accidental discovery of any human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery. In such an event, the County Coroner must be called in to assess the remains (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5[e]). If the County Coroner determines that the remains are those of a Native American, the NAHC must be contacted within 48 hours, and the provisions for treating or disposing of the remains and any associated grave goods, as described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 must be followed.

As future development and infrastructure projects are considered by the City, each project would be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and other applicable State and local regulations. Subsequent discretionary development and infrastructure projects would also be analyzed for potential environmental impacts, consistent with the requirements of CEQA, as applicable. Under CEQA, human remains are protected under the definition of archaeological materials as being "any evidence of human activity." PRC Section 5097 has specific stop-work and notification procedures to follow in the event that Native American human remains are inadvertently discovered during development activities.

The proposed General Plan includes specific policies and actions that address the inadvertent disturbance of cultural resources and human remains. Policy RM-4.4 requires construction protocols for inadvertent discoveries of cultural materials, including work stoppage and evaluation by qualified professionals, and Policy RM-4.5 requires treatment of discovered human remains in accordance with State law and in a culturally respectful manner. Action RM-4e requires that excavation halt if human remains are discovered, that the San Joaquin County Coroner be notified, and that Native American Heritage Commission procedures and Most Likely Descendant recommendations be followed, as applicable. Action RM-4d also requires work stoppage and professional evaluation if previously unidentified cultural materials are encountered.

Compliance with the General Plan policies and actions and existing regulations, including Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e), and PRC Section 5097.98, ensures that potential impacts associated with the inadvertent discovery of human remains would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-4.4: Inadvertent Discovery Procedures. Require construction protocols for inadvertent discoveries of archaeological resources, paleontological resources, or cultural materials, including work stoppage, evaluation by qualified professionals, and treatment in coordination with responsible agencies and tribes, as applicable.

Policy RM-4.5: Human Remains. Ensure treatment of discovered human remains in accordance with State law and in a culturally respectful manner, including notification and coordination with the San Joaquin County Coroner and the Most Likely Descendant, as applicable.

Action RM-4d: If previously unidentified cultural or paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, all work within 50 feet of the discovery shall cease, the Community Development Director shall be notified, the resources shall be examined by a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist for appropriate protection and preservation measures. Construction activities may only resume when appropriate protections are in place and have been approved by the Community Development Director or designee.

Action RM-4e: In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, the City shall halt excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the San Joaquin County Coroner has been informed and has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required. If the remains are of Native American origin, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the descendants from the deceased Native Americans have made a recommendation to the landowner or the persons responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code section 5097.98, or the Native American Heritage Commission was unable to identify a descendant or the descendant failed to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being granted access to the site.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.5-3: General Plan implementation could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 (Less Than Significant Impact)

Tribal cultural resources may include sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe. The Planning Area is located within a region with a long history of Native American occupation and use and contains a formally recorded Native American occupation site and prehistoric isolated finds. The ethnographic background and consultation records indicate that multiple California Native American tribes may possess cultural knowledge or affiliations relevant to the Planning Area. Accordingly, the potential presence of tribal cultural resources, including resources that have not been formally recorded, cannot be ruled out.

The proposed General Plan itself would not directly alter any tribal cultural resource. As part of the General Plan Project, the City requested a Tribal Consultation List from the NAHC and sent consultation letters to potentially affiliated tribal representatives and organizations in compliance with AB 52 and SB 18. None of the tribal organizations who were notified of the General Plan pursuant to AB 52 and SB 18 responded requesting consultation, nor did any tribal organizations provide information specific to the potential for tribal cultural resources to occur in the Planning Area.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions addressing tribal cultural resources. Proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-4.3 requires early engagement with California Native American tribes consistent with State law to identify and avoid impacts to tribal cultural resources and to incorporate culturally appropriate treatment measures when avoidance is not feasible. Policy RM-4.1 supports protection of significant cultural resources, and Policies RM-4.4 and RM-4.5 establish discovery procedures and respectful treatment protocols if cultural materials or human remains are encountered. Action RM-4a directs the City to assess development proposals for potential impacts to tribal cultural resources pursuant to CEQA. Action RM-4d requires work stoppage, evaluation by qualified professionals, and appropriate treatment if previously unidentified cultural materials are discovered during ground-disturbing activities. Action RM-4e requires that excavation halt if human remains are discovered, that the San Joaquin County Coroner be notified, and that Native American Heritage Commission procedures and Most Likely Descendant recommendations be followed, as applicable.

Potential impacts to tribal cultural resources associated with future development would be reduced through implementation of General Plan policies and actions. Further, applicable subsequent development and infrastructure projects would be analyzed for potential environmental impacts, consistent with the requirements of CEQA. Subsequent discretionary projects implemented in accordance with the General Plan would be subject to the provisions of AB 52 and may require tribal consultation with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Planning Area and who have previously requested AB 52 consultations with the City. Future AB 52 consultation may identify tribal cultural resources not yet found and formally recorded that could be impacted by subsequent projects. Through compliance with the General Plan policies and actions and existing regulations, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the

significance of a tribal cultural resource. Therefore, impacts related to tribal cultural resources would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-4.1: Preservation of Significant Resources. Protect significant historic, archaeological, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources.

Policy RM-4.3: Tribal Consultation and Collaboration. Engage California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Planning Area early in the planning and environmental review process, consistent with the requirements of AB 52 (Pub. Res. Code §21080.3.1) and SB 18 (Gov. Code §65352.3), to identify and avoid impacts to tribal cultural resources, and incorporate culturally appropriate treatment measures when avoidance is not feasible.

Policy RM-4.4: Inadvertent Discovery Procedures. Require construction protocols for inadvertent discoveries of archaeological resources, paleontological resources, or cultural materials, including work stoppage, evaluation by qualified professionals, and treatment in coordination with responsible agencies and tribes, as applicable.

Policy RM-4.5: Human Remains. Ensure treatment of discovered human remains in accordance with State law and in a culturally respectful manner, including notification and coordination with the San Joaquin County Coroner and the Most Likely Descendant, as applicable.

Action RM-4a: Continue to assess development proposals for potential impacts to sensitive historic, archaeological, tribal cultural, and paleontological resources pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Action RM-4b: Prepare and periodically update an inventory of known historic, archaeological, and cultural resources within the Planning Area using information from the California Historical Resources Information System, prior studies, and other available sources to inform land use planning and project review.

Action RM-4d: If previously unidentified cultural or paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, all work within 50 feet of the discovery shall cease, the Community Development Director shall be notified, the resources shall be examined by a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist for appropriate protection and preservation measures. Construction activities may only resume when appropriate protections are in place and have been approved by the Community Development Director or designee.

Action RM-4e: In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, the City shall halt excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the San Joaquin County Coroner has been informed and has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required. If the remains are of Native American origin, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the descendants

from the deceased Native Americans have made a recommendation to the landowner or the persons responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code section 5097.98, or the Native American Heritage Commission was unable to identify a descendant or the descendant failed to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being granted access to the site.

Action RM-4f: Notify and consult with California Native American tribes in accordance with State law for proposed General Plan amendments, Specific Plans, and discretionary development projects that may affect tribal cultural resources, and incorporate culturally appropriate avoidance, preservation, or mitigation measures when feasible.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

3.5.4 REFERENCES

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This section provides a background discussion of the seismic and geologic hazards found in the City and the regional vicinity. This section is organized with an environmental setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis.

One comment was received during the NOP comment period regarding this environmental topic; refer to Appendix A. The comment letter from Aldara Salinas of the San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department, dated May 19, 2026, provides information on requirements and permits for abandonment of wells or septic systems and geotechnical drilling.

3.6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

GEOLOGIC CONDITIONS

The Planning Area is located within the San Joaquin Valley, within the southern portion of California's Great Valley geomorphic province. The Great Valley is an alluvial plain about 50 miles wide and 400 miles long in the central part of California.[1] Its northern part is the Sacramento Valley, drained by the Sacramento River, and its southern part is the San Joaquin Valley drained by the San Joaquin River. It is bordered by the Tehachapi Mountains on the south, the Klamath Mountains on the north, the Sierra Nevada on the east, and the Coast Ranges on the west.

The San Joaquin Valley is filled with thick sedimentary rock sequences that were deposited as much as 130 million years ago. Large alluvial fans have developed on each side of the Valley. The larger and more gently sloping fans are on the east side of the San Joaquin Valley and overlie metamorphic and igneous basement rocks. These basement rocks are exposed in the Sierra Nevada foothills and consist of meta-sedimentary, volcanic, and granitic rocks.

Regional Geology

Mountain House lies near the southwestern edge of the San Joaquin Valley, just northeast of the Altamont Hills, in an area characterized by generally flat topography and extensive alluvial deposits. Regional drainage in this portion of the Great Valley is tied to the San Joaquin River system and associated Delta waterways, which ultimately convey flows north and west toward San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean. The Planning Area is relatively flat. Mountain House is at an average elevation of 62.3 feet. Figure 3.6-1 shows the USGS Topographic map for the Planning Area.

FAULTS

A fault is a fracture in the crust of the earth. A fault trace is the line on the earth's surface defining the fault. Displacement of the earth's crust along faults releases energy in the form of earthquakes and in some cases in fault creep. Most faults are the result of repeated displacements over a long period of time.

[1] California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey, *Note 36: California Geomorphic Provinces,* December 2002.

Faults are classified as Historic, Holocene, Late Quaternary, Quaternary, and Pre-Quaternary according to the age of most recent movement.[2] These classifications are described as follows.

- **Historic:** faults on which surface displacement has occurred within the past 200 years
- **Holocene:** shows evidence of fault displacement within the past 11,000 years, but without historic record
- **Late Quaternary:** shows evidence of fault displacement within the past 700,000 years, but may be younger due to a lack of overlying deposits that enable more accurate age estimates
- **Quaternary:** shows evidence of displacement sometime during the past 1.6 million years
- **Pre-Quaternary:** without recognized displacement during the past 1.6 million years

Faults are further distinguished as active, potentially active, or inactive.[3]

- **Active:** An active fault is a Historic or Holocene fault that has had surface displacement within the last 11,000 years.
- **Potentially Active:** A potentially active fault is a pre-Holocene Quaternary fault that has evidence of surface displacement between about 1.6 million and 11,000 years ago.
- **Inactive:** An inactive fault is a pre-Quaternary fault that does not have evidence of surface displacement within the past 1.6 million years. The probability of fault rupture is considered low; however, this classification does not mean that inactive faults cannot, or will not, rupture.

The State Geologist is required to delineate regulatory zones of required investigation to assist jurisdictions in fulfilling their responsibilities for protecting the public safety from the effects of earthquake-related ground failure. Figure 3.6-2 provides a map of known faults within the vicinity of the Planning Area. The closest known fault classified as active by the California Geological Survey (CGS) is the Greenville Fault Zone, located approximately 9.62 miles from the Planning Area. The San Andres fault is located approximately 47.84 miles from the Planning Area. Other notable faults within the region include the Calaveras fault zone, Hayward fault, Concord fault, Green Valley fault zone, West Napa fault zone, Rodgers Creek fault zone, Verona fault zone and Seal Cove fault zone.

Fault Rupture

A fault rupture occurs when the surface of the earth breaks as a result of an earthquake, although this does not happen with all earthquakes. These ruptures generally occur in a weak area of an existing fault. Ruptures can be sudden (i.e. earthquake) or slow (i.e. fault creep). The Alquist-Priolo Fault Zoning Act requires active earthquake fault zones to be mapped and it provides special development considerations within these zones. Mountain House does not have surface expression of active faults and fault rupture is not anticipated.

[2] California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey (Jennings, C. & Bryant, W.), *An Explanatory Text to Accompany the Fault Activity Map of California*, 2010.
[3] California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey (Jennings, C. & Bryant, W.), *An Explanatory Text to Accompany the Fault Activity Map of California*, 2010.

SEISMIC HAZARDS

Seismic hazards include both rupture (surface and subsurface) along active faults and ground shaking, which can occur over wider areas. Ground shaking, produced by various tectonic phenomena, is the principal source of seismic hazards in areas devoid of active faults. All areas of the State are subject to some level of seismic ground shaking. Strong ground shaking from an earthquake can result in damage associated with landslides, ground lurching, structural damage, and liquefaction.

Several scales may be used to measure the strength or intensity of an earthquake.[4] Magnitude scales, like the moment magnitude (Mw), measure the size of the earthquake at its source. An earthquake event has a single magnitude; however, the degree of ground shaking that the earthquake causes varies from place to place based on distance, type of surface material, and other factors. Magnitude is expressed as a number. For example, a magnitude 5.3 is a moderate earthquake, and a 6.3 is a strong earthquake. Because of the logarithmic basis of the magnitude scale, each whole number increase in magnitude represents a tenfold increase in measured amplitude as measured on a seismogram.

In contrast to magnitude, other scales describe earthquake intensity, which can vary depending on distance from earthquake epicenter and local characteristics. The Modified Mercalli Intensity (MMI) Scale expresses earthquake intensity experienced at a particular location on a scale of increasing levels of intensity that range from imperceptible shaking to catastrophic destruction. It does not have a mathematical basis; instead, it is an arbitrary ranking based on observed effects. Table 3.6-1 below presents Modified Mercalli intensity effects at each level.

TABLE 3.6-1: MODIFIED MERCALLI INTENSITIES AND EFFECTS

Intensity	Shaking	Description/Damage
I	Not felt	Not felt except by very few under especially favorable conditions.
II	Weak	Felt only by a few persons at rest, especially on upper floors of buildings.
III	Weak	Felt quite noticeably by persons indoors, especially on upper floors of buildings. Many people do not recognize it as an earthquake. Vibrations similar to the passing of a truck.
IV	Light	Felt indoors by many, outdoors by few during the day. At night, some awakened. Dishes, windows, doors disturbed; walls make cracking sound. Sensation like a heavy truck striking a building. Standing vehicles are rocked noticeably.
V	Moderate	Felt by nearly everyone; many awakened: Some dishes and windows are broken. Unstable objects are overturned. Pendulum clocks may stop.
VI	Strong	Felt by all, and many are frightened. Some heavy furniture is moved; a few instances of fallen plaster occur. Damage is slight.

[4] United States Geological Survey, *Earthquake Magnitude, Energy Release, and Shaking Intensity*. Available at: https://www.usgs.gov/programs/earthquake-hazards/earthquake-magnitude-energy-release-and-shaking-intensity#:~:text=Moment%20Magnitude%20(MW)%20is,magnitude%20range%20where%20they%20overlap. Accessed April 2026.

Intensity	Shaking	Description/Damage
VII	Very strong	Damage is negligible in buildings of good design and construction; slight to moderate in well-built ordinary structures; considerable damage in poorly built or badly designed structures; some chimneys are broken.
VIII	Severe	Damage slight in specially designed structures; considerable damage in ordinary substantial buildings with partial collapse. Damage great in poorly built structures. Fall of chimneys, factory stacks, columns, monuments, walls. Heavy furniture overturned.
IX	Violent	Damage is considerable in specially designed structures; well-designed frame structures are thrown out of plumb. Damage is great in substantial buildings, with partial collapse. Buildings are shifted off foundations.
X+	Extreme	Some well-built wooden structures are destroyed; most masonry and frame structures are destroyed with foundations. Rails are bent.

Source: United States Geological Survey, The Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale. Available at: https://www.usgs.gov/programs/earthquake-hazards/modified-mercalli-intensity-scale. Accessed April 2026.

The California Geological Survey's Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Assessment Program Map Sheet 48 depicts expected ground shaking intensity from future earthquakes across the State.[5] The shaking intensity is represented using the MMI scale, which describes the perceived earthquake shaking and correlates strongly with earthquake-induced damage. Map Sheet 48 maps the level of shaking with a two percent probability of being exceeded in 50 years. According to Map Sheet 48, the Planning Area is predicted to have a two percent probability that a seismic event in the next 50 years would exceed an MMI of VIII, corresponding to severe shaking.

The USGS Earthquake Catalog provides a list of documented earthquakes. No previous significant earthquakes are identified as originating within the Planning Area; however, significant earthquakes are documented in the region. Table 3.6-2 presents significant earthquakes above a 4.5 magnitude originating within an approximately 50-kilometer (31 miles) radius of Mountain House.

TABLE 3.6-2: SIGNIFICANT EARTHQUAKES IN THE REGION

Magnitude	Location	Year
4.5	15 km SW of Westley, California	2023
5.5	6 km NNE of East Foothills, California	2007
4.7	8 km ESE of East Foothills, California	1996
4.5	6 km NE of East Foothills, California	1989
4.8	7 km E of East Foothills, California	1988
5.3	6 km E of East Foothills, California	1988
5.7	15 km NE of East Foothills, California	1986
4.8	7 km E of East Foothills, California	1981
5.4	9 km NE of Livermore, California	1980
4.6	10 km SW of Brentwood, California	1980
4.8	11 km E of Blackhawk, California	1980
5.1	11 km E of Blackhawk, California	1980

[5] California Department of Conservation, Earthquake Shaking Potential for California, https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/publications/ms48#background, accessed April 2026.

Magnitude	Location	Year
5.8	The 1980 Livermore, California Earthquake	1980
4.6	3 km SW of Blackhawk, California	1970
4.9	1 km WNW of Antioch, California	1965
4.5	12 km NE of Milpitas, California	1938
4.5	1 km ENE of Union City, California	1933
4.8	2 km NE of East Foothills, California	1917
4.5	Near Rio Vista, California	1909
6.0	North of Antioch, California	1889

Source: United States Geological Survey, Earthquake Catalog, https://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/search/, accessed April 2026.

The potential for seismic ground shaking in California is expected. As a result of the foreseeable seismicity in California, the State requires special design considerations for all structural improvements in accordance with the seismic design provisions in the California Building Code. These seismic design provisions require enhanced structural integrity based on several risk parameters.

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones

The California legislature passed the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act in 1972 to address seismic hazards associated with faults and to establish criteria for developments for areas with identified seismic hazard zones. An active earthquake fault, per California's Alquist-Priolo Act, is one that has ruptured within the Holocene Epoch (approximately 11,000 years). Based on this criterion, the CGS identifies Earthquake Fault Zones. These Earthquake Fault Zones are identified in Special Publication 42 (SP42), which is updated as new fault data become available. SP42 lists all counties and cities within California that are affected by designated Earthquake Fault Zones. The Earthquake Fault Zones are delineated on maps within SP42 (Earthquake Fault Zone Maps).

As shown in Figure 3.6-2, the Planning area is not within an Earthquake Fault Zone. The nearest Earthquake Fault Zone, the Greenville Fault Zone, is located approximately 9.62 miles southwest of the Planning Area.

LIQUEFACTION

Liquefaction is a phenomenon in which the strength and stiffness of soil is reduced by earthquake shaking or other events. Liquefaction is primarily associated with loose, saturated materials in which the space between individual soil particles is filled with water. Cohesion between the loose materials that comprise the soil may be jeopardized during seismic events, and the ground will take on liquid properties. Thus, liquefaction requires specific soil characteristics, high ground water, and seismic shaking.

Liquefaction typically requires a significant sudden decrease of shearing resistance in cohesion-less soils and a sudden increase in water pressure, which is typically associated with an earthquake of high magnitude. The potential for liquefaction is highest when groundwater levels are high, and loose, fine, sandy soils occur at depths of less than 50 feet. According to the CGS Earthquake Zones

of Required Investigation Map, the entirety of the Planning Area has not been evaluated for liquefaction.[6] There is a large liquefaction zone that has been mapped approximately one mile northwest from Mountain House which surrounds the Clifton Court Forebay, a nearby reservoir, and extends into the delta.

OTHER GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

Soils

A Custom Soil Survey was completed for the Planning Area using the National Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey program. The NRCS Soils Map is provided in Figure 3.6-3. Table 3.6-3 below identifies the type and range of soils found in the Planning Area.

TABLE 3.6-3: PLANNING AREA SOILS

Soil Type	City	SOI	Grand Total
Capay clay, 0 to 1 percent slopes, MLRA 17	893.0	221.3	1,114.2
Capay clay, 0 to 2 percent slopes	8.5	3.8	12.4
Capay clay, 1 to 6 percent slopes, MLRA 17	59.2	22.3	81.5
Merritt silty clay loam, partially drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes	82.6	7.7	90.2
Pescadero clay loam, partially drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes	248.0	1.7	249.7
Reiff loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	61.2	--	61.2
Stomar clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	2,253.2	45.6	2,298.8
Stomar clay loam, wet, 0 to 2 percent slopes	536.4	10.8	547.2
Vernalis clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	68.5	46.1	114.6
Water	2.0	6.2	8.2
Willows clay, partially drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes	196.9	7.3	204.2
Zacharias clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	9.8	--	9.8
Grand Total	**4,419.3**	**372.7**	**4,792.1**

Source: NRCS Custom Soil Survey, 2025.

As shown in Table 3.6-3, the majority of soils within the Planning Area consist of clays. Below is a brief description of the most prominent soils within the Planning Area.

Capay Series. The Capay series consists of poorly drained soils from alluvium derived from mixed rock sources. Capay soils occur on interfan basin floors and valleys. Slopes range from 0 to 2 percent.

Merritt Series. The Merrit series consists of poorly drained soils from alluvium derived from mixed rock sources. Merrit soils occur on flood plains in valleys. Slopes range from 0 to 2 percent.

Pescadero Series. Pescadero series consists of poorly drained soils of alluvium derived from sedimentary rock. Pescadero soils occur on basin floors on valleys. Slopes range from 0 to 2 percent.

[6] California Geological Survey, California Geological Survey, Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/eqzapp/. Accessed April 2026.

Reiff Series. The Reiff Loam series consists of poorly drained alluvium derived from sandstone and shale. Reiff loam soils occur on alluvial fans on valleys. Slopes range from 0 to 2 percent.

Stomar series. The Stomar series consists of well drained alluvium derived from sedimentary rock. Reiff loam soils occur on alluvial fans on valleys. Slopes range from 0 to 2 percent.

Vernalis series. The Vernalis series consists of well drained of alluvium derived from mixed rock sources. Vernalis soils occur on alluvium derived from mixed rock sources.

Willows Series. The Willows series consists of poorly drained consists of alluvium derived from mixed sources. The Willows series occur at basin floors on valleys.

Zacharias Series. The Zacharias series consists of well drained of alluvium derived from mixed rock sources. The Zacharias series occurs at alluvial fans on valleys.

Erosion

Erosion naturally occurs on the surface of the earth as surface material (i.e. rock, soil, debris, etc.) is loosened, dissolved, or worn away, and transported from one place to another by gravity. Two common types of soil erosion include wind erosion and water erosion. The steepness of a slope is an important factor that affects soil erosion. Erosion potential in soils is influenced primarily by loose soil texture and steep slopes. Loose soil can be eroded by water or wind forces, whereas soils with high clay content are generally susceptible only to water erosion. The potential for erosion generally increases as a result of human activity, primarily through the development of facilities and impervious surfaces and the removal of vegetative cover.

The NRCS delineates soil units and compiles soils data as part of the National Cooperative Soil Survey. The following description of erosion factors is provided by the NRCS Physical Properties Descriptions:

> *Erosion factor K indicates the susceptibility of a soil to sheet and rill erosion by water. Values of K range from 0.02 to 0.69. Other factors being equal, the higher the value, the more susceptible the soil is to sheet and rill erosion by water. Erosion factor Kw indicates the erodibility of the whole soil, whereas Kf indicates the erodibility of the fine soils. The estimates are modified by the presence of rock fragments.*

Soil erosion data for the Planning Area was obtained from the NRCS. As identified by the NRCS Web Soil Survey, the erosion factor K (Kf) within the Planning Area varies from 0.24 to 0.37, which is considered a medium potential for erosion.

Expansive Soils

Linear extensibility (also known as shrink-swell potential or expansive potential) refers to the change in length of an unconfined clod as moisture content is decreased from a moist to a dry state. Expansive soils can undergo significant volume change with changes in moisture content. They shrink and harden when dried and expand and soften when wet. Expansive soil properties can cause substantial damage to building foundations, piles, pavements, underground utilities, and/or other

improvements. Structural damage, such as warping and cracking of improvements, and rupture of underground utility lines, may occur if the expansive potential of soils is not considered during the design and construction of improvements.

Figure 3.6-4 provides a map of the shrink-swell potential of the soil within the Planning Area. As shown in Figure 3.6-4, the shrink-swell potential of the Planning Area ranges from "low" to "very high". The majority of the Planning Area is mapped as having "moderate" shrink-swell potential. A strip of land in the northern part of the Planning Area is mapped as having "high" shrink-swell potential and southern portions of the Planning Area are mapped as having "very high" shrink swell potential.

Landslides

Areas with steep slopes and valleys are potentially subject to instability, resulting in landslides. These areas may be prone to hazards such as rock falls, slope failures, and debris flows (mudflows). While seismic shaking can cause landslides, other causes can include erosion, soil saturation, excess weight from accumulation of rain or snow, and human-made conditions such as construction disturbance or vegetation removal.

According to the CGS Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Map, the Planning Area has not been evaluated for earthquake-induced landslides.[7]

NON-SEISMICALLY INDUCED LANDSLIDES

As discussed above, factors such as geological conditions, drainage, slope, vegetation, and others directly affect the potential for landslides. Figure 3.6-5 illustrates the landslide potential (for non-seismically included potential) within the Planning Area, ranging from 0 (low susceptibility) to 10 (high susceptibility). As shown, the potential for a landslide is generally low, aside from small areas in the southwest corner of the Planning Area.

Subsidence

Land subsidence is a gradual settling or sudden sinking of the Earth's surface due to removal or displacement of subsurface earth materials. Common causes of land subsidence include aquifer-system compaction associated with groundwater withdrawals; drainage of organic soils; underground mining; and natural compaction or collapse. Subsidence takes place gradually, usually over a period of several years. Soils with high shrink-swell (linear extensibility) potential can be particularly susceptible to subsidence during a loss of soil moisture.

In many parts of the San Joaquin Valley, lowering of groundwater levels due to pumping has resulted in large amounts of subsidence. As discussed in the Tracy Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan,

[7] California Geological Survey, California Geological Survey, Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/eqzapp/. Accessed April 2026.

historical land surface subsidence within the Non-Delta Management Area of the Tracy Subbasin, which includes Mountain House, has generally been minimal.[8]

Collapsible Soils

Collapsible soils undergo a rearrangement of their grains and a loss of cementation, resulting in substantial and rapid settlement under relatively low loads. Collapsible soils occur predominantly at the base of mountain ranges, where Holocene-age alluvial fan and wash sediments have been deposited during rapid run-off events. Soils prone to collapse are commonly associated with manmade fill, wind-laid sands and silts, and alluvial fan and mudflow sediments deposited during flash floods. Differential settlement of structures can occur when collapsible soils are saturated, such as from heavily irrigated landscape areas near a building foundation. Examples of common problems associated with collapsible soils include tilting floors, cracking or separation in structures, sagging floors, and nonfunctional windows and doors. Collapsible soils have not been identified in the Planning Area as an issue. However, in areas subject to potential liquefaction, the potential for liquefaction induced settlement is present.

Lateral Spreading

Lateral spreading refers to landslides that are a result of lateral displacement of gently sloping ground. Ground shaking, especially when inducing liquefaction, may cause lateral spreading toward unsupported slopes. Areas identified to have high liquefaction susceptibility or areas with a sloping terrain may be vulnerable to lateral spreading. As previously stated, the Planning Area has not been evaluated for liquefaction. However, because the Planning Area is essentially flat, lateral spreading is not anticipated.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos

The term “asbestos” is used to describe a variety of fibrous minerals that, when airborne, can result in serious human health effects. Naturally occurring asbestos is commonly associated with ultramafic rocks and serpentinite. Ultramafic rocks, such as dunite, peridotite, and pyroxenite are igneous rocks comprised largely of iron-magnesium minerals. As they are intrusive in nature, these rocks often undergo metamorphosis, prior to their being exposed on the Earth’s surface. The metamorphic rock serpentinite is a common product of the alteration process. Naturally occurring asbestos is not identified within San Joaquin County. There is no naturally occurring asbestos mapped within Mountain House.[9]

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Among the natural resources deserving conservation and preservation, and existing within the Planning Area, are the often-unseen records of past life buried in the sediments and rocks below the pavement, buildings, soils, and vegetation which now cover most of the area. Fossils constitute a

[8] GEI Consultants. November 2021. Tracy Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

[9] Department of Conservation, 2000, A General Location Guide For Ultramafic Rocks In California - Areas More Likely To Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos. Available at: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/toxics/asbestos/ofr_2000-019.pdf. Accessed July 30, 2025.

non-renewable resource: Once lost or destroyed, the exact information they contained can never be reproduced.

Paleontology is the science that attempts to unravel the meaning of these fossils in terms of the organisms they represent, the ages and geographic distribution of those organisms, how they interacted in ancient ecosystems and responded to past climatic changes, and the changes through time of all of these aspects.

The sensitivity of a given area or body of sediment with respect to paleontological resources is a function of both the potential for the existence of fossils and the predicted significance of any fossils which may be found there. The primary consideration in the determination of paleontological sensitivity of a given area, body of sediment, or rock formation is its potential to include fossils. Information that can contribute to assessment of this potential includes: 1) direct observation of fossils within the project area; 2) the existence of known fossil localities or documented absence of fossils in the same geologic unit (e.g., "Formation" or one of its subunits); 3) descriptive nature of sedimentary deposits (such as size of included particles or clasts, color, and bedding type) in the area of interest compared with those of similar deposits known elsewhere to favor or disfavor inclusion of fossils; and 4) interpretation of sediment details and known geologic history of the sedimentary body of interest in terms of the ancient environments in which they were deposited, followed by assessment of the favorability of those environments for the preservation of fossils.

Paleontologists consider all vertebrate fossils to be of significance. Fossils of other types are considered significant if they represent a new record, new species, an oldest occurring species, the most complete specimen of its kind, a rare species worldwide, or a species helpful in the dating of formations. However, even a previously designated low potential site may yield significant fossils.

Regional Paleontological Setting

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

The following summary of the geological evolution of the Central Valley and the potential for paleontological resources is based on the San Joaquin County General Plan Draft EIR.[10] During the Mesozoic Era (208–65 million years ago [mya]), the Sierra Nevada formed, but the region that would become the San Joaquin Valley lay several thousand feet below the surface of the Pacific Ocean. During the Late Cretaceous Period (75–65 mya), flowering plants, early dinosaurs, and the first birds and mammals appeared. The basic form of the Great Central Valley took shape during the Cenozoic period, first as islands, then as mountains. During the late Cenozoic Era (65–2 mya), the Sierra Nevada eroded to mere hills compared to their earlier appearance, the Coast Ranges rose, and the San Joaquin Valley began to form.

During the Paleocene Epoch (65–53 mya), dinosaurs became extinct and mammals gradually evolved as the dominant group of animal life. During the Eocene Epoch (53–39 mya), the western edges of the San Joaquin Valley rose above sea level. Sedimentation and tectonic uplift of geological

[10] Environmental Science Associates, *San Joaquin County 2035 General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report,* October 2014.

formations continued until two million years ago. In the subsequent Oligocene Epoch (39–23 mya), sedimentation continued, and during the Miocene Epoch (23–5 mya) the Diablo Range was uplifted. The Pliocene Epoch (5–2 mya) was a time of tremendous uplift, and great quantities of sediment eroded from the nearby mountain ranges accumulated in the valley, eventually forming a deposit thousands of feet thick. In the Pleistocene Epoch (2 million to 10,000 years ago), the Sierra Nevada range was increasingly elevated and glaciated, resulting in the formation of spectacular features such as Yosemite Valley. During the Holocene Epoch (10,000 years ago to the present), the San Joaquin Valley was above sea level and achieved its present appearance, 466 miles long and 19 to 50 miles wide, enclosed by the Siskiyou, Sierra Nevada, Tehachapi, and Coast Ranges on the north, east, south, and west, respectively. The valley contained fresh water lakes and rivers attractive to herds of prehistoric grazing animals, including Columbian Mammoth, camel, bison, and native horse. The fossil remains of these creatures have been found in San Joaquin County and adjacent areas. The vast majority of paleontological specimens from San Joaquin County have been found in rock formations in the foothills of the Diablo Mountain Range. However, remains of extinct animals such as mammoth, could be found virtually anywhere in the county, especially along watercourses such as the San Joaquin River and its tributaries.

PLANNING AREA

The CGS's Geologic Map of California identifies the generalized rock types in the Planning Area as predominantly consisting of Quaternary alluvium (Q) which is younger alluvium that consists of marine and nonmarine (continental) sedimentary rocks from the Pleistocene through Holocene Epochs that are composed of alluvium, lake, playa, and terrace deposits, both unconsolidated and semi-consolidated.[11] This type is mostly nonmarine deposits but does include marine deposits near the coast. A small portion of the southwestern Planning Area is underlain by QPc, which consists of nonmarine (continental) sedimentary rocks from the Pliocene to Pleistocene Epochs that are composed of sandstone, shale, and gravel deposits, mostly loosely consolidated.

According to a records search of the University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) Collections, 1,006 fossil specimens from 99 localities have been recorded within San Joaquin County.[12] The majority of these are dated to the Tertiary period, with Cretaceous being the second most frequent period. These correspond to the Cenozoic and Mesozoic Eras, respectively. The majority of fossils are vertebrates and include early land mammals.

[11] California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey, *Geologic Map of California*, https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/gmc/, accessed May 2026.
[12] UC Museum of Paleontology, Databases, https://ucmp.berkeley.edu/collections/databases/, accessed May 2026.

3.6.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act

The Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 established the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP). Under the NEHRP, four federal agencies have responsibility for long-term earthquake risk reduction: the USGS, the National Science Foundation, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the National Institute of Standards and Technology. NEHRP's mission includes improved understanding, characterization, and prediction of hazards and vulnerability; improvements of building codes and land use practices; risk reduction through post-earthquake investigation and education; development and improvement of design and construction techniques; improvement of mitigation capacity; and accelerated application of research results.

STATE

California Building Standards Code

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, known as the California Building Standards Code (CBSC), contains the regulations that govern the construction of buildings in California. Through the CBSC, the State provides minimum standards for building design and construction. The CBSC contains specific requirements for seismic safety, excavation, foundations, retaining walls, and site demolition. It also regulates grading activities, including drainage and erosion control.

Title 24, Part 2 of the California Code of Regulations contains the California Building Code (CBC), which contains general building design and construction requirements relating to fire and life safety, structural safety, and access compliance. Chapter 16 addresses structural design, Chapter 17 addresses structural tests and special inspections, and Chapter 18 addresses soils and foundations. Section 1610 provides structural design standards for foundation walls and retaining walls to ensure resistance to lateral soil loads. Section 1613 provides structural design standards for earthquake loads. Section 1704.7 requires special inspections for existing site soil conditions, fill placement and load-bearing requirements during the construction as specified in Table 1704.7 of this section. Sections 1704.8 through 1704.16 provide inspection and testing requirements for various foundation types, and construction material types. Section 1803.1.1.1 mandates each city and county enact an ordinance which requires a preliminary soil report and that the report be based upon adequate test borings or excavations, of every subdivision, where a tentative and final map is required pursuant to Section 66426 of the Government Code. Section 1803.5.3 defines expansive soils and specifies that in areas likely to have expansive soil, the building official shall require soil tests to determine where such soils do exist. Section 1803.5.4 specifies that a subsurface soil investigation must be performed to determine whether the existing ground-water table is above or within 5 feet (1524 mm) below the elevation of the lowest floor level where such floor is located below the finished ground level adjacent to the foundation. Section 1803.5.8 provides specific standards where shallow foundations will bear on compacted fill material more than 12 inches (305 mm) in depth. Sections 1803.5.11 and 1803.5.12 provide requirements for geotechnical

investigations for structures assigned varying Seismic Design Categories in accordance with Section 1613. Section 1804 provides standards and requirements for excavation, grading, and fill. Sections 1808, 1809, and 1810 provide standards and requirements for the construction of varying foundations.

California Health and Safety Code

Section 19100 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code establishes the State's regulations for earthquake protection. This section of the code requires structural designs to be capable of resisting likely stresses produced by phenomena such as strong winds and earthquakes.

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The State of California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1972 was established to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. Pursuant to the act, the state geologist has established regulatory zones (known as earthquake fault zones) around surface traces of active faults. Application for a development permit for any project within a delineated earthquake fault zone is required to be accompanied by a geologic report, prepared by a geologist registered in California, that is directed to the problem of potential surface fault displacement through a project site.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazard Mapping Act (SHMA) was adopted by the state in 1990 to protect the public from the effects of non-surface fault rupture earthquake hazards, including strong ground shaking, liquefaction, seismically induced landslides, ground amplification, or other ground failure caused by earthquakes. The goal of the act is to minimize loss of life and property by identifying and mitigating seismic hazards. The CGS is the primary agency responsible for the implementation of the SHMA. The CGS prepares maps identifying seismic hazard zones and provides them to local governments, which include areas susceptible to amplified shaking, liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and other ground failures. SHMA requires responsible agencies to only approve projects within these zones following a site-specific investigation to determine if the hazard is present, and if so, the inclusion of appropriate mitigation(s). In addition, the SHMA requires real estate sellers and agents at the time of sale to disclose whether a property is within one of the designated seismic hazard zones.

Caltrans Seismic Design Criteria

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has Seismic Design Criteria (SDC), which is an encyclopedia of new and currently practiced seismic design and analysis methodologies for the design of new bridges in California. The SDC adopts a performance-based approach specifying minimum levels of structural system performance, component performance, analysis, and design practices for ordinary standard bridges. The SDC has been developed with input from the Caltrans Offices of Structure Design, Earthquake Engineering and Design Support, and Materials and Foundations. Memo 20-1 Seismic Design Methodology (Caltrans 1999) outlines the bridge category and classification, seismic performance criteria, seismic design philosophy and approach, seismic

demands and capacities on structural components, and seismic design practices that collectively make up Caltrans' seismic design.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program (under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act) controls water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. The term "pollutant" can include, but is not limited to, industrial and municipal waste, as well as eroded soils, sediment, and particulate material. The State Water Resources Control board (SWRCB) and its nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) issue these permits in lieu of direct issuance by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), subject to review and approval by the EPA Regional Administrator (EPA Region 9). In general, the discharge of pollutants is to be eliminated or reduced, as much as practicable.

Individual projects that disturb more than one acre are required to obtain NPDES coverage under the California General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit). The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) describing best management practices (BMPs) the discharger would use to prevent and retain storm water runoff. The SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program; a chemical monitoring program for "non-visible" pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs; and a sediment monitoring plan if the site discharges directly to a waterbody listed on the state's Clean Water Act 303(d) list for sediment.

LOCAL

San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) was last updated in January 2023 in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000. It is a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan that covers the County's geographical area and was developed with input from various San Joaquin County departments, four cities within the County, and other agencies. The LHMP is intended to guide hazard mitigation planning to reduce the effects of hazard events.

San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department

Residential septic wastewater systems under the County's jurisdiction are permitted through the San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Sections 117415-117420 and County Ordinance Code Section 9-1110. These code requirements are designed to ensure proper handling and disposal of sewage effluent by governing construction, repair, destruction, permitting and inspection of on-site septic systems.

Mountain House Municipal Code

Title 5, Division 9, *Stormwater Management Requirements and Discharge Control*, contains the City's Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance, which establishes minimum

stormwater management requirements and controls pursuant to and consistent with the Clean Water Act and Porter-Cologne Act.

Title 8, Division 1, *Building Standards*, adopts the California Building Code (CBC), as amended by the City for local conditions.

Title 9, Division 14, *Grading and Excavation Provisions*, contains standards for grading and excavations of development projects. In accordance with Municipal Code Section 9-14-202, *Grading or Excavation Permit Required*, grading and excavation activities require approval of a grading permit obtained from the Building Inspection Division, with the exception of exempt activities enumerated in Section 9-14-203.

Title 9, Division 9, *Subdivision Regulations*, govern the subdivision of property in City of Mountain House. Section 9-9-210, *Soils Reports*, requires major subdivision development to prepare a preliminary soils report. The report must be prepared by a state-registered civil engineer and based upon adequate test borings, and shall be submitted to the building official for every major subdivision at the time of tentative map submittal. If the required preliminary soils report indicates the presence of critically expansive soils or other soil problems which, if not corrected, would lead to structural defects, the subdivider shall provide for and submit the findings of a soil investigation of each lot in the subdivision. Section 9-9-211, *Geotechnical Reports*, requires major subdivision development to prepare preliminary geotechnical report including estimates of expected peak ground accelerations during maximum credible earthquake potentially affecting the site. If the required preliminary geotechnical report indicates the presence of geologic hazards (such as slope instability, subsidence, adverse soil conditions, seismic hazards) which, if not corrected, would lead to structural defects, the subdivider shall provide for and submit the findings of a geotechnical investigation for each lot in the subdivision.

3.6.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project will have a significant impact on geology and soils if it will:

- Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
    - Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42;
    - Strong seismic ground shaking;
    - Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or
    - Landslides.
- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;

- Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse;
- Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property;
- Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water; or
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.6-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, or landslides (Less than Significant)

Mountain House is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, and no known active faults traverse the Planning Area. Fault rupture is therefore not anticipated as a result of General Plan implementation. Nevertheless, the Planning Area is within a seismically active region and could be subject to strong ground shaking from regional faults, including the Greenville Fault Zone, which is approximately 9.6 miles from Mountain House, as well as other Bay Area faults such as the San Andreas, Calaveras, and Hayward faults.

According to the CGS Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Map, the Planning Area has not been evaluated for liquefaction or earthquake-induced landslides. The Planning Area is relatively flat and the potential for landslides is considered to be low. However, the Planning Area contains alluvial soils that could be susceptible to localized seismic-related ground failure under site-specific conditions.

Implementation of the General Plan would allow for new development and associated improvements within the Planning Area. As such, future development associated with General Plan buildout could expose people and structures to seismic hazards, including strong ground shaking and, in some locations, liquefaction-related ground failure. At the program level, these risks would be addressed through existing State and local requirements and through policies in the proposed General Plan Safety Element. Future development projects would comply with the CBSC, which requires seismic design, site-specific soils and geotechnical investigations where warranted, and the incorporation of engineering recommendations into project design. Grading and excavation activities associated with future development would be required to obtain a grading permit from the City, which would allow for project-specific review and approval to ensure compliance with applicable environmental and safety requirements. The Mountain House Municipal Code also requires preliminary soils and geotechnical reports for major subdivisions where expansive soils, subsidence, seismic hazards, or other geologic hazards could lead to structural defects. In addition,

proposed Safety Element policies and actions require the City to maintain geologic hazard mapping, enforce seismic design standards, require geotechnical assessments and mitigation for new buildings and infrastructure, incorporate site-specific seismic design for critical facilities, and review and update local building and grading standards as State requirements evolve. Policy SAF-1.1 directs the City to maintain geologic and seismic hazard maps using updates from the California Geological Survey and local surveys. Policy SAF-1.2 directs the City to enforce State seismic design guidelines and applicable building codes to reduce damage associated with seismic and geologic hazards. Policy SAF-1.3 requires appropriate geotechnical assessments, monitoring, reporting, and mitigation measures for new buildings and infrastructure. Policy SAF-1.4 requires new critical infrastructure and facilities to incorporate site-specific seismic structural design in accordance with applicable building codes. Action SAF-1a directs the City to update its building, zoning, and grading codes as needed to ensure that adopted standards address potential seismic and geologic hazards. Action SAF-1b requires surveys of soil and geologic conditions for discretionary development and redevelopment proposals, where appropriate, and implementation of the recommendations contained in project-specific geotechnical assessments.

The City would consider future development and infrastructure projects and evaluate each for conformance with the CBSC, General Plan, Municipal Code, and other regulations. Future discretionary development and infrastructure projects implemented under the General Plan would also undergo project-level environmental review, during which site-specific geologic conditions and seismic hazards would be evaluated and any necessary design measures would be incorporated. With implementation of applicable City and State codes and the proposed General Plan policies and actions, impacts related to fault rupture, strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, and landslides would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-1: Seismic and Geologic Hazards. A community resilient to seismic and geologic hazards through preparedness, risk reduction, and safe development practices.

Policy SAF-1.1: Geologic Hazard Identification. Maintain geologic and seismic hazards maps in the City's geographic information system in concert with updates from the California Geologic Survey and local surveys and update as appropriate.

Policy SAF-1.2: Earthquake Protection. Enforce State seismic design guidelines and all relevant building codes to reduce the risk of damage associated with seismic activity and geologic hazards.

Policy SAF-1.3: Geotechnical Assessments. Require appropriate geotechnical assessments, monitoring and reporting, and mitigation measures for new buildings and infrastructure to reduce seismic and geologic hazards risk.

Policy SAF-1.4: Critical Facilities. Require new critical infrastructure and facilities that may be built in the City to incorporate site specific seismic structural design as required by applicable building codes.

Action SAF-1a: Update building, zoning, and grading codes as needed to ensure adopted standards mitigate potential seismic and geologic hazards.

Action SAF-1b: During review of discretionary development and redevelopment proposals, require surveys of soil and geologic conditions by State licensed Engineering Geologists and Civil Engineers where appropriate. When potential geologic impacts are identified, require project applicants to mitigate the impacts per the recommendations contained within the geotechnical assessment.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.6-2: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil (Less than Significant)

The General Plan would accommodate future development, infrastructure, and public improvements that could involve clearing, grading, excavation, trenching, and other ground-disturbing activities. These activities could temporarily expose soils to wind and water erosion, particularly before sites are stabilized, landscaped, or fully developed. Uncontrolled erosion could result in the loss of topsoil, sedimentation of nearby waterways and drainage facilities, and degradation of stormwater quality.

Although the Planning Area is generally flat, which reduces the likelihood of severe slope-related erosion, soils can still be mobilized during construction, especially during storm events or under windy conditions common in the San Joaquin Valley. Because future development locations, grading quantities, and construction methods are not known at the program level, implementation of the General Plan could increase the potential for short-term erosion or topsoil loss.

As future development and infrastructure projects are considered, each project would be evaluated for conformance with the CBSC, General Plan, Municipal Code, NPDES permit, and other relevant regulations. In compliance with NPDES permit regulations, the State of California requires that any construction activity disturbing one acre or more of soil comply with the Construction General Permit. The Construction General Permit requires development and implementation of a SWPPP, which must include erosion-control and sediment-control BMPs that would meet or exceed measures required by the Construction General Permit to control stormwater quality degradation due to potential construction-related pollutants. The SWPPP would include project-specific BMPs designed to control drainage and erosion. Development under the General Plan would also be subject to construction and post-construction requirements under the Municipal Code, including the City's Grading and Excavation Provisions (Title 9, Division 14) and Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance (Title 5, Division 9).

The proposed General Plan Resource Management Element includes policies and actions requiring protection of stormwater quality, use of low impact development and site design measures,

maintenance of buffers and erosion control features along waterways and drainage corridors, and incorporation of runoff control and stormwater treatment features during project review. For example, Policy RM-3.3 requires the protection of water quality through effective stormwater treatment and best management practices. Policy RM-3.4 requires new development and significant redevelopment to incorporate low impact development site design measures consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable NPDES permit requirements. Policy RM-3.5 requires the maintenance and enhancement of buffers along waterways and drainage corridors to reduce erosion and protect water quality and habitat. Action RM-3a requires new development and redevelopment projects to incorporate stormwater treatment, runoff control measures, and low impact development techniques during project review. With the implementation of the policies and actions in the General Plan, as well as compliance with applicable State and local requirements, potential impacts associated with erosion and loss of topsoil would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-3: Water Resources. A community that conserves and protects water resources to support long-term sustainability.

Policy RM-3.3: Stormwater Quality. Protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and best management practices.

Policy RM-3.4: Low Impact Development. The City shall require low impact development (LID) site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. LID measures shall include on-site stormwater retention, infiltration where appropriate, bioretention, permeable paving, and other techniques that reduce runoff and protect downstream waterways.

Policy RM-3.5: Waterway Buffering and Erosion Control. Maintain and enhance buffers along waterways and drainage corridors to protect water quality, support habitat, reduce erosion, and provide compatible trail and open space connections.

Action RM-3a: Require new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. During project review, ensure that development proposals incorporate stormwater treatment, runoff control measures, and low impact development (LID) techniques. Coordinate with responsible agencies, including the Regional Water Quality Control Board and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.6-3: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in development located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse (Less than Significant)

Development allowed under the General Plan could result in the exposure of people and structures to conditions that have the potential for adverse effects associated with ground instability or failure. Soils and geologic conditions in the Mountain House Planning Area have the potential for landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Each is discussed below:

LANDSLIDE

While the Planning Area has not been evaluated for earthquake-induced landslides by the CGS, the Planning Area is predominantly flat and the potential for landslides is generally low. As shown in Figure 3.6-5, the only areas with elevated non-seismic landslide susceptibility are limited portions of the southwestern corner of the Planning Area. As a result, widespread exposure to landslide hazards is not anticipated under General Plan implementation. There is the potential for future projects to be proposed in areas with localized slope or stability concerns; however, these projects would be required to comply with applicable City and State codes, including requirements for project-specific geotechnical review and appropriate engineering response.

LATERAL SPREADING

Lateral spreading refers to landslides that are a result of lateral displacement of gently sloping ground. Ground shaking, especially when inducing liquefaction, may cause lateral spreading toward unsupported slopes. Areas identified to have high liquefaction susceptibility or areas with a sloping terrain may be vulnerable to lateral spreading. Although the Planning Area has not been specifically mapped by the CGS for liquefaction, Mountain House is predominantly flat and does not contain the broad areas of steep or unsupported terrain typically associated with this hazard. Consequently, the potential for widespread lateral spreading is low, though localized conditions could occur near drainage features or other engineered embankments and would need to be addressed through site-specific geotechnical analysis where relevant.

SUBSIDENCE

Soils with high shrink-swell potential can be particularly susceptible to subsidence during a loss of soil moisture. The Planning Area contains soils that range from having low to very high shrink-swell potential.

Land subsidence in the San Joaquin Valley is often associated with groundwater withdrawal. As discussed in the Tracy Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan, historical land surface subsidence

within the Non-Delta Management Area of the Tracy Subbasin, which includes Mountain House, has generally been minimal. While future regional groundwater conditions could change over time, subsidence is not currently identified as a major constraint to General Plan implementation.

LIQUEFACTION

Liquefaction is most likely where loose, saturated, fine-grained alluvial soils are present and strong seismic shaking occurs. The Planning Area has not been evaluated by the CGS for liquefaction; however, a mapped liquefaction zone occurs approximately one mile northwest of Mountain House near Clifton Court Forebay and Delta areas. Given the alluvial character of local soils and the potential for shallow groundwater in portions of the broader area, site-specific liquefaction susceptibility may exist at some locations within the Planning Area.

COLLAPSE

Collapsible soils have not been identified in the Planning Area as a widespread issue. However, localized settlement or collapse-related behavior could occur where undocumented fill, loose alluvial soils, or saturated conditions are present. In addition, areas with liquefaction susceptibility could experience liquefaction-induced settlement during a strong seismic event.

CONCLUSION

The proposed General Plan Safety Element includes policies and actions to address geologic conditions within the Planning Area, including requirements for geotechnical assessments, compliance with current seismic design standards, design of structures in expansive soil areas in conformance with the CBC, and evaluation of critical facilities and lifeline infrastructure. Policy SAF-1.2 directs the City to enforce State seismic design guidelines and applicable building codes to reduce damage associated with seismic activity and geologic hazards. Policy SAF-1.3 requires appropriate geotechnical assessments, monitoring, reporting, and mitigation measures for new buildings and infrastructure. Policy SAF-1.5 requires structures and building foundations in areas containing expansive soils to be designed and engineered in accordance with the California Building Code. Policy SAF-1.6 directs the City to maintain an inventory of public buildings, infrastructure, and critical community lifeline facilities that may be at risk from seismic and geologic hazards. Action SAF-1a directs the City to update building, zoning, and grading codes as needed to ensure that adopted standards address potential seismic and geologic hazards. Action SAF-1b requires surveys of soil and geologic conditions for discretionary development and redevelopment proposals, where appropriate, and implementation of recommendations contained in project-specific geotechnical assessments. Action SAF-1c directs the City to assess critical and lifeline facilities and infrastructure for seismic and landslide safety to help ensure that they remain operational following a seismic event.

As future development and infrastructure projects are proposed, each project would be evaluated for compliance with the CBSC, the Mountain House Municipal Code, and the General Plan. Future development projects would comply with the CBSC, which requires seismic design, site-specific soils and geotechnical investigations where warranted, and the incorporation of engineering

recommendations into project design. Grading and excavation activities associated with future development would be required to obtain a grading permit from the City, which would allow for project-specific review and approval to ensure compliance with applicable environmental and safety requirements. The Municipal Code also requires preliminary soils and geotechnical reports for major subdivision development where expansive soils, subsidence, adverse soil conditions, slope instability, seismic hazards, or other geologic hazards could result in structural defects. In addition, future discretionary projects would undergo analysis for environmental impacts pursuant to CEQA to address site-specific geologic conditions. Implementation of the CBSC and Municipal Code requirements related to seismic and geologic conditions and policies and actions contained within the General Plan would ensure that future development projects are evaluated for potential geologic and seismic risks and that potential risks are adequately addressed. With implementation of these requirements and policies, impacts related to unstable geologic units or soils, including landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-1: Seismic and Geologic Hazards. A community resilient to seismic and geologic hazards through preparedness, risk reduction, and safe development practices.

Policy SAF-1.2: Earthquake Protection. Enforce State seismic design guidelines and all relevant building codes to reduce the risk of damage associated with seismic activity and geologic hazards.

Policy SAF-1.3: Geotechnical Assessments. Require appropriate geotechnical assessments, monitoring and reporting, and mitigation measures for new buildings and infrastructure to reduce seismic and geologic hazards risk.

Policy SAF-1.5: Expansive Soils. All structures and building foundations located within areas containing expansive soils shall be designed and engineered to comply with the most current version of the California Building Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2).

Policy SAF-1.6: Risk Inventories. Maintain an updated inventory of public buildings, infrastructure, and other critical community lifeline facilities within the City at risk of seismic and geologic hazard impacts and regularly evaluate potential mitigation projects to address risks, as financially feasible.

Action SAF-1a: Update building, zoning, and grading codes as needed to ensure adopted standards mitigate potential seismic and geologic hazards.

Action SAF-1b: During review of discretionary development and redevelopment proposals, require surveys of soil and geologic conditions by State licensed Engineering Geologists and Civil Engineers where appropriate. When potential geologic impacts are identified, require project applicants to mitigate the impacts per the recommendations contained within the geotechnical assessment.

Action SAF-1c: Assess critical and lifeline facilities and infrastructure for seismic and landslide safety to ensure they remain operational after a seismic event.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.6-4: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in development on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property (Less than Significant)

Expansive soils can cause structural distress when they shrink and swell in response to changes in moisture content. Potential effects include cracking of building foundations, movement of slabs and pavements, and damage to underground utilities if these conditions are not properly addressed during project design and construction.

As shown in Figure 3.6-4, the shrink-swell potential of the Planning Area ranges from "low" to "very high". The majority of the Planning Area is mapped as having moderate shrink-swell potential, while a strip in the northern portion of the Planning Area is mapped as high and southern portions are mapped as very high. As a result, future development under the General Plan could occur in areas where expansive soils pose risks to structures or infrastructure if such conditions are not evaluated and addressed.

The proposed General Plan Safety Element includes policies and actions designed to protect Mountain House from geologic hazards, including expansive soils. For example, Policy SAF-1.3 requires appropriate geotechnical assessments, monitoring, reporting, and mitigation measures for new buildings and infrastructure. Policy SAF-1.5 requires structures and building foundations in areas containing expansive soils to be designed and engineered in accordance with the California Building Code. Action SAF-1a directs the City to update its building, zoning, and grading codes as needed to ensure that adopted standards address potential seismic and geologic hazards. Action SAF-1b requires surveys of soil and geologic conditions for discretionary development and redevelopment proposals, where appropriate, and implementation of recommendations contained in project-specific geotechnical assessments.

As future development and infrastructure projects are proposed, each project would be evaluated for compliance with the CBSC, the Mountain House Municipal Code, and the General Plan. In order to identify geologic and soil conditions specific to each site, future development and improvement projects would be required to prepare site-specific geotechnical studies, including the potential for expansive soils. A site-specific geotechnical investigation would identify the potential for damage related to expansive soils and non-uniformly compacted fill and engineered fill. If a risk is identified, design criteria and specification options may include removal of the problematic soils, and replacement, as needed, with properly conditioned and compacted fill material that is designed to withstand the forces exerted during the expected shrink-swell cycles and settlements. Design criteria and specifications set forth in the design-level geotechnical investigation would ensure

impacts from problematic soils are minimized. In addition, future discretionary projects would undergo analysis for environmental impacts pursuant to CEQA to address site-specific geologic conditions. Thus, implementation of CBSC and the Municipal Code requirements related to on-site soil conditions and General Plan policies and actions would ensure that future development projects are evaluated for potential risks associated with development on expansive soils and that potential risks are adequately addressed. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-1: Seismic and Geologic Hazards. A community resilient to seismic and geologic hazards through preparedness, risk reduction, and safe development practices.

Policy SAF-1.3: Geotechnical Assessments. Require appropriate geotechnical assessments, monitoring and reporting, and mitigation measures for new buildings and infrastructure to reduce seismic and geologic hazards risk.

Policy SAF-1.5: Expansive Soils. All structures and building foundations located within areas containing expansive soils shall be designed and engineered to comply with the most current version of the California Building Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2).

Action SAF-1a: Update building, zoning, and grading codes as needed to ensure adopted standards mitigate potential seismic and geologic hazards.

Action SAF-1b: During review of discretionary development and redevelopment proposals, require surveys of soil and geologic conditions by State licensed Engineering Geologists and Civil Engineers where appropriate. When potential geologic impacts are identified, require project applicants to mitigate the impacts per the recommendations contained within the geotechnical assessment.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.6-5: General Plan implementation does not have the potential to have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water (Less than Significant)

As described in Section 3.15, Utilities and Service Systems, wastewater service within Mountain House is provided by the City through a network of collection and treatment infrastructure. Future development consistent with the General Plan would connect to the City's wastewater system and would not involve the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. It is noted that there are a limited number of existing residences within unincorporated areas of the Planning Area

which are served by individual septic systems. These parcels are subject to oversight by the San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department and would be required to comply with applicable residential septic system permit requirements in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Sections 117415-117420 and County Ordinance Code Section 9-1110 that govern the appropriate design standards for septic systems. These code requirements include measures to ensure that on-site soils have adequate infiltration rates. As such, potential impacts associated with having soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

There are no proposed General Plan goals, policies, or actions specific to septic systems.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.6-6: General Plan implementation has the potential to directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature (Less than Significant)

Only qualified, trained paleontologists with specific expertise in the type of fossils being evaluated can determine the scientific significance of paleontological resources. Fossils are considered to be significant if one or more of the following criteria apply:

1. The fossils provide information on the evolutionary relationships and developmental trends among organisms, living or extinct.
2. The fossils provide data useful in determining the age(s) of the rock unit or sedimentary stratum, including data important in determining the depositional history of the region and the timing of geologic events therein.
3. The fossils provide data regarding the development of biological communities or interaction between paleobotanical and paleozoological biotas.
4. The fossils demonstrate unusual or spectacular circumstances in the history of life.
5. The fossils are in short supply and/or in danger of being depleted or destroyed by the elements, vandalism, or commercial exploitation, and are not found in other geographic locations.
6. All identifiable vertebrate fossils are considered significant due to the rarity of their preservation.

Significant paleontological resources are determined to be fossils or assemblages of fossils that are unique, unusual, rare, uncommon, or diagnostically important. Significant fossils can include

remains of large to very small aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates or remains of plants and invertebrate animals previously not represented in certain portions of the stratigraphy. Assemblages of fossils that might aid stratigraphic correlation, particularly those offering data for the interpretation of tectonic events, geomorphologic evolution, and paleoclimatology are also critically important.

Fossils are a non-renewable resource and paleontological sensitivity depends on both the potential for fossils to occur and the likely significance of any fossils that may be found. The Planning Area is underlain largely by alluvial deposits, and buried paleontological resources could occur in subsurface sediments even where no surface evidence is visible. Because fossils are not uniformly distributed and may not be detected until excavation occurs, future ground disturbance within previously undisturbed sediments could encounter scientifically important material.

The Planning Area is located in a region where fossils and paleontological resources have been identified. While the General Plan is a program-level document and does not propose specific development, it is possible that undiscovered paleontological resources could be encountered during ground-disturbing activities associated with future development under the General Plan.

The City would require individual projects to undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis pursuant to CEQA to evaluate potential impacts to paleontological resources. Grading, excavation, or other ground-disturbing activities associated with future construction activities would require professional assessment and evaluation in order to determine whether significant paleontological resources occur in the area of a proposed ground-disturbing action and whether the action might affect such resources. Damage to or destruction of a paleontological resource would be considered a potentially significant impact under local, State, or federal criteria. The proposed General Plan Update Resource Management Element includes policies and actions to protect significant paleontological resources within the Planning Area.

At the program level, future discretionary projects would continue to undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis pursuant to CEQA to evaluate potential impacts to paleontological resources. Additionally, all future projects would be subject to the proposed General Plan Resource Management Element, which includes policies and actions to protect significant paleontological resources within the Planning Area. Policy RM-4.1 directs the City to protect significant paleontological resources. Policy RM-4.4 requires construction protocols for inadvertent discoveries, including work stoppage, evaluation by qualified professionals, and appropriate treatment. Action RM-4a directs the City to assess development proposals for potential impacts to sensitive paleontological resources pursuant to CEQA. Action RM-4d requires work within 50 feet of a previously unidentified paleontological resource to cease until the discovery is examined by a qualified paleontologist and appropriate protection and preservation measures are approved by the Community Development Director or designee. If previously unidentified paleontological resources are encountered during future ground-disturbing activities, Action RM-4d would require all earth-disturbing activities to cease within a 50-foot radius of the area of discovery for examination by a qualified paleontologist and for appropriate protection and preservation measures to be

implemented. Construction activities may only resume when appropriate protections are in place and have been approved by the Community Development Director or designee.

With implementation of the General Plan policies and actions, potential impacts related to destruction of a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-4: Cultural Resources. Protected cultural and historic resources that preserve the community's history and character.

Policy RM-4.1: Preservation of Significant Resources. Protect significant historic, archaeological, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources.

Policy RM-4.4: Inadvertent Discovery Procedures. Require construction protocols for inadvertent discoveries of archaeological resources, paleontological resources, or cultural materials, including work stoppage, evaluation by qualified professionals, and treatment in coordination with responsible agencies and tribes, as applicable.

Action RM-4a: Continue to assess development proposals for potential impacts to sensitive historic, archaeological, tribal cultural, and paleontological resources pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Action RM-4d: If previously unidentified cultural or paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, all work within 50 feet of the discovery shall cease, the Community Development Director shall be notified, the resources shall be examined by a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist for appropriate protection and preservation measures. Construction activities may only resume when appropriate protections are in place and have been approved by the Community Development Director or designee.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

3.6.4 REFERENCES

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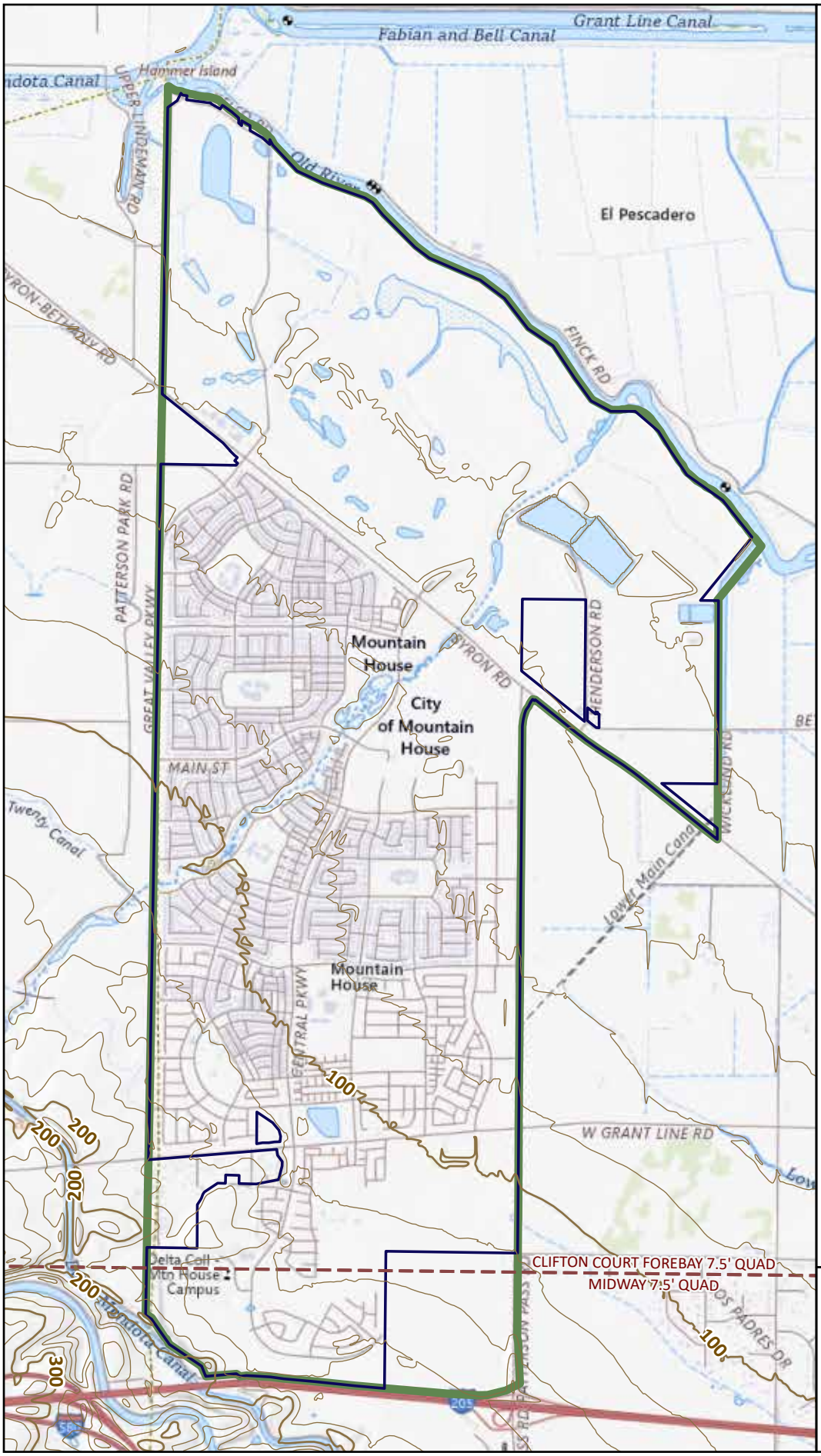
FIGURE 3.6-1.

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP



Mountain House City Limits

Sphere of Influence (SOI)

USGS 7.5' Quadrangle Boundary

100-ft Index Elevation Contour

20-ft Intermediate ElevationContour

0 1,500 3,000

Feet

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group August 6, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group

A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Map.

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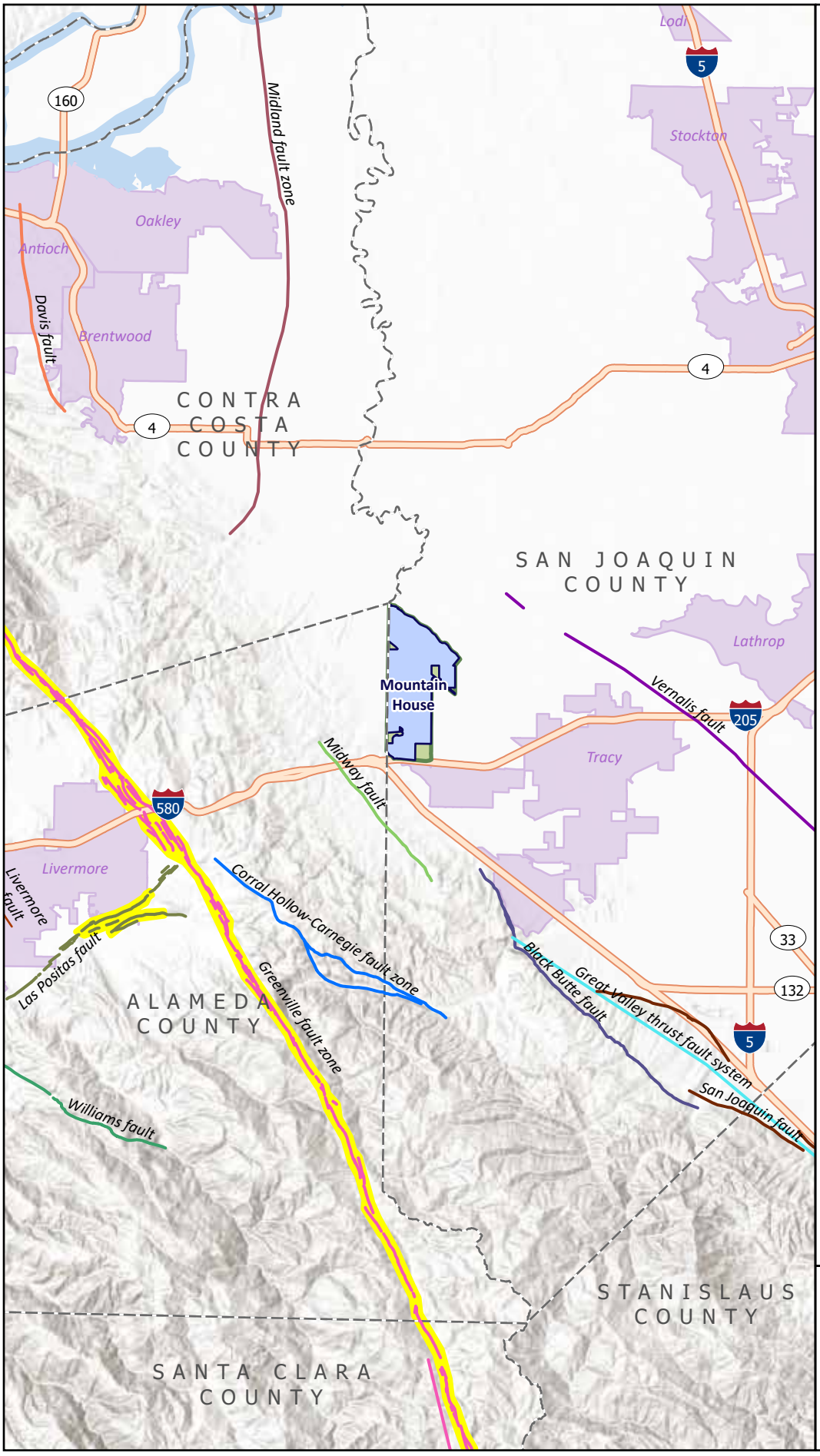
FIGURE 3.6-2.

REGIONAL FAULTS



- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary
- Other Incorporated Areas
- Alquist-Priolo Zone of Required Investigation

Quaternary Faults

- Black Butte fault
- Corral Hollow-Carnegie fault zone
- Davis fault
- Great Valley thrust fault system
- Greenville fault zone
- Las Positas fault
- Livermore fault
- Midland fault zone
- Midway fault
- San Joaquin fault
- Vernalis fault
- Williams fault

0 2½ 5
Miles

City of Mountain House

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group July 31, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: USGS Quaternary Faults Database; CGS Alquist-Priolo Zones; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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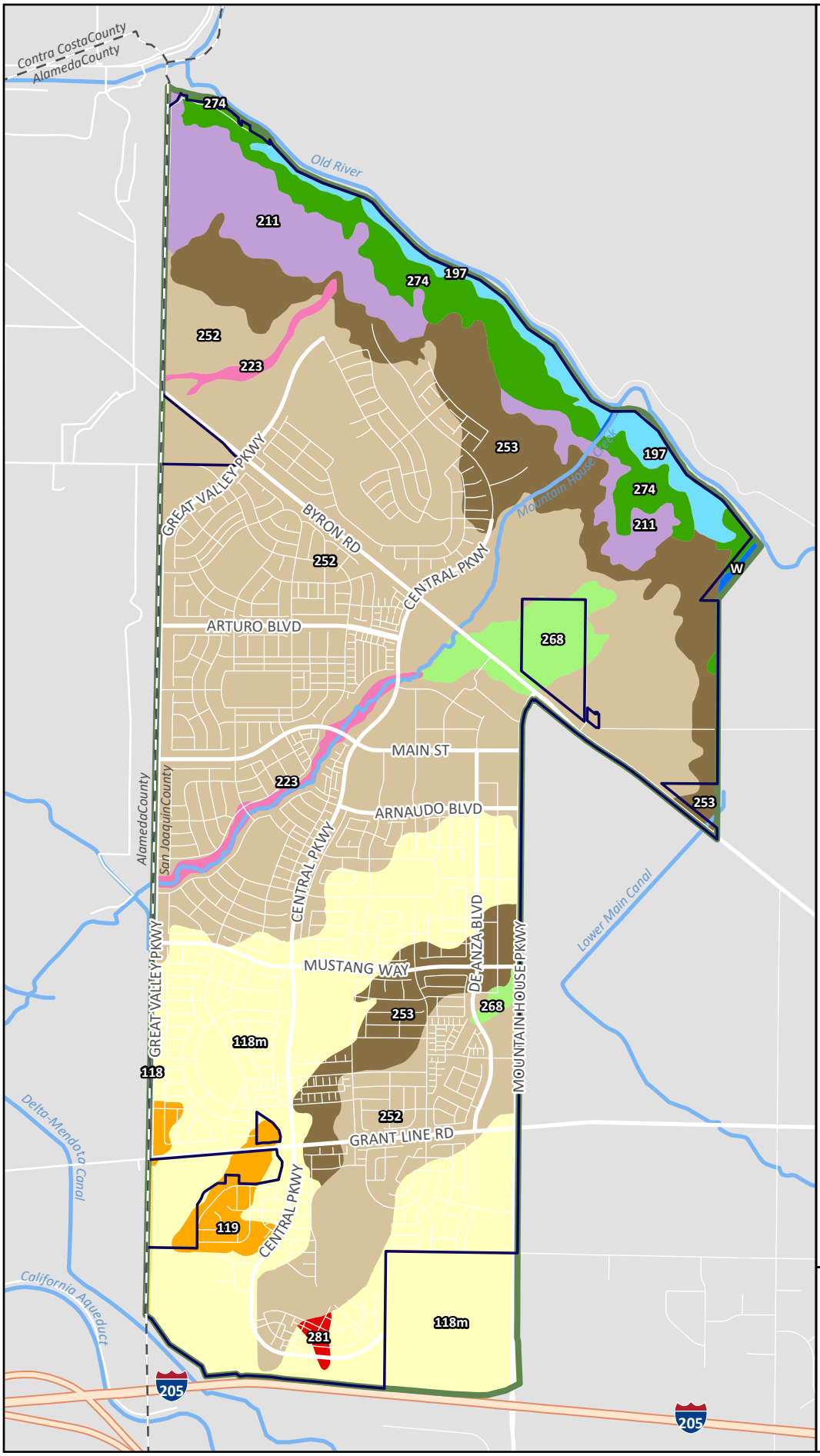
FIGURE 3.6-3.

SOILS MAP



- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary

Map ID: Soil Type (slope %)

- 118m: Capay clay, MLRA 17 (0-1%)
- 118: Capay clay (0-2%)
- 119: Capay clay, MLRA 17 (1-6%)
- 197: Merritt silty clay loam, partially drained (0-2%)
- 211: Pescadero clay loam, partially drained (0-2%)
- 223: Reiff loam (0-2%)
- 252: Stomar clay loam (0-2%)
- 253: Stomar clay loam, wet (0-2%)
- 268: Vernalis clay loam (0-2%)
- 274: Willows clay, partially drained (0-2%)
- 281: Zacharias clay loam (0-2%)
- W: Water

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
July 31, 2025.

DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP
A LAND USE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FIRM

Sources: ESRI USA Soils accessed 7-31-2025; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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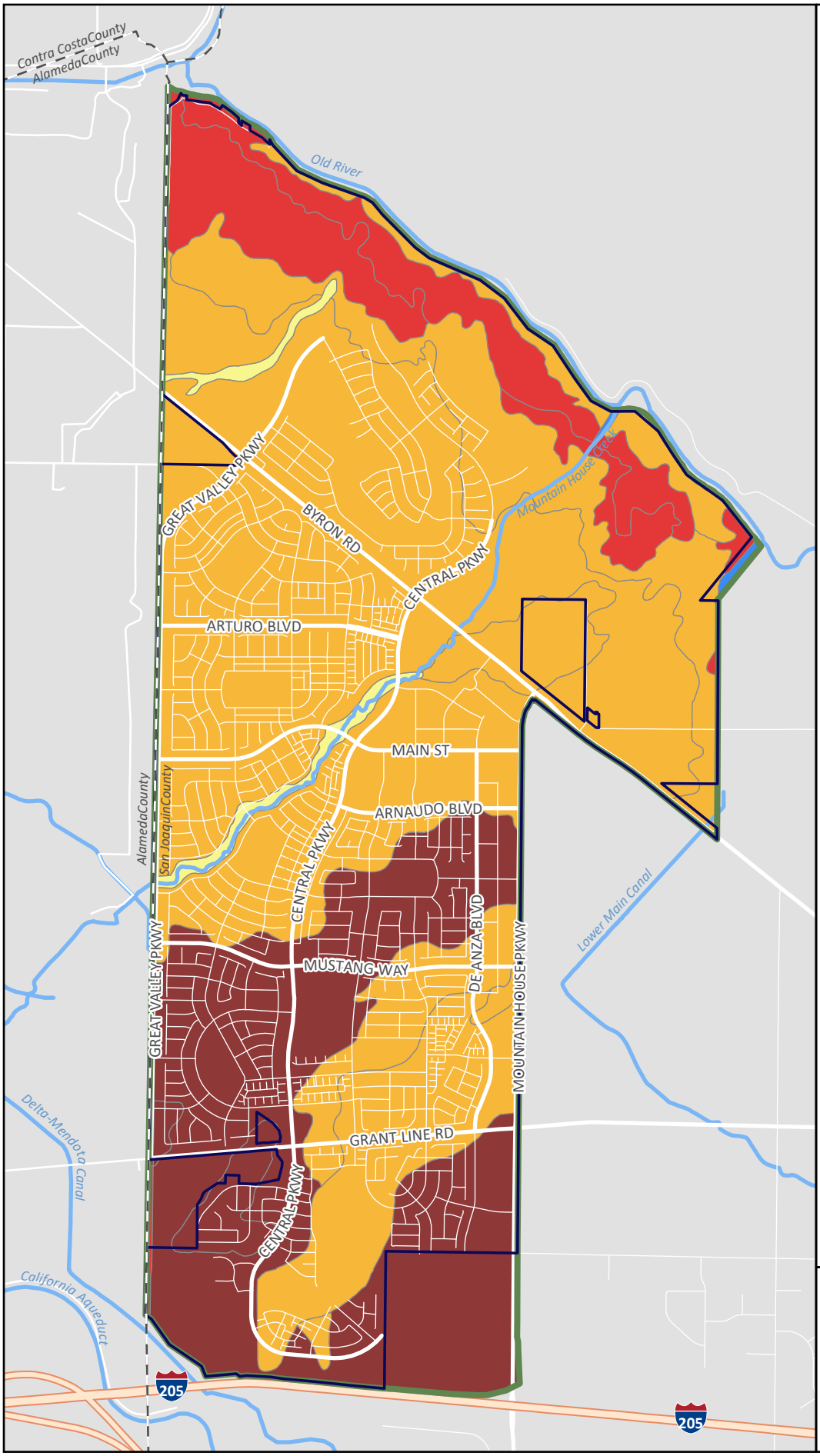

FIGURE 3.6-4.

SHRINK-SWELL POTENTIAL OF SOILS

Mountain House City Limits

Sphere of Influence (SOI)

County Boundary

Shrink-Swell Potential (LE Rating)*

Low (0-3)

Moderate (3-6)

High (6-9)

Very High (9-30)

Water (unrated)

* Shrink-Swell Potential is based on a Linear Extensibility (LE) rating. Linear extensibility refers to the change in volume of an unconfined clod of soil as moisture content is decreased from a moist to a dry state. The volume change is reported as percent change for the whole soil.

A map unit is typically composed of one or more soil/rock components. Each of these components may have its own LE rating. For mapping purposes, these individual ratings are aggregated into a single value that represents the map unit as a whole. For each map unit, LE is actually recorded as three separate values: a low value, a high value, and a "representative" value. The "representative" value indicates the expected value for the soil component. This map is based on the "representative" value of each aggregated map unit, using the Weighted Average Aggregation method where percent composition is the weighting factor.

Map units with representative LE values of 0-3% are considered Low for shrink-swell potential. Ratings of 3-6% are considered moderate. Ratings of 6-9% are considered high, and ratings above 9% are very high. Some map units are not rated.

Please refer to the USDA/NRCS Web Soil Survey for more details. websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov

0 1,500 3,000

Feet

City of Mountain House

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group July 31, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group

A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: ESRI USA Soils accessed 7-31-2025; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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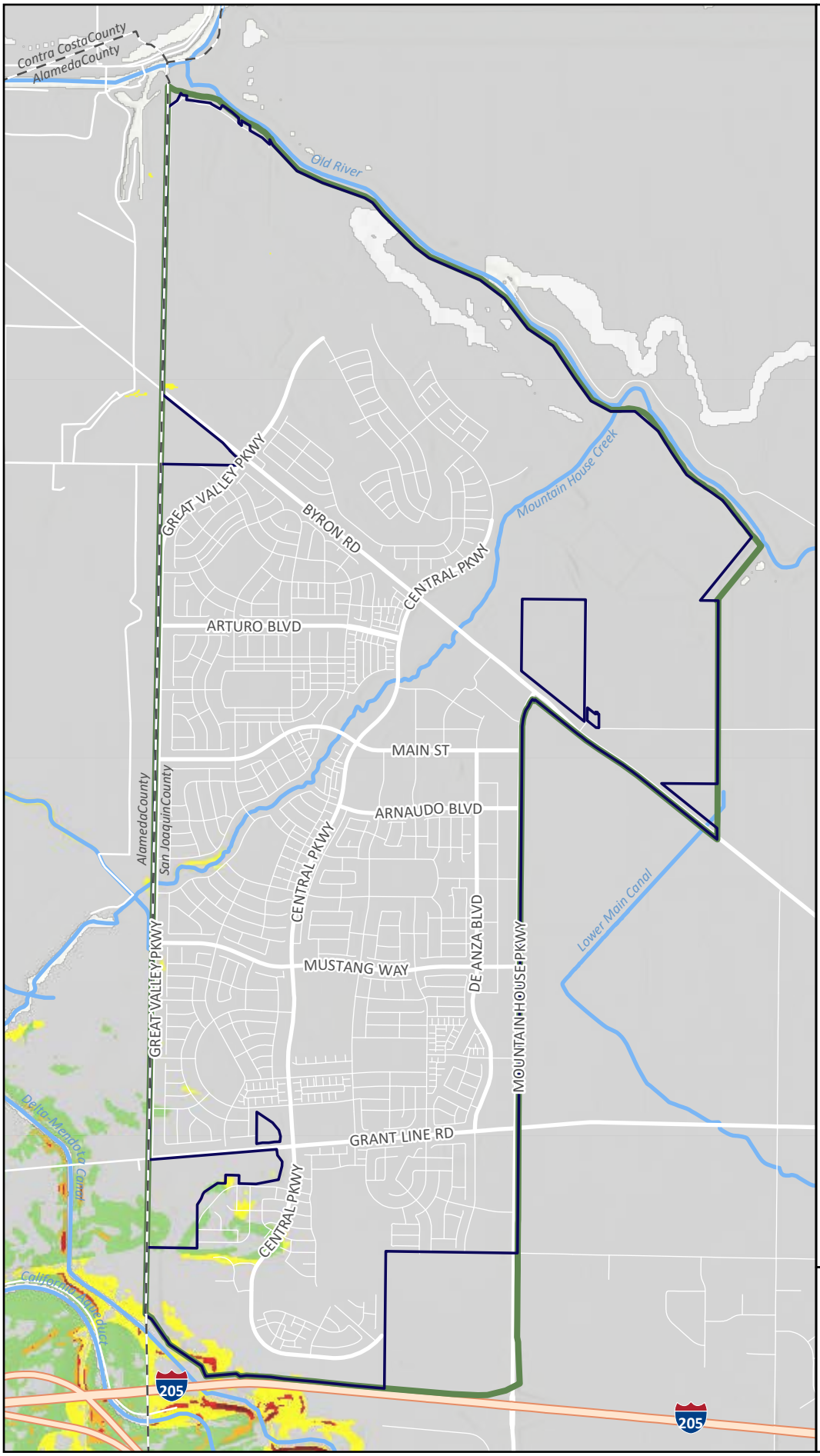

FIGURE 3.6-5.

LANDSLIDE SUSCEPTIBILITY

Mountain House City Limits

Sphere of Influence (SOI)

County Boundary

Landslide Susceptibility Rating

increasing susceptibility

0 3 5 6 7 8 9 10

0 1,500 3,000

Feet

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
July 31, 2025.

DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP
A LAND USE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FIRM

Sources: CGS Map Sheet 58 (2011); San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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This section discusses regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy impacts that could result from implementation of the General Plan. This section provides a background discussion of greenhouse gases and climate change linkages, the effects of global climate change, and energy use in Mountain House. The analysis and discussion of the GHG and energy impacts in this section focuses on the General Plan's consistency with local, regional, statewide, and federal climate change and energy conservation planning efforts and discusses the context of these planning efforts as they relate to the proposed Project. Disclosures of the estimated energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions due to implementation of the General Plan are provided.

Emissions of GHGs have the potential to adversely affect the environment in a cumulative context. Although an individual project's emissions would have minimal impacts on climate change, GHG emissions from multiple projects could result in a cumulative impact with respect to global climate change. Therefore, the analysis of GHGs and climate change presented in this section is presented in terms of the proposed Project's contribution to cumulative impacts and potential to result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to GHGs and climate change.

There were no comments received during the NOP comment period related to this environmental topic.

3.7.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

GREENHOUSE GASES AND CLIMATE CHANGE LINKAGES

Various gases in the Earth's atmosphere, classified as atmospheric GHGs, play a critical role in determining the Earth's surface temperature. Solar radiation enters Earth's atmosphere from space, and a portion of the radiation is absorbed by the Earth's surface. The Earth emits this radiation back toward space, but the properties of the radiation change from high-frequency solar radiation to lower-frequency infrared radiation.

Naturally occurring GHGs include water vapor (H_2O), carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), and ozone (O_3). Several classes of halogenated substances that contain fluorine, chlorine, or bromine are also GHGs, but they are, for the most part, solely a product of industrial activities. Although the direct GHGs CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O occur naturally in the atmosphere, human activities have changed their atmospheric concentrations. From the pre-industrial era (i.e., ending about 1750) to 2019, concentrations of these three GHGs have increased globally by 47, 156, and 23 percent, respectively.[1]

GHGs, which are transparent to solar radiation, are effective in absorbing infrared radiation. As a result, this radiation that otherwise would have escaped back into space is now retained, resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon is known as the greenhouse effect. Among the

[1] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2023 Synthesis Report*. Available at: https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_LongerReport.pdf. Accessed August 2026.

prominent GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), ozone (O_3), water vapor, nitrous oxide (N_2O), and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

Emissions of GHGs contributing to global climate change are attributable in large part to human activities associated with the industrial/manufacturing, utility, transportation, residential, and agricultural sectors. In California, the transportation sector is the largest emitter of GHGs, followed by the industrial and electricity generation sectors.[2]

As the name implies, global climate change is a global problem. GHGs are global pollutants, unlike criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants, which are pollutants of regional and local concern, respectively. California produced approximately 360.4 million gross metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents ($MMTCO_2e$) in 2023.

Carbon dioxide equivalents are a measurement used to account for the fact that different GHGs have different potential to retain infrared radiation in the atmosphere and contribute to the greenhouse effect. This potential, known as the global warming potential of a GHG, is also dependent on the lifetime, or persistence, of the gas molecule in the atmosphere. Expressing GHG emissions in carbon dioxide equivalents takes the contribution of all GHG emissions to the greenhouse effect and converts them to a single unit equivalent to the effect that would occur if only CO_2 were being emitted.

Consumption of fossil fuels in the transportation sector was the single largest source of California's GHG emissions in 2023, accounting for 38 percent of total GHG emissions in the State. This category was followed by the industrial sector (22 percent), the electricity generation sector (including both in-state and out of-state sources) (16 percent), the agriculture and forestry sector (eight percent), the residential energy consumption sector (10 percent), and the commercial energy consumption sector (seven percent).[3]

[2] California Energy Commission, 2021 *California Clean Energy Almanac*. Available at: https://www.energy.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-02/2021_EnergyAlmanac_ADA.pdf. Accessed May 2026.
[3] California Air Resources Board, *Current California GHG Emission Inventory Data*. Available at: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/ghg-inventory-data. Accessed May 2026.

EFFECTS OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

According to NASA Science and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), global climate change is not a future problem, but a current reality with far-reaching consequences.[4] The results of the IPCC Sixth Assessment report identify that the effects of increasing global temperature are far-reaching and extremely difficult to quantify. The scientific community continues to study the effects of global climate change. In general, increases in the ambient global temperature as a result of increased GHGs are anticipated to result in rising sea levels, which could threaten coastal areas through accelerated coastal erosion, threats to levees and inland water systems and disruption to coastal wetlands and habitat.

According to the IPCC, if the temperature of the ocean warms, it is anticipated that the winter snow season would be shortened. Snowpack in the Sierra Nevada provides both water supply (runoff) and storage (within the snowpack before melting), which is a major source of supply for the State. The snowpack portion of the supply could potentially decline by 50 percent to 75 percent by the end of the 21st century.[5] This phenomenon could lead to significant challenges securing an adequate water supply for a growing state population. Further, the increased ocean temperature could result in increased moisture flux into the State; however, since this would likely increasingly come in the form of rain rather than snow in the high elevations, increased precipitation could lead to increased potential and severity of flood events, placing more pressure on California's levee/flood control system.

Furthermore, sea level has risen approximately seven inches during the last century, and it is predicted to rise an additional 22 to 35 inches by 2100, depending on the future GHG emission levels. If this occurs, resultant effects could include increased coastal flooding, saltwater intrusion, and disruption of wetlands. As the existing climate throughout California changes over time, mass migration of species, or failure of species to migrate in time to adapt to the perturbations in climate, could also result. According to the Indicators of Climate Change in California report, the impacts of global warming in California are anticipated to include, but are not limited to, those discussed below.[6]

Public Health

Higher temperatures are expected to increase the frequency, duration, and intensity of conditions conducive to air pollution formation. For example, days with weather conducive to O_3 formation are projected to increase from 25 percent to 35 percent under the lower warming range and to 75 percent to 85 percent under the medium warming range. In addition, if global background O_3 levels

[4] National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), *The Effects of Climate Change*. Available at: https://science.nasa.gov/climate-change/effects/#:~:text=Global%20climate%20change%20is%20not,longer%2C%20more%20intense%20heat%20waves. Accessed May 2026.

[5] Natural Resources Defense Council, *California Snowpack and the Drought*, 2014. Available at: https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/ca-snowpack-and-drought-FS.pdf. Accessed May 2026.

[6] California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, *2022 Report: Indicators of Climate Change in California.* Available at: https://oehha.ca.gov/climate-change/epic-2022. Accessed May 2026.

increase as predicted in some scenarios, it may become impossible to meet local air quality standards. Air quality could be further compromised by increases in wildfires, which emit fine particulate matter that can travel long distances depending on wind conditions. The Climate Scenarios report identified by the IPCC indicates that large wildfires could become up to 55 percent more frequent if GHG emissions are not significantly reduced.[7]

In addition, under the higher warming scenario, there could be up to 100 more days per year with temperatures above 90 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) in Los Angeles and 95°F in Sacramento by 2100. This is a large increase over historical patterns and approximately twice the increase projected if temperatures remain within or below the lower warming range. Rising temperatures will increase the risk of death from dehydration, heat stroke/exhaustion, heart attack, stroke, and respiratory distress caused by extreme heat.

Water Resources

A vast network of man-made reservoirs and aqueducts capture and transport water throughout the State from northern California rivers and the Colorado River. The current distribution system relies on Sierra Nevada snow pack to supply water during the dry spring and summer months. Rising temperatures, potentially compounded by decreases in precipitation, could severely reduce spring snow pack, increasing the risk of summer water shortages.

The State's water supplies are also at risk from rising sea levels. An influx of saltwater would degrade California's estuaries, wetlands, and groundwater aquifers. Saltwater intrusion caused by rising sea levels is a major threat to the quality and reliability of water within the southern edge of the Sacramento/San Joaquin River Delta, a major State fresh water supply. Global warming is also projected to seriously affect agricultural areas, with California farmers projected to lose as much as 25 percent of the water supply they need; decrease the potential for hydropower production within the State (although the effects on hydropower are uncertain); and seriously harm winter tourism. Under the lower warming range, the snow dependent winter recreational season at lower elevations could be reduced by as much as one month. If temperatures reach the higher warming range and precipitation declines, there might be many years with insufficient snow for skiing, snowboarding, and other snow dependent recreational activities.

If GHG emissions continue unabated, more precipitation will fall as rain instead of snow, and the snow that does fall will melt earlier, reducing the Sierra Nevada spring snow pack by as much as 70 to 90 percent. Under the lower warming scenario, snow pack losses are expected to be only half as large as those expected if temperatures were to rise to the higher warming range. How much snow pack will be lost depends in part on future precipitation patterns, the projections for which remain uncertain. However, even under the wetter climate projections, the loss of snow pack would pose challenges to water managers, hamper hydropower generation, and nearly eliminate all skiing and other snow-related recreational activities.

[7]Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis, the Working Group I contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report*, 2023, https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-i/, accessed January 28, 2025.

Agriculture

Increased GHG emissions are expected to cause widespread changes to the agriculture industry, reducing the quantity and quality of agricultural products statewide. Although higher carbon dioxide levels can stimulate plant production and increase plant water-use efficiency, California's farmers will face greater water demand for crops and a less reliable water supply as temperatures rise.

Plant growth tends to be slow at low temperatures, increasing with rising temperatures up to a threshold. However, faster growth can result in less-than-optimal development for many crops, so rising temperatures are likely to worsen the quantity and quality of yield for a number of California's agricultural products. Products likely to be most affected include wine grapes, fruits and nuts, and milk.

Crop growth and development will be affected, as will the intensity and frequency of pest and disease outbreaks. Rising temperatures will likely aggravate ozone pollution, which makes plants more susceptible to disease and pests and interferes with plant growth.

In addition, continued global warming will likely shift the ranges of existing invasive plants and weeds and alter competition patterns with native plants. Range expansion is expected in many species while range contractions are less likely in rapidly evolving species with significant populations already established. Should range contractions occur, it is likely that new or different weed species will fill the emerging gaps. Continued global warming is also likely to alter the abundance and types of many pests, lengthen pests' breeding season, and increase pathogen growth rates.

Forests and Landscapes

Global warming is expected to alter the distribution and character of natural vegetation thereby resulting in a possible increased risk of large wildfires. If temperatures rise into the medium warming range, the risk of large wildfires in California could increase by as much as 55 percent, which is almost twice the increase expected if temperatures stay in the lower warming range. However, since wildfire risk is determined by a combination of factors, including precipitation, winds, temperature, and landscape and vegetation conditions, future risks will not be uniform throughout the State. For example, if precipitation increases as temperatures rise, wildfires in southern California are expected to increase by approximately 30 percent toward the end of the century. In contrast, precipitation decreases could increase wildfires in northern California by up to 90 percent.

Moreover, continued global warming will alter natural ecosystems and biological diversity within the State. For example, alpine and sub-alpine ecosystems are expected to decline by as much as 60 to 80 percent by the end of the century as a result of increasing temperatures. The productivity of the State's forests is also expected to decrease as a result of global warming.

Rising Sea Levels

Rising sea levels, more intense coastal storms, and warmer water temperatures will increasingly threaten the State's coastal regions. Under the higher warming scenario, sea level is anticipated to rise 22 to 35 inches by 2100. Elevations of this magnitude would inundate coastal areas with

saltwater, accelerate coastal erosion, threaten vital levees and inland water systems, and disrupt wetlands and natural habitats.

ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Energy in California is consumed from a wide variety of sources. Fossil fuels (including gasoline and diesel fuel and natural gas) are the most widely used form of energy in the State.[8] However, renewable sources of energy (such as solar and wind) are growing in proportion to California's overall energy mix. A large driver of renewable sources of energy in California is the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), which requires the State to derive at least 33 percent of electricity generated from renewable resources by 2020, 60 percent by 2030, and requires all the State's electricity to come from carbon-free resources by 2045.

Overall, in 2023, California's per capita energy usage was ranked 50th in the nation at 174 million British thermal units (Btu) per capita.[9] Additionally, California's per capita rate of energy usage has been reduced by approximately one third since the 1970s.[10] Many state regulations since the 1970s, including new building energy efficiency standards, vehicle fleet efficiency measures, as well as growing public awareness, have helped to keep per capita energy usage in the state constrained.

The consumption of nonrenewable energy (primarily gasoline and diesel fuel) associated with the operation of passenger, public transit, and commercial vehicles results in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that ultimately result in global climate change. Other fuels such as natural gas, ethanol, and electricity (unless derived from solar, wind, nuclear, or other energy sources that do not produce carbon emissions) also result in GHG emissions and contribute to global climate change.

Electricity Consumption

California relies on a regional power system composed of a diverse mix of natural gas, renewable, hydroelectric, and nuclear generation resources. Approximately 77 percent of the electrical power needed to meet California's demand is produced in the State, while the remaining 23 percent is imported from the Pacific Northwest and the Southwest.[11] In 2023, California's in-State generated electricity was derived from natural gas (43.7 percent), coal (0.1 percent), oil (less than 0.1 percent), and other (waste heat/petroleum coke) (0.1 percent); and nearly half was derived from non-GHG and renewable resources that include geothermal, biomass, hydroelectric resources, nuclear, wind, and solar (56.1 percent). The percentage of renewable resources as a proportion of California's overall energy portfolio is increasing over time, as directed by the RPS.

Electricity service in the Planning Area is provided by the Modesto Irrigation District (MID). According to the California Energy Commission (CEC), approximately 2,669 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of electricity

[8] U.S. Energy Information Administration, *California State Profile and Energy Estimates, 2024.* Available at: https://www.eia.gov/state/?sid=CA#tabs-1. Accessed August 2026.
[9] Ibid.
[10] U.S. Energy Information Administration, *State Energy Data System: 1960-2022,* June 2024.
[11] California Energy Commission, *2024 Total System Electric Generation*. Available at: https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/california-electricity-data/2024-total-system-electric-generation. Accessed August 2026.

were used in MID's service area in 2024.[12] This is approximately 0.95 percent of the State's total system electric energy mix of 278,338 GWh in 2024.[13]

Natural Gas

Natural gas supplies are derived from underground sources and brought to the surface at gas wells. Once it is extracted, gas is purified and the odorant that allows gas leaks to be detected is added to the normally odorless gas. Natural gas suppliers, such as Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), then send the gas into transmission pipelines, which are usually buried underground. Compressors propel the gas through the pipeline system, which delivers it to homes and businesses. PG&E provides natural gas for residential, industrial, and agency consumers within the Planning Area. The County's total natural gas consumption in 2024 (residential and non-residential) was approximately 177 million therms.[14]

Petroleum

The primary energy source for the United States is petroleum (oil), which is refined to produce fuels like gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel.[15] Petroleum is a finite, nonrenewable energy source. California used approximately 660 million barrels of petroleum in 2024, with the majority (569 million barrels) used for the transportation sector.[16] This total annual consumption equates to a daily use of approximately 1.8 million barrels of petroleum.

3.7.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Clean Air Act

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) was first signed into law in 1970. In 1977, and again in 1990, the law was substantially amended. The FCAA is the foundation for a national air pollution control effort, and it is composed of the following basic elements: NAAQS for criteria air pollutants, hazardous air pollutant standards, State attainment plans, motor National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)

[12] California Energy Commission, *California Electricity Consumption.* Available at: https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/california-electricity-data/california-energy-consumption-dashboards-0. Accessed May 2026.

[13] California Energy Commission, *2024 Total System Electric Generation.* Available at: *https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/california-electricity-data/2024-total-system-electric-generation*. Accessed May 2026.

[14] California Energy Commission, *Natural Gas Consumption by County.* Available at: https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/california-electricity-data/california-energy-consumption-dashboards-1. Accessed May 2026.

[15] U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Monthly Energy Review*. Available at: https://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/monthly/. Accessed May 2026.

[16] U.S. Energy Information Administration, *California State Profile and Energy Estimates: Total Petroleum Consumption Estimates, 2024.* Available at: https://www.eia.gov/state/data.php?sid=CA#ConsumptionExpenditures. Accessed May 2026.

vehicle emissions standards, stationary source emissions standards and permits, acid rain control measures, stratospheric ozone protection, and enforcement provisions.

The EPA is responsible for administering the FCAA. The FCAA requires the EPA to set NAAQS for several problem air pollutants based on human health and welfare criteria. Two types of NAAQS were established: primary standards, which protect public health, and secondary standards, which protect the public welfare from non-health-related adverse effects such as visibility reduction.

On April 2, 2007, in the court case of *Massachusetts et al. vs. the U.S. EPA et al*. (549 U.S. 497), the U.S. Supreme Court found that GHGs are air pollutants covered by the federal Clean Air Act (42 USC Sections 7401-7671q). The Supreme Court held that the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency must determine whether or not emissions of GHGs from new motor vehicles cause or contribute to air pollution, which may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health or welfare, or whether the science is too uncertain to make a reasoned decision. In making these decisions, the Administrator is required to follow the language of Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. On December 7, 2009, the Administrator signed two distinct findings regarding GHGs under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act:

- Endangerment Finding: The Administrator finds that the current and projected concentrations of the six key well-mixed GHGs (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride) in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations.
- Cause or Contribute Finding: The Administrator finds that the combined emissions of these well-mixed GHGs from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the GHG pollution, which threatens public health and welfare.

In February 2026, the U.S. EPA finalized its rescission of the 2009 Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding, which served as a prerequisite for regulating emissions from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines. Absent this finding, the U.S. EPA concluded it lacks statutory authority under Section 202(a) of the FCAA to prescribe standards for GHG emissions. Therefore, U.S. EPA also finalized the repeal of all subsequent GHG emission standards from its regulations for light-, medium-, and heavy-duty on-highway vehicles and engines.

Energy Policy and Conservation Act

The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 sought to ensure that all vehicles sold in the U.S. would meet certain fuel economy goals. Through the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, Congress established the first fuel economy standards for on-road motor vehicles in the United States. Pursuant to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, which is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), is responsible for establishing additional vehicle standards and for revising existing standards.

Compliance with federal fuel economy standards is determined on the basis of each manufacturer's average fuel economy for the portion of its vehicles produced for sale in the U.S. The Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) program, which is administered by the EPA, was created to determine

vehicle manufacturers' compliance with the fuel economy standards. The EPA calculates a CAFE value for each manufacturer based on city and highway fuel economy test results and vehicle sales. Based on the information generated under the CAFE program, the USDOT is authorized to assess penalties for noncompliance.

Energy Policy Act of 1992

The Energy Policy Act of 1992 was passed to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign petroleum and improve air quality. The Energy Policy Act of 1992 includes several parts intended to build an inventory of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) in large, centrally fueled fleets in metropolitan areas. The Energy Policy Act of 1992 requires certain federal, state, and local government and private fleets to purchase a percentage of light duty AFVs capable of running on alternative fuels each year. In addition, financial incentives are included in the Energy Policy Act of 1992. Federal tax deductions will be allowed for businesses and individuals to cover the incremental cost of AFVs. States are also required by the Energy Policy Act of 1992 to consider a variety of incentive programs to help promote AFVs.

Energy Policy Act of 2005

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 was signed into law on August 8, 2005. Generally, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 provides for renewed and expanded tax credits for electricity generated by qualified energy sources, such as landfill gas; provides bond financing, tax incentives, grants, and loan guarantees for clean renewable energy and rural community electrification; and establishes a federal purchase requirement for renewable energy.

Mandatory Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule

In 2009, EPA issued a final rule for mandatory reporting of GHGs from large GHG emissions sources in the United States. In general, this national reporting requirement will provide EPA with accurate and timely GHG emissions data from facilities that emit 25,000 metric tons or more of CO_2 per year. This publicly available data will allow the reporters to track their own emissions, compare them to similar facilities, and aid in identifying cost effective opportunities to reduce emissions in the future. Reporting is at the facility level, except that certain suppliers of fossil fuels and industrial GHGs along with vehicle and engine manufacturers will report at the corporate level. An estimated 85% of the total U.S. GHG emissions, from approximately 10,000 facilities, are covered by this final rule.

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) (49 U.S. Code Section 101 et seq.) promoted the development of intermodal transportation systems to maximize mobility as well as address national and local interests in air quality and energy. ISTEA contained factors that metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), were to address in developing transportation plans and programs, including some energy-related factors. To meet the ISTEA requirements, MPOs adopted explicit policies defining the social, economic, energy, and environmental values that were to guide transportation decisions in that metropolitan area. The planning process was then to address these policies. Another requirement was to consider the consistency of transportation planning with federal, state, and local energy goals. Through this requirement, energy consumption

was expected to become a criterion, along with cost and other values that determine the best transportation solution.

STATE

The California Legislature has enacted a series of statutes in recent years addressing the need to reduce GHG emissions across the State. These statutes can be categorized into four broad categories: (i) statutes setting numerical statewide targets for GHG reductions, and authorizing the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to enact regulations to achieve such targets; (ii) statutes setting separate targets for increasing the use of renewable energy for the generation of electricity throughout the State; (iii) statutes addressing the carbon intensity of vehicle fuels, which prompted the adoption of regulations by CARB; and (iv) statutes intended to facilitate land use planning consistent with statewide climate objectives. The discussion below will address each of these key sets of statutes, as well as Executive Orders and CARB "Scoping Plans" intended to achieve GHG reductions under the first set of statutes and recent building code requirements intended to reduce energy consumption.

Statutes Setting Statewide GHG Reduction Targets

ASSEMBLY BILL 32 (GLOBAL WARMING SOLUTIONS ACT)

In 2006, the California State Legislature enacted the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Health & Safety Code Section 38500 et seq.), also known as Assembly Bill (AB) 32 (Stats. 2006, ch. 488). AB 32 establishes regulatory, reporting, and market mechanisms to achieve quantifiable reductions in GHG emissions and a cap on statewide GHG emissions. AB 32 required that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. This reduction was accomplished through an enforceable statewide cap on GHG emissions that was phased in starting in 2012. To effectively implement the cap, AB 32 directed CARB to develop and implement regulations to reduce statewide GHG emissions from stationary sources.

SENATE BILL 32

SB 32 (Stats. 2016, Ch. 249) added Section 38566 to the Health and Safety Code. It provides that "[i]n adopting rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective greenhouse gas emissions reductions authorized by [Division 25.5 of the Health and Safety Code], [CARB] shall ensure that statewide greenhouse gas emissions are reduced to at least 40 percent below the statewide GHG emissions limit no later than December 31, 2030." In other words, SB 32 requires California, by 2030, to reduce its statewide GHG emissions so that they are 40 percent below those that occurred in 1990.

EXECUTIVE ORDERS S-3-05, B-30-15, AND B-55-18

The 2020 statewide GHG reduction target in AB 32 was consistent with the second of three statewide emissions reduction targets set forth in former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's 2005 Executive Order known as S-3-05, which is expressly mentioned in AB 32. (See Health & Safety Code Section 38501, subd. (i).) That Executive Branch document included the following GHG emission reduction targets: by 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels; by 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; by 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels. To meet the targets,

the Governor directed several State agencies to cooperate in the development of a climate action plan. The Secretary of California EPA leads the Climate Action Team, whose goal is to implement global warming emission reduction programs identified in the Climate Action Plan and to report on the progress made toward meeting the emission reduction targets established in the executive order.

In 2015, Governor Brown issued Executive Order, B-30-15, which created a "new interim statewide GHG emission reduction target to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 is established in order to ensure California meets its target of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050." SB 32 codified this target.

In 2018, the Governor issued Executive Order B-55-18, which established a statewide goal to "achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, and maintain and achieve negative emissions thereafter." The order directs the CARB to work with other State agencies to identify and recommend measures to achieve those goals. As discussed below, the 2022 Scoping Plan lays out a path towards achieving carbon neutrality by 2045.

SENATE BILL 350

Senate Bill 350 (SB 350) (Stats. 2015, Ch. 547) added to the Public Utilities Code language that puts into statute the 2050 GHG reduction target identified in Executive Order S-3-05, albeit in the limited context of new state policies (i) increasing the overall share of electricity that must be produced through renewable energy sources and (ii) directing certain State agencies to begin planning for the widespread electrification of the California vehicle fleet. Section 740.12(a)(1)(D) of the Public Utilities Code states that "[t]he Legislature finds and declares [that] … [r]educing emissions of [GHGs] to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 will require widespread transportation electrification." Furthermore, Section 740.12(b) states that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), in consultation with CARB and the California Energy Commission (CEC), must "direct electrical corporations to file applications for programs and investments to accelerate widespread transportation electrification to reduce dependence on petroleum, meet air quality standards, … and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050."

Statute Setting Target for the Use of Renewable Energy for the Generation of Electricity

CALIFORNIA RENEWABLES PORTFOLIO STANDARD

SB X1-2 (Stats. 2011, 1st Ex. Sess., Ch. 1) set aggressive statutory targets for renewable electricity, culminating in the requirement that 33 percent of the State's electricity come from renewables by 2020. This legislation applies to all electricity retailers in the State, including publicly owned utilities, investor-owned utilities, electricity service providers, and community choice aggregators. All these entities were required to meet renewable energy goals of 20 percent of retail sales from renewables by the end of 2013, 25 percent by the end of 2016, and 33 percent by the end of 2020. (See Pub. Utility Code, Section 399.11 et seq. [subsequently amended].) SB 350, discussed below, increases the Renewable Portfolio Standard to require 50 percent of electricity generated to be from renewables by 2030. (Pub. Utility Code, Section 399.11, subd (a); see also Section 399.30, subd.

(c)(2).) In 2018, Senate Bill 100 (Stats. 2018, Ch. 312) revised the above-described deadlines and targets so that the State will have to achieve a 50 percent renewable resources target by December 31, 2026 (instead of by 2030) and achieve a 60 percent target by December 31, 2030. The legislation also establishes a State policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100-percent of electricity procured to serve all State agencies by December 31, 2045.

ASSEMBLY BILL 1493, PAVLEY CLEAN CARS STANDARDS

In 2002, the Legislature enacted Assembly Bill 1493 ("Pavley Bill") (Stats. 2002, Ch. 200), which directed CARB to develop and adopt regulations that achieve the maximum feasible reduction of GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks beginning with model year 2009. (See Health and Safety Code Section 43018.5.) In September 2004, pursuant to this directive, CARB approved regulations to reduce GHG emissions from new motor vehicles beginning with the 2009 model year. These regulations created what are commonly known as the "Pavley standards." In September 2009, CARB adopted amendments to the Pavley standards to reduce GHG emissions from new motor vehicles through the 2016 model year. These regulations created what are commonly known as the "Pavley II standards." (See California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sections 1900, 1961, and 1961.1 *et seq*.)

In 2012, CARB adopted an Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) program aimed at reducing both smog-causing pollutants and GHG emissions for vehicles model years 2017-2025. This historic program, developed in coordination with the USEPA and NHTSA, combined the control of smog-causing (criteria) pollutants and GHG emissions into a single coordinated set of requirements for model years 2015 through 2025. The regulations focus on substantially increasing the number of plug-in hybrid cars and zero-emission vehicles in the vehicle fleet and on making fuels such as electricity and hydrogen readily available for these vehicle technologies. The components of the ACC program are the Low-Emission Vehicle (LEV) regulations that reduce criteria pollutants and GHG emissions from light- and medium-duty vehicles, and the Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) regulation, which requires manufacturers to produce an increasing number of pure ZEVs (meaning battery electric and fuel cell electric vehicles), with provisions to also produce plug-in hybrid electric vehicles in the 2018 through 2025 model years. (See California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sections 1900, 1961, 1961.1, 1961.2, 1961.3, 1965, 1968.2, 1968.5, 1976, 1978, 2037, 2038, 2062, 2112, 2139, 2140, 2145, 2147, 2235, and 2317 et seq.)

It is expected that the Pavley regulations will reduce GHG emissions from California passenger vehicles by about 34 percent below 2016 levels by 2025, all while improving fuel efficiency and reducing motorists' costs.

Statute Intended to Facilitate Land Use Planning Consistent with Statewide Climate Objectives

CALIFORNIA SENATE BILL 375 (SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY)

This 2008 legislation built on AB 32 by setting forth a mechanism for coordinating land use and transportation on a regional level for the purpose of reducing GHGs. The focus is to reduce miles traveled by passenger vehicles and light trucks. CARB is required to set GHG reduction targets for

each metropolitan region for 2020 and 2035. Each of California's metropolitan planning organizations then prepares a sustainable communities strategy that demonstrates how the region will meet its GHG reduction target through integrated land use, housing, and transportation planning. Once adopted by the metropolitan planning organizations, the sustainable communities strategy is to be incorporated into that region's federally enforceable regional transportation plan. If a metropolitan planning organization is unable to meet the targets through the sustainable communities strategy, then an alternative planning strategy must be developed that demonstrates how targets could be achieved, even if meeting the targets is deemed to be infeasible.

2022 SCOPING PLAN UPDATE

In accordance with AB 32, the CARB developed the first Scoping Plan in 2008 to outline the State's strategy to achieve 1990 level emissions by year 2020. In May 2014, the CARB released and adopted the *First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan* to identify the next steps in reaching AB 32 goals and evaluate the progress that has been made between 2000 and 2012. A newer version of the Scoping Plan was then adopted by the CARB in December 2017 (entitled *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*). Lastly, the most recent version of the Scoping Plan was adopted by the CARB in November 2022 (entitled *Final 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality*) (2022 Scoping Plan), which was designed consistent with the long-term GHG reduction targets embedded in AB 1279. Since adoption of the 2008 Scoping Plan and the subsequent updates in 2014, 2017, and 2022, State agencies have adopted programs identified in the plan, and the Legislature has passed additional legislation to achieve the GHG reduction targets. Statewide strategies to reduce GHG emissions include the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, California Appliance Energy Efficiency regulations, California Building Standards (e.g., CALGreen and the Building and Energy Efficiency Standards), zero carbon electricity by 2045, and changes in the corporate average fuel economy standards (e.g., Pavley I and California Advanced Clean Cars).

Statutes Intended to Reduce Emissions of Short-lived Climate Pollutants

SB 605 AND SB 1383

SB 605 (2014) required CARB to complete a comprehensive strategy to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants in the state, and SB 1383 (2016) required CARB to approve and implement that strategy by January 1, 2018. SB 1383 also establishes specific targets for the reduction of short-lived climate pollutants (40 percent below 2013 levels by 2030 for methane and HFCs, and 50 percent below 2013 levels by 2030 for anthropogenic black carbon) and provides direction for reductions from dairy and livestock operations and landfills. Accordingly, CARB adopted its Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy (Reduction Strategy) in March 2017. The Reduction Strategy establishes a framework for the statewide reduction of emissions of black carbon, methane, and fluorinated gases.

Statute Intended to Achieve Carbon Neutrality and Foster Climate Adaptation and Resilience

ASSEMBLY BILL 1757

AB 1757 (September 2022) requires the California Natural Resources Agency to determine a range of targets for natural carbon sequestration, and for nature-based climate solutions that reduce GHG

emissions for future years 2030, 2038, and 2045. These targets are to be determined by no later than January 1, 2024, and are established to support the State's goals to achieve carbon neutrality and foster climate adaptation and resilience.

Building Code Requirements Intended to Reduce GHG Emissions

CALIFORNIA ENERGY CODE

The California Energy Code (CCR Title 24, Part 6), which is incorporated into the Building Energy Efficiency Standards, was first established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. Although these standards were not originally intended to reduce GHG emissions, increased energy efficiency results in decreased GHG emissions because energy efficient buildings require less electricity and thus less consumption of fossil fuels, which emit GHGs. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods.

The most recent Energy Code (also known as Title 24) standards are the 2025 Energy Code standards. The CEC updates the standards every three years and buildings permitted on or after January 1, 2026, must comply with the 2025 standards. The 2025 standards expand the use of heat pumps in newly constructed residential buildings, encourage electric-readiness, and strengthen ventilation standards, amongst others.

CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS CODE

The purpose of the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) (CCR Title 24, Part 11) is to improve public health and safety and to promote the general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impact or positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: 1) planning and design; 2) energy efficiency; 3) water efficiency and conservation; 4) material conservation and resource efficiency; and 5) environmental quality. CALGreen, which became effective on January 1, 2011, instituted mandatory minimum environmental performance standards for all ground-up new construction of commercial, low-rise residential uses, and State-owned buildings, as well as schools and hospitals. The mandatory standards require the following:

- 20 percent mandatory reduction in indoor water use relative to baseline levels;
- 50 percent construction/demolition waste must be diverted from landfills;
- Mandatory inspections of energy systems to ensure optimal working efficiency; and
- Low-pollutant emitting exterior and interior finish materials such as paints, carpets, vinyl flooring, and particle boards.

The voluntary standards require the following:

Tier I: 15 percent improvement in energy requirements, stricter water conservation requirements for specific fixtures, 65 percent reduction in construction waste, 10 percent recycled content, 20 percent permeable paving, 20 percent cement reduction, and cool/solar reflective roof.

Tier II: 30 percent improvement in energy requirements, stricter water conservation requirements for specific fixtures, 75 percent reduction in construction waste, 15 percent recycled content, 30 percent permeable paving, 30 percent cement reduction, and cool/solar reflective roof.

The latest version of CALGreen is the 2025 CALGreen Code, which became effective on January 1, 2026. Between 2010 and 2025, continuous updates and additions have been made to CALGreen, including water conservation and recycling, electric vehicle infrastructure and charging, and changes intended to eliminate conflicts with the California Energy Code, which is Part 6 of Title 24.

TITLE 20

CCR Title 20 requires manufacturers of appliances to meet State and federal standards for energy and water efficiency. The CEC certifies an appliance based on a manufacturer's demonstration that the appliance meets the standards. New appliances regulated under Title 20 include refrigerators, refrigerator-freezers, and freezers; room air conditioners and room air-conditioning heat pumps; central air conditioners; spot air conditioners; vented gas space heaters; gas pool heaters; plumbing fittings and plumbing fixtures; fluorescent lamp ballasts; lamps; emergency lighting; traffic signal modules; dishwashers; clothes washers and dryers; cooking products; electric motors; low-voltage dry-type distribution transformers; power supplies; televisions and consumer audio and video equipment; and battery charger systems. Title 20 presents protocols for testing each type of appliance covered under the regulations, and appliances must meet the standards for energy performance, energy design, water performance, and water design. Title 20 contains three types of standards for appliances: federal and State standards for federally regulated appliances, State standards for federally regulated appliances, and State standards for non-federally regulated appliances.

SENATE BILL 1

SB 1 (Murray) (August 2006) established a $3 billion rebate program to support the goal of the state to install rooftop solar energy systems with a generation capacity of 3,000 megawatts through 2016. SB 1 added sections to the Public Resources Code, including Chapter 8.8 (California Solar Initiative), that require building projects applying for ratepayer-funded incentives for photovoltaic systems to meet minimum energy efficiency levels and performance requirements. Section 25780 established that it is a goal of the state to establish a self-sufficient solar industry. The goals included establishing solar energy systems as a viable mainstream option for homes and businesses within 10 years of adoption and placing solar energy systems on 50% of new homes within 13 years of adoption. SB 1, also termed "Go Solar California," was previously titled "Million Solar Roofs.

SOLID WASTE

In 1989, AB 939, known as the Integrated Waste Management Act (PRC Sections 40000 et seq.), was passed because of the increase in waste stream and the decrease in landfill capacity. The statute established the California Integrated Waste Management Board, which oversees a disposal reporting system. AB 939 mandated a reduction of waste being disposed where jurisdictions were required to meet diversion goals of all solid waste through source reduction, recycling, and composting activities of 25 percent by 1995 and 50 percent by 2000.

AB 341 (Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011 [Chesbro]) amended the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 to include a provision declaring that it is the policy goal of the state that not less than 75 percent of solid waste generated be source-reduced, recycled, or composted by 2020, and annually thereafter. In addition, AB 341 required the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to develop strategies to achieve the state's policy goal.

AB 1826 (Chapter 727, Statutes of 2014, effective 2016) requires businesses to recycle their organic waste (i.e., food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, nonhazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed in with food waste) depending on the amount of waste they generate per week. This law also requires local jurisdictions across the state to implement an organic waste recycling program to divert organic waste generated by businesses, including multifamily residential dwellings that consist of five or more units. The minimum threshold of organic waste generation by businesses subject to the law decreases over time, which means an increasingly greater proportion of the commercial sector will be required to comply.

Assembly Bill 1007

AB 1007, (Pavley, Chapter 371, Statutes of 2005) directed the CEC to prepare a plan to increase the use of alternative fuels in California. As a result, the CEC prepared the State Alternative Fuels Plan in consultation with the State, federal, and local agencies. The State Alternative Fuels Plan presents strategies and actions California must take to increase the use of alternative non-petroleum fuels in a manner that minimizes costs to California and maximizes the economic benefits of in-state production. The State Alternative Fuels Plan assessed various alternative fuels and developed fuel portfolios to meet California's goals to reduce petroleum consumption, increase alternative fuels use, reduce GHG emissions, and increase in-state production of biofuels without causing a significant degradation of public health and environmental quality.

Executive Order B-48-18: Zero-Emission Vehicles

In January 2018, Executive Order (EO) B-48-18 was signed into law and requires all state entities to work with the private sector to have at least five million zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) on the road by 2030, as well as install 200 hydrogen fueling stations and 250,000 electric vehicle charging stations by 2025. It specifies that 10,000 of the electric vehicle charging stations should be direct current fast chargers. EO B-48-18 also requires all state entities to continue to partner with local and regional governments to streamline the installation of ZEV infrastructure. The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development is required to publish a Plug-in Charging Station Design Guidebook and update the 2015 Hydrogen Station Permitting Guidebook to aid in these efforts. All state entities are required to participate in updating the 2016 ZEV Action Plan (Governor's Interagency Working Group on Zero-Emission Vehicles 2016) to help expand private investment in ZEV infrastructure, with a focus on serving low-income and disadvantaged communities. Additionally, all state entities are to support and recommend policies and actions to expand ZEV infrastructure at residential uses through the Low Carbon Fuel Standard Program and recommend how to ensure affordability and accessibility for all drivers.

Executive Order (N-79-20) and Advanced Clean Cars II

CARB has adopted the Advanced Clean Cars II regulations which aim to significantly reduce emissions from light-duty passenger cars, pickup trucks, and SUVs, beginning with the 2026 model year and continuing through 2035. These regulations take a two-pronged approach. First, they revise the Zero-Emission Vehicle Regulation to mandate an increasing share of zero-emission vehicles, leveraging existing advanced technologies such as battery-electric, hydrogen fuel cell electric, and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles to meet air quality and climate goals. This amendment aligns with Governor Newsom's 2020 Executive Order N-79-20, which requires all new passenger vehicles sold in California to be zero-emission by 2035. Second, updates to the Low-Emission Vehicle Regulations impose progressively stricter standards on gasoline-powered cars and heavier passenger trucks to further reduce smog-forming emissions.

Senate Bill 1078 (2002), Senate Bill 107 (2006), Executive Order S-14-08 (2008), Senate Bill 350 (2015), and Senate Bill 100 (2018), Assembly Bill 1279 (2022), Senate Bill 1020 (2022)

SB 1078 established the RPS program, which required retail sellers of electricity to provide at least 20 percent of their supply from renewable sources by 2017. This goal has subsequently been accelerated several times. SB 1078 changed the target date to 2010 and EO S-14-08 expanded the State's RPS to 33 percent renewable power by 2020. SB 350 expanded the RPS by requiring retail seller and publicly owned utilities to procure 50 percent of their electricity from eligible renewable energy resources by 2030, with interim goals of 40 percent by 2024 and 45 percent by 2027. SB 100 accelerated and expanded the standards set forth in SB 350 by updating the RPS program to 50 percent eligible renewable energy resources by 2025 and 60 percent by 2030. In addition, SB 100 sets a 100 percent clean, zero carbon, and renewable energy policy for California's electricity system by 2045. Additionally, AB 1279, the California Climate Crisis Act, declares the policy of the State both to achieve net zero GHG emissions as soon as possible, but no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net negative GHG emissions thereafter, and to ensure that by 2045, statewide anthropogenic GHG emissions are reduced to at least 85 percent below the 1990 levels. Lastly, SB 1020 revised State policy to require that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 90 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2035, 95 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2040, 100 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2045, and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all State agencies by December 31, 2035.

LOCAL

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Climate Change Action Plan

In August 2008, the SJVAPCD adopted its Climate Change Action Plan. The Climate Change Action Plan directed the SJVAPCD's Air Pollution Control Officer to develop guidance to assist SJVAPCD staff, local businesses, land use agencies and other permitting agencies in addressing GHG emissions as

part of the CEQA process. Regarding CEQA guidance, some of the goals of the Climate Change Action Plan are to assist local land use agencies, developers and the public by identifying and quantifying GHG emission reduction measures for development projects and by providing tools to streamline evaluation of project-specific GHG effects, and to assist SJVAB businesses in complying with State law related to GHG emissions.

A product of this direction to provide CEQA guidance is the Final Staff Report – Climate Change Action Plan: Addressing GHG Emissions Impacts, presented to the APCD Board in December 2009. A central component of the Final Staff Report is the establishment of Best Performance Standards, which are specifications or project design elements that identify effective, feasible GHG emission reduction measures. Emission reductions achieved through Best Performance Standards implementation would be pre-quantified, thus negating the need for project-specific quantification of GHG emissions.

For projects not implementing Best Performance Standards, demonstration of a 29 percent reduction in GHG emissions from business-as-usual conditions is required to determine that a project would have a less than cumulatively significant impact. Appendix J of the Final Staff Report provides a table of GHG emission reduction measures for development projects, along with a point value that corresponds to a percentage decrease in GHG emissions when available.

San Joaquin County Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS/RTP)

The 2022 San Joaquin County Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), adopted by the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) in August 2022, is the region's long-range transportation plan designed to meet the State's GHG reduction targets pursuant to the requirements of SB 375. The RTP/SCS continues to provide a sustainability vision through the year 2046 that recognizes the significant impact the transportation network has on the region's public health, mobility and economic vitality. Its foundation comprises recent household and job growth forecasts, market demand and economic studies, and transportation studies, including SJCOG's Transportation Innovation Planning Study, Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Study, and Public Health Impact Analysis. The RTP/SCS can be considered the San Joaquin region's "statement of priorities" for the future transportation system from 2022 through 2046. The policies, supportive strategies and performance indicators for the plan are all designed to convey: (1) what the region wants the future transportation system to look like; (2) what types of decisions will help the region attain its vision; and (3) the performance measures or indicators by which the region can assess its progress. Establishing clear links between the broad, value-laden goals and the more specific performance indicators helps to provide a tangible path toward feasible implementation.

Mountain House Municipal Code

Title 8, Division 1, *Building Standards*, adopts the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), as amended. Title 8, Division 2, *Small Residential Rooftop Solar Energy Systems*, contains provisions for expedited, streamlined permitting process for small residential rooftop solar energy systems. Title 8, Division 3, *Expedited, Streamlined Permitting of Electric Vehicle Charging*

Station, contains provisions for expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations.

3.7.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GHG-related impacts are considered significant if implementation of the proposed Project would do any of the following:

- Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; and/or
- Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

The vast majority of individual projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to create a project-specific impact through a direct influence on climate change; therefore, the issue of climate change typically involves an analysis of whether a project's contribution towards an impact is cumulatively considerable. "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15355).

The SJVAPCD has evaluated different approaches for estimating impacts and summarizing potential GHG emission reduction measures. The SJVAPCD staff has concluded that "*existing science is inadequate to support quantification of impacts that project specific GHG emissions have on global climatic change*." This is readily understood when one considers that global climatic change is the result of the sum total of GHG emissions, both man-made and natural that occurred in the past; that is occurring now; and will occur in the future. The effects of project specific GHG emissions are cumulative, and unless reduced or mitigated, their incremental contribution to global climatic change could be considered significant.

The *Final Draft Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts* (SJVAPCD, 2015) provides an approach to assessing a Project's impacts on greenhouse gas emissions by evaluating the Project's emissions to the "reduction targets" established in ARB's AB 32 Scoping Plan. For instance, the SJVACD's guidance recommends that projects should demonstrate that "*project specific GHG emissions would be reduced or mitigated by at least 29%, compared to Business as Usual (BAU), including GHG emission reductions achieved since the 2002-2004 baseline period, consistent with GHG emission reduction targets established in ARB's AB 32 Scoping Plan. Projects achieving at least a 29% GHG emission reduction compared to BAU would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG*."

Subsequent to the SJVAPCD's approval of the *Final Draft Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts* (SJVAPCD 2015), the California Supreme Court issued an opinion that affects the conclusions that should/should not be drawn from a GHG emissions analysis that is based on

consistency with the AB 32 Scoping Plan. More specifically, in *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife*, the Court ruled that showing a "project-level reduction" that meets or exceeds the Scoping Plan's overall statewide GHG reduction goal is not necessarily sufficient to show that the project's GHG impacts will be adequately mitigated: "*the Scoping Plan nowhere related that statewide level of reduction effort to the percentage of reduction that would or should be required from individual projects*..." According to the Court, the lead agency cannot simply assume that the overall level of effort required to achieve the statewide goal for emissions reductions will suffice for a specific project.

Given this Court decision, reliance on a 29 percent GHG emissions reduction from projected BAU levels compared to the Project's estimated 2020 levels as recommended in the SJVAPCD's guidance documents will not be the basis for an impact conclusion in this EIR. Given that the SJVAPCD staff has concluded that "*existing science is inadequate to support quantification of impacts that project specific GHG emissions have on global climatic change,*" this EIR will instead rely on a qualitative approach for this analysis.

Energy

The proposed Project would result in a significant impact on energy use if it would:

- Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or
- Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.7-1: General Plan implementation has the potential to generate GHG emissions that could have a significant impact on the environment and/or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases (Significant and Unavoidable)

Emissions of GHGs contributing to global climate change are attributable in large part to human activities associated with the industrial/manufacturing, utility, transportation, residential, and agricultural sectors. Therefore, the cumulative global emissions of GHGs contributing to global climate change can be attributed to every nation, region, and city, and virtually every individual on Earth. A project's GHG emissions are at a micro-scale relative to global emissions but could result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to a significant cumulative macro-scale impact. Implementation of the proposed Project would contribute to increases of GHG emissions that are associated with global climate change. Estimated GHG emissions attributable to future development would be primarily associated with increases of CO_2 and other GHG pollutants, such as methane (CH_4) and nitrous oxide (N_2O), from mobile sources and utility usage.

Development that occurs because of implementation of the proposed Project would include activities that emit GHG emissions over the short and long term. A summary of short- and long-term emissions and the analysis for each are included below.

The major projected impacts of climate change in Mountain House are expected to be more days of extreme heat over longer periods, as well as potential for flooding. Short-term and long-term emissions typically associated with construction and operations of future development projects, which may occur because of implementation of the proposed Project, are further described below.

SHORT-TERM EMISSIONS

Short-term greenhouse gas emissions would occur because of construction equipment used for the following: demolition, grading, paving, and building construction activities associated with future development and infrastructure projects that will be undertaken in Mountain House over the next 20 years. GHG emissions would also result from worker and vendor trips to and from project sites and from demolition and soil hauling trips. Construction activities are short-term and cease to emit greenhouse gases upon completion, unlike operational emissions that are continuous year after year until operation of the use ceases. As such, SJVAPCD recommends in its draft threshold to amortize project-specific construction emissions over a 30-year operational lifetime of a project. This normalizes construction emissions so that they can be grouped with operational emissions to generate a precise project GHG inventory. However, the SJVAPCD does not have a current threshold of significance for construction-related GHG emissions for plan-level impacts (including general plans).

Adoption of the proposed General Plan does not directly approve or otherwise entitle any new development projects or infrastructure improvement projects in Mountain House. As such, the

construction-related GHG emissions of future projects cannot be known or quantified at this time, as it would be highly speculative. Typically, construction-related GHG emissions contribute unsubstantially (less than one percent) to a project's annual greenhouse gas emissions inventory and mitigation for construction-related emissions is not effective in reducing a project's overall contribution to climate change, given how small of a piece of the total emissions construction emissions are. Short-term climate change impacts due to future construction-related activities would be subject to State requirements for GHG emissions and would be assessed on project-by-project basis, as required by the SJVAPCD.

LONG-TERM EMISSIONS

Future development projects associated with General Plan implementation will result in continuous GHG emissions from mobile, area, and operational sources. Mobile sources, including vehicle trips to and from development projects, will result primarily in emissions of CO_2, with minor emissions of CH_4 and N_2O. The most significant GHG emission from natural gas usage will be methane. Electricity usage by future development and indirect usage of electricity for water and wastewater conveyance will result primarily in emissions of CO_2. Disposal of solid waste will result in emissions of methane from the decomposition of waste at landfills coupled with CO_2 emission from the handling and transport of solid waste. These sources combine to define the long-term greenhouse gas inventory for typical development projects.

The following quantitative analysis describes VMT and population increases associated with implementation of the General Plan. VMT is used as a primary indicator of GHG emissions because transportation is California's largest source of GHG emissions, and General Plan implementation would affect emissions primarily through land use development and resulting vehicle travel. As part of the transportation analysis, AMG (the traffic consultant) modeled VMT for the Planning Area for air quality analysis purposes; refer to Section 3.14 (Transportation) and Appendix C.

As described in Section 2.0 of this EIR, buildout of the existing Master Plan is projected to result in a Planning Area population of 43,028 and 9,814 jobs, representing a total service population of 52,842 for the future baseline condition. Buildout of the proposed General Plan is projected to result in a Planning Area population of 54,258 and 8,199 jobs, representing a total service population of 62,457 for the future proposed Project condition. Table 3.7-1 compares the combined population and jobs growth (i.e. service population) anticipated under buildout of the existing Master Plan and the proposed Project.

TABLE 3.7-1: FUTURE SERVICE POPULATION (JOBS + POPULATION) GROWTH UNDER EXISTING MASTER PLAN AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN

Future (2046) Jobs + Population in Mountain House under the Existing Master Plan	52,842
Future (2046) Jobs + Population in Mountain House under the Proposed General Plan	62,457
Percent increase in Jobs + Population between the Existing and Proposed Future Scenarios	18.2%

Sources: City of Mountain House & De Novo Planning Group, 2026. Refer to Table 2.0-2 in Section 2.0-2 within this EIR for further detail.

Table 3.7-2 shows the future (2046) baseline scenario VMT and projected VMT following buildout of the proposed Project. As shown, the future (2046) baseline daily VMT for the Planning Area is

approximately 1,316,910 and the VMT for the Planning Area under the proposed Project scenario would be approximately 1,946,093.

TABLE 3.7-2: FUTURE VMT UNDER EXISTING MASTER PLAN AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN

Future (2046) VMT in Mountain House under the Existing Master Plan	1,316,910
Future (2046) VMT in Mountain House under the Proposed General Plan	1,946,093
Percent increase in VMT between the Existing and Proposed Future Scenarios	47.8%

Source: AMG, 2026.
Note: VMT modeling reflects forecast conditions for the 2046 horizon year, consistent with the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) Travel Demand Model; refer to Section 3.14, Transportation.

As shown in the two tables above, implementation of the proposed Project would result in an approximately 47.8 percent increase in VMT, which is greater than the projected 18.2 percent increase in combined population and jobs, relative to the two scenarios. Because the growth rate associated with the proposed General Plan is anticipated to be slower than the VMT increase associated with it, the proposed Project is anticipated to result in VMT increases on a per service population basis.

As discussed in Chapter 2.0, growth projections for the General Plan should not be considered a prediction for growth, as the actual amount of development that will occur throughout the 20-year planning horizon of the General Plan is based on many factors outside of the City's control. Actual future development would depend on future real estate and labor market conditions, property owner preferences and decisions, site-specific constraints, and other factors.

The City of Mountain House has not developed or adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP). However, in order to reduce community-wide GHG emissions, the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would limit increases of GHG emissions within the City. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-5.3 supports the implementation of regional and Statewide GHG emissions reduction goals through coordination with the SJCOG, SJVAPCD, and other responsible agencies. This policy also aligns local planning efforts with applicable State climate laws and regional planning frameworks by incorporating GHG reduction strategies into City plans, programs, and development review processes. Policy EJ-6.1 directs the City to incorporate health, environmental, and infrastructure vulnerability considerations into City planning and decision-making, using available data to identify overlapping risks and prioritize mitigation, adaptation, and emergency response actions for vulnerable populations. Policy EJ-1 promotes tree planting, landscaping, and green infrastructure that improve air quality, provide buffering, reduce heat, and support healthier neighborhoods. Policy RM-6.5 requires electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in new development projects to be consistent with CALGreen. The City shall encourage installation of EV charging at existing public facilities and private commercial centers and shall coordinate with utilities to support adequate electrical grid capacity for EV charging. Action RM-5b directs the City to coordinate with the SJVAPCD, SJCOG, and other relevant agencies to align local planning efforts with regional air quality and greenhouse reduction targets, ensuring the City remains compliant with State requirements and identifying grant funding opportunities. Policy RM-5.5 directs the City to pursue grant opportunities and strategic partnerships to fund and implement clean air and

greenhouse gas reduction projects, including initiatives for community greening, zero-emission transportation, and building efficiency improvements.

Furthermore, the Circulation Element and Land Use Element contain goals, policies, and actions that promote non-vehicle travel and more efficient land uses. For example, Policy CIR-1.1 directs the City to design and maintain a multimodal street network that accommodates motorists and freight vehicles while ensuring safe and accessible travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Policy CIR-2.2 promotes the expansion of a high-quality bicycle infrastructure to support riders of all ages and abilities. Additionally, Policy LU-2.4 promotes the allowance and encouragement of infill development at densities consistent with applicable land use designations.

These General Plan policies and actions would minimize potential impacts associated with GHG emissions in the Planning Area from future development and improvement projects, and would comply with State requirements under AB 32, SB 375, and SB 32. Subsequent development projects will be required to comply with the General Plan and adopted federal, State, and local regulations, which would reduce GHG emissions at the project level.

In addition, the General Plan will not conflict with the implementation of the policies and supportive strategies in SJCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS. The 2022 RTP/SCS policies and supportive strategies are identified in Table ES.1 of the RTP/SCS and include the following:

- Policy: Enhance the Environment for Existing and Future Generations and Conserve Energy
- Policy: Maximize Mobility and Accessibility
- Policy: Increase Safety and Security
- Policy: Preserve the Efficiency of the Existing Transportation System
- Policy: Support Economic Vitality
- Policy: Promote Interagency Coordination and Public Participation for Transportation Decision-Making and Planning Efforts
- Policy: Maximize Cost Effectiveness
- Policy: Improve the Quality of Life for Residents

As demonstrated by the General Plan goals, policies, and actions listed below, the proposed General Plan is supportive and complimentary of the policies and strategies included in the 2022 RTP/SCS and would not conflict with implementation of this plan.

The 2022 RTP/SCS utilized a number of land use and travel demand modeling tools to determine projected population, employment, and VMT increases associated with buildout of the land uses in Mountain House as part of the RTP/SCS's overall analysis of per capita GHG emissions throughout the region. As noted in Chapter 5 of the 2022 RTP/SCS, the Plan meets the GHG targets established by the CARB (it explicitly outlines how the integrated plan achieves the SB 375 mandate of a 16 percent per-capita GHG reduction for passenger vehicles by the year 2035 compared to 2005 levels) (also refer to Appendix N and Appendix S of the 2022 RTP/SCS).

Separately, the proposed General Plan would not conflict with any of the other provisions of the CARB Scoping Plan or applicable regulations related to GHG reductions because the General Plan

includes a comprehensive approach to increasing mobility options, promoting a pedestrian- and bicycle-oriented development pattern, expanding transit access, and developing complete neighborhoods that accommodate a variety of housing types and are proximate to shopping, services, and jobs, and encourages development of infill sites. These comprehensive policy approaches serve to support regional and statewide efforts to reduce GHG emissions, including CARB's Scoping Plan and SJCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS through energy efficiency, green building, land use development, and the other policies and actions listed below. It should also be noted that, although that SJCOG is in the process of updating their RTP/SCS (2026 version), the proposed General Plan also does not conflict with the draft policies or strategic land use direction of the 2026 RTP/SCS.

Overall, subsequent development associated with implementation of the General Plan would be required to comply with regulations imposed by the State of California and the SJCOG, as well as the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions aimed at the reduction of air pollutant emissions. While compliance with relevant plans, policies, and regulations would reduce GHG emissions, the associated reductions of GHG emissions are not quantifiable, especially at the programmatic level. As such, even with implementation of the goals, policies, and actions contained in the proposed General Plan, there is no guarantee that the General Plan alone would be sufficient to limit GHGs to the extent required by AB 32, SB 375, SB 32, and other federal and State regulations. Therefore, as a conservative approach, General Plan implementation is considered to have the potential to generate GHG emissions that could have a significant impact on the environment and/or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. This impact is considered ***significant and unavoidable***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-1: Comprehensive Land Use Planning. A balanced land use pattern that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options, offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities, and promoting a robust local economy.

Policy LU-1.2: Complete Neighborhoods. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.3: Comprehensive Land Use Analysis. Land use decisions should include evaluation of both fiscal impacts (costs and revenues to the City) and qualitative community benefits, including public health, environmental quality, housing affordability, and equitable access to services, to ensure long-term community sustainability.

Policy LU-1.5: Town Center. Create opportunities for mixed-use development and pedestrian-friendly design within the Town Center to enable residents to live close to

businesses and employment, improving multi-modal travel and increasing social interaction.

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.4: Targeted Infill Development. Allow and encourage infill development at densities consistent with applicable land use designations. Design review for infill projects shall focus on compatibility of building materials, landscaping, and architectural quality, and shall not be used as a basis for reducing density or intensity below what is allowed by the applicable land use designation.

Policy LU-2.5: Land Use Compatibility. The City shall require that land use decisions and development approvals include analysis of compatibility between adjacent land uses, with particular attention to potential nuisance impacts (noise, odor, light, vibration, and truck traffic) on sensitive receptors including residences, schools, daycare centers, and medical facilities. The City shall require appropriate buffers, setbacks, landscaping, hours of operation restrictions, or architectural treatments to ensure compatibility and protect sensitive receptors from significant adverse impacts.

Policy LU-2.6: Mixed-Use Design Integration. Require residential and non-residential portions of mixed-use buildings and sites to be well-integrated through site and building design that ensures compatibility among different uses on the same site.

Policy LU-3.2: Pedestrian-Friendly Environments. Prioritize pedestrian-oriented design and connectivity in new developments by incorporating tree-lined sidewalks, active street fronts, and human-scale building frontages to create visually appealing, safe environments with seamless access to the surrounding street network.

Policy LU-3.6: Sustainable Design. Promote environmentally responsive design by integrating natural elements, such as drought tolerant landscaping, efficient irrigation systems, and energy-efficient building materials and design, into public and private spaces.

Circulation Element

Goal CIR-1: Safe and Complete Streets. A safe and efficient roadway system that accommodates all users and provides connections between neighborhoods, employment areas, and regional transportation corridors.

Policy CIR-1.1: Multimodal Street Network. The City shall design and maintain a multimodal street network that accommodates motorists and freight vehicles while ensuring safe and accessible travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-1.2: Complete Streets. The City shall plan, design, construct, and maintain transportation facilities as Complete Streets that provide safe, accessible, and convenient travel for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets features shall be incorporated into all new roadway construction and significant reconstruction projects.

Policy CIR-1.6: Connectivity. Maintain strong connectivity within the roadway network to distribute traffic and reduce congestion.

Policy CIR-1.7: Traffic Calming. Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods and near schools to promote safety and minimize cut-through traffic on local streets.

Policy CIR-1.8: Truck Routes. Maintain a network of designated local truck routes to facilitate goods movement to regional roads and to discourage the use of residential roads.

Policy CIR-1.9: Accessibility. Ensure transportation facilities remain accessible to mobility-impaired and visually impaired users, such as individuals with disabilities and seniors.

Action CIR-1c: Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods, including roundabouts, curb extensions, speed feedback signs, median islands, and raised crosswalks. Priority should be given to neighborhoods with a demonstrated need based on public outreach and other criteria that may include safety data, vehicle speeds/volumes, and pedestrian activity.

Action CIR-1g: Monitor traffic volumes and safety conditions through monitored TDMs along major corridors and update improvement priorities as needed.

Action CIR-1h: Review and update the City's designated truck routes as needed while considering the potential mobility conflicts and the location of sensitive land uses.

Goal CIR-2: Connected Active Transportation. A safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle network linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, commercial areas, and community destinations.

Policy CIR-2.1: Pedestrian Network. Develop and maintain a continuous pedestrian network that enhances walkability through safe and attractive pedestrian infrastructure.

Policy CIR-2.2: Bicycle Network. Expand high-quality bicycle infrastructure to support riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-2.5: Bicycle Facilities. Provide secure bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities at key destinations and qualifying private development projects.

Policy CIR-2.6: Multi-Use Trails Network. Expand and enhance the City's active transportation network by providing multi-use trails along creek and utilities corridors and open space areas.

Policy CIR-2.7: Walkable Neighborhoods. Encourage development patterns that support walkable neighborhoods.

Action CIR-2a: Continue to implement and periodically update the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

Action CIR-2b: Construct bicycle lanes and shared-use paths along key corridors, including Central Parkway, Great Valley Parkway, De Anza Boulevard, Arturo Boulevard, and Mustang Way.

Action CIR-2c: Improve pedestrian crossings near schools, parks, and community facilities.

Action CIR-2d: Install bicycle parking, lighting, and wayfinding signage at major destinations.

Action CIR-2e: Explore opportunities to incorporate multi-use trail connections along Mountain House Creek and open space corridors.

Action CIR-2f: Pursue State and federal funding programs for active transportation improvements such as those identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Goal CIR-3: Transit and Regional Connectivity: Improve connections between Mountain House and regional transportation systems while expanding local transit opportunities.

Policy CIR-3.1: Regional Transit Service. Support regional transit service connecting Mountain House with surrounding communities.

Policy CIR-3.2: Transit-Supportive Development. Encourage transit-supportive development in the Town Center and near major activity centers.

Policy CIR-3.3: First- and Last-Mile Connections. Improve first- and last-mile connections between neighborhoods and transit services.

Policy CIR-3.4: Mobility Hubs. Support the development of mobility hubs to serve as centralized, convenient points linking a variety of transportation options

Policy CIR-3.5: Regional Coordination. Coordinate with regional transit providers to expand transit service in Mountain House.

Policy CIR-3.6: Innovation. Support innovative transit options including micro-transit and on-demand services.

Action CIR-3a: Coordinate with regional transportation providers to expand transit service and provide enhanced amenities for safe and comfortable transit access.

Action CIR-3b: Identify and plan for mobility hub locations within the Town Center, adjacent to I-205 and major activity centers.

Action CIR-3c: Improve first- and last-mile connections through sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and wayfinding.

Action CIR-3d: Evaluate the feasibility of local shuttle, circulator services, or autonomous shuttle.

Action CIR-3e: Advocate for the development of a regional mobility hub in Mountain House that includes park-and-ride facilities serving regional transit routes.

Action CIR-3f: Partner with neighboring jurisdictions and regional transit providers to expand regional rail and bus transit projects serving Mountain House to include ACE and Valley Link.

Goal CIR-4: Sustainable Mobility: Promote transportation choices that reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and support environmental sustainability.

Policy CIR-4.1: Compact Development Patterns. Coordinate land use and transportation planning to support compact development patterns.

Policy CIR-4.2: Transportation Demand Management. The City shall continue to implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program consistent with the requirements of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and regional air quality plans. The TDM program shall include measures such as carpooling, vanpooling, telecommuting, transit subsidies, and bicycle facilities. The City shall continue to require TDM programs for major employers and large development projects as a condition of approval.

Policy CIR-4.3: Reduce VMT. Incorporate Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction strategies into land use and transportation decisions, including promoting infill development, mixed-use projects, transit-oriented design, and pedestrian-friendly environments that reduce the need for vehicle travel. New development projects shall be evaluated for VMT performance consistent with Action CIR-4a and State CEQA guidelines.

Policy CIR-4.4: Shared Mobility. Promote shared mobility services.

Policy CIR-4.5: Reduce GHG Emissions. Support strategies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Action CIR-4a: Require proposed development projects that could have a potentially significant VMT impact to consider reasonable and feasible project modifications, transportation demand management programs, and other measures during the project design and environmental review stage of project development that would reduce VMT effects in a manner consistent with State guidance on VMT reduction.

Action CIR-4b: Require new development to incorporate electric vehicle charging in accordance with the California Green Building Standards Code. Explore opportunities to install electric vehicle charging stations at public facilities.

Action CIR-4c: As need for transit grows, review and consider alternatives to conventional transit systems, such as smaller shuttle buses (micro-transit), on-demand transit services, or transportation networking company services that connect neighborhood centers to local and regional activity centers with greater cost efficiencies.

Action CIR-4d: As new and evolving transportation technologies and mobility services (e.g. autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, electric bicycles and scooters, micro-mobility options, transportation network companies, and smart cities infrastructure) are implemented and used by the public, review and update City policies and plans to maximize the benefit to the public of such technologies and services without adversely affecting the City's transportation network. Updates to the City's policies and plans may cover topics such as electric vehicle charging stations, smart parking sensors and curb space management, changes in parking supply requirements, policies regarding electric bicycle and scooter use, autonomous shuttle service, etc.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-1.6: Bicycle and Trail Network. Encourage a safe, accessible, and well-maintained bicycle and trail network that links neighborhoods with parks, open space areas, recreational trails, schools, and community destinations.

Goal RM-5: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions that support a healthier and more resilient community.

Policy RM-5.1: Regional Cooperation. Support regional efforts by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, California Air Resources Board, San Joaquin Council of Governments, regional transit providers, utilities, and other agencies to improve regional air quality and support implementation of greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies.

Policy RM-5.3: Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Support the implementation of regional and Statewide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals through coordination with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, and other responsible agencies. Align local planning efforts with applicable State climate laws and regional planning frameworks by incorporating greenhouse gas reduction strategies into City plans, programs, and development review processes.

Policy RM-5.4: Community Design. Promote land use patterns and community design that reduce vehicle trip lengths and support convenient access between neighborhoods, schools, parks, employment areas, and services.

Policy RM-5.5: Clean Air Funding Opportunities. Pursue grant opportunities and strategic partnerships to fund and implement clean air and greenhouse gas reduction

projects, including initiatives for community greening, zero-emission transportation, and building efficiency improvements.

Policy RM-5.6: Alternative Transportation. Promote transportation options such as walking, bicycling, transit, ridesharing, and other alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel in order to reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality.

Policy RM-5.7: Carbon Reduction. Expand the number of parks and trees in Mountain House to provide a larger carbon sink or area containing natural sources that retain more carbon than what those sources emit.

Policy RM-5.8: Public Education. Promote public awareness and community participation in efforts that improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and encourage sustainable transportation and energy use practices.

Action RM-5a: Review development applications, infrastructure projects, and planning efforts for consistency with applicable air quality and greenhouse gas requirements during discretionary project review and the CEQA process. Where appropriate, require project applicants to prepare technical analyses that address:

1. Construction and operational air pollutant emissions;
2. Potential exposure of sensitive receptors to roadway, stationary-source, and other pollutant sources;
3. Consistency with applicable greenhouse gas reduction requirements, plans, and thresholds; and
4. Feasible mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, or reduce identified impacts.

Action RM-5b: Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin Council of Governments, and other relevant agencies to align local planning efforts with regional air quality and greenhouse reduction targets, ensuring the City remains compliant with State requirements and identifying grant funding opportunities.

Action RM-5c: Review new development proposals for compliance with California Code of Regulations Title 24 standards and applicable State and local energy efficiency requirements as part of the City's development review process.

Action RM-5d: Review available grant programs and partnership opportunities annually to identify funding sources for community greening, zero-emission transportation infrastructure, building efficiency improvements, and other projects that improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Action RM-5e: Prepare and distribute educational materials on sustainable transportation choices, energy-efficient practices, and available incentive programs that support lower emissions and improved environmental quality.

Action RM-5f: Review City development standards, circulation improvements, and capital projects annually to identify opportunities to support walking, bicycling, transit access, electric vehicle infrastructure, and other measures that reduce vehicle emissions and greenhouse gas emissions.

Goal RM-6: Energy Resources: Reliable, efficient, and resilient energy systems that support long-term growth and sustainability.

Policy RM-6.1: Energy Compliance and Efficiency. Require new development and City operations to incorporate all applicable energy efficiency requirements and energy-saving design features.

Policy RM-6.2: Renewable Energy and Storage. Encourage the installation of renewable energy systems and battery storage, where feasible, and streamline permitting for rooftop solar and other clean energy technologies consistent with safety and design requirements.

Policy RM-6.4: Cooling Landscapes. Promote landscaping and site improvements that reduce building energy use, provide shade, and improve outdoor comfort while supporting water-efficient and sustainable site design.

Policy RM-6.5: EV Infrastructure Require electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in new development projects consistent with the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). The City shall encourage installation of EV charging at existing public facilities and private commercial centers and shall coordinate with utilities to support adequate electrical grid capacity for EV charging.

Policy RM-6.6: Building Electrification. Support new development and building improvements that incorporate electrification and other clean energy technologies over time.

Action RM-6a: Review development proposals to ensure that new residential and nonresidential development complies with applicable State and local energy efficiency requirements, including Energy Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6) and CALGreen (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11) standards and other adopted energy conservation requirements.

Action RM-6b: Coordinate annually with Modesto Irrigation District, PG&E, and other relevant agencies to review projected energy demand, service reliability, renewable energy opportunities, and infrastructure needs for existing neighborhoods, future growth areas, and critical facilities.

Action RM-6c: Apply landscaping and site design standards during project review that promote shade trees, cooling landscape features, and water-efficient planting to reduce heat gain and improve energy performance.

Action RM-6d: Maintain and periodically update City regulations, permitting materials, application checklists, and public information resources to support rooftop solar, battery storage, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and other clean energy improvements consistent with applicable safety and design requirements.

Action RM-6e: Evaluate City-owned and community-serving facilities on a regular basis to identify feasible energy efficiency upgrades, shade and landscape improvements, backup power systems, renewable energy installations, battery storage, and electrification measures for future budgeting and capital improvement planning.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Pollution Exposure & Air Quality. Improved air quality and reduced pollution exposure for all.

Policy EJ-1.1: Emission Sources. Encourage feasible measures to reduce emissions from transportation, construction, agricultural activities, and other pollution-generating sources, and promote land use planning, site design, and operational practices that minimize exposure to ozone, particulate matter, pesticides, and other harmful pollutants, especially near sensitive receptors.

Policy EJ-1.3: Regional Coordination. Coordinate with San Joaquin County and applicable agencies to address key pollution exposure concerns, including regional air quality, pesticide use, drinking water contaminants, groundwater threats, hazardous waste, and impaired water bodies.

Policy EJ-1.4: Green Infrastructure. Promote tree planting, landscaping, and green infrastructure that improve air quality, provide buffering, reduce heat, and support healthier neighborhoods.

Policy EJ-1.7: Truck Routes. The City shall not designate truck routes on non-arterial residential streets. When evaluating truck route designations, the City shall consider the potential for disproportionate noise, air quality, and safety impacts on residents, and shall require feasible mitigation for new freight corridors that would pass within 500 feet of sensitive receptors.

Action EJ-1a: During development review, require discretionary development, infrastructure, and long-range planning projects to evaluate construction and operational emissions, exposure of sensitive receptors, and include feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality and pollution exposure impacts, as appropriate.

Action EJ-1b: Coordinate with San Joaquin County and other applicable agencies to share information regarding pesticide use, poor air quality conditions, and other pollution exposure risks, and provide residents with accessible guidance on practical measures to reduce exposure.

Goal EJ-6: Unique or Compounded Health Risks: A healthier and more resilient community with reduced exposure to environmental hazards.

Policy EJ-6.1: Vulnerability Planning. Incorporate health, environmental, and infrastructure vulnerability considerations into City planning and decision-making, using available data to identify overlapping risks and prioritize mitigation, adaptation, and emergency response actions for vulnerable populations.

MITIGATION MEASURES

There is no feasible mitigation for this impact.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significant and Unavoidable.

Impact 3.7-2: General Plan implementation has the potential to result in a significant impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, or conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency (Less than Significant)

The State CEQA Guidelines require consideration of the potentially significant energy implications of a project. CEQA requires mitigation measures to reduce "wasteful, inefficient and unnecessary" energy usage (Public Resources Code Section 21100, subdivision [b][3]). According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the means to achieve the goal of conserving energy include decreasing overall energy consumption, decreasing reliance on natural gas and oil, and increasing reliance on renewable energy sources. In particular, a project would be considered "wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary" if it were to violate State and federal energy standards and/or result in significant adverse impacts related to project energy requirements, energy inefficiencies, energy intensiveness of materials, cause significant impacts on local and regional energy supplies or generate requirements for additional capacity, fail to comply with existing energy standards, otherwise result in significant adverse impacts on energy resources, or conflict or create an inconsistency with applicable plan, policy, or regulation.

The proposed Project is the Mountain House General Plan policy document. Buildout of the General Plan includes residential, commercial, office/industrial, mixed-use, open space, and other land uses (see Chapter 2.0, Project Description, for further detail). As previously discussed, the buildout projections are not a prediction for growth as the actual amount of development that will occur through the planning horizon of the General Plan is based on many factors outside of the City's control, including future real estate and labor market conditions, property owner preferences and decisions, and site-specific constraints. The amount of energy used in the Planning Area at buildout would directly correlate to the type and size of development, the energy consumption associated

with unit appliances, outdoor lighting, and energy use associated with other buildings and activities. Other major sources of Planning Area energy consumption include fuel used by vehicle trips generated during construction and operational activities, and fuel used by off-road and on-road construction vehicles during construction. The following discussion provides a breakdown of the energy uses in the Planning Area upon buildout of the proposed Project.

ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS

At buildout, the electricity and natural gas consumption would be used primarily to power buildings (all types of buildings, including residential, commercial, office, industrial, public, etc.). Electricity would primarily come from the electricity utility provider (MID), though on-site solar generation is anticipated to generate a substantial source of energy for the community at General Plan buildout.

FUEL CONSUMPTION - ON-ROAD VEHICLES (OPERATION)

Buildout of the General Plan would generate vehicle trips during its operational phase. As shown in Table 3.7-1, the proposed Project would generate approximately 1,946,093 daily VMT in the Planning Area under the proposed General Plan buildout scenario. Fuel consumption is anticipated to represent the largest sector of GHG emissions at General Plan buildout. Energy for on-road vehicles would be derived from gasoline, diesel, as well as electricity from MID and from on-site solar generation.

FUEL CONSUMPTION - ON-ROAD VEHICLES (CONSTRUCTION)

The proposed Project would also generate on-road vehicle trips during construction activities (from construction workers, vendors, and haulers). The vast majority of on-road mobile vehicle fuel used during the construction activities during buildout of the General Plan would occur during building construction.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES (CONSTRUCTION)

Off-road construction vehicles would use diesel fuel during construction activities. A non-exhaustive list of off-road constructive vehicles expected to be used during construction activities includes: cranes, forklifts, generator sets, tractors, excavators, and dozers.

CONCLUSION

Buildout of the General Plan would use energy resources for the operation of buildings (electricity and natural gas), for on-road vehicle trips (e.g., gasoline and diesel fuel), and from off-road construction activities (e.g., diesel fuel) associated with buildout of the General Plan. Each of these activities would require the use of energy resources. Developers of individual projects within the Planning Area would be responsible for conserving energy, to the extent feasible, and would rely heavily on reducing per capita energy consumption to achieve this goal, including through Statewide and local measures. For example, developers would be required to comply with the latest version of the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (CalGreen), the latest version of which is the 2025 version, which became effective on January 1, 2026. CalGreen requires developers to implement stringent

requirements for home insulation, energy efficiency of appliances, renewable energy, electric vehicle charging, water efficiency and conservation, construction waste reduction, indoor and outdoor air quality, material conservation and resource efficiency, and efficiency of building maintenance and operation.

Additionally, developers would be required to comply with proposed General Plan goals, policies and actions that reduce energy usage, promote renewable and/or alternative energy sources, and encourage pedestrian/bicycle modes of transportation, as identified under Impact 3.7-1. For example, Policy RM-1.6 encourages a safe, accessible, and well-maintained bicycle and trail network that links neighborhoods with parks, open space areas, recreational trails, schools, and community destinations. Policy RM-6.1 requires new development and City operations to incorporate all applicable energy efficiency requirements and energy-saving design features. Policy RM-6.2 encourages the installation of renewable energy systems and battery storage, where feasible, and streamline permitting for rooftop solar and other clean energy technologies consistent with safety and design requirements. Policy RM-6.4 promotes landscaping and site improvements that reduce building energy use, provide shade, and improve outdoor comfort while supporting water-efficient and sustainable site design. Additionally, the proposed General Plan prioritizes pedestrian-oriented design and connectivity in new developments, infill development, pedestrian features, and other land use strategies that reduce automobile travel, thereby reducing energy consumption.

Individual projects accommodated through implementation of the General Plan would comply with all applicable federal, State, and local regulations regulating energy usage. For example, MID is responsible for the mix of energy resources used to provide electricity for its customers, and it is in the process of implementing the Statewide RPS to increase the proportion of renewable energy (e.g., solar and wind) within its energy portfolio. MID is expected to achieve at least 60 percent renewables by 2030, and 100 percent zero-carbon electricity by 2045 (in compliance with SB 100). Additionally, energy-saving regulations, including the latest State Title 24 building energy efficiency standards (“part 6”), would be applicable to projects implemented under the proposed General Plan. Other Statewide measures, including those intended to improve the energy efficiency of the statewide passenger and heavy-duty truck vehicle fleet (e.g., the Pavley Bill and the Low Carbon Fuel Standard), would improve vehicle fuel economies, thereby conserving gasoline and diesel fuel. These energy savings would continue to accrue over time. Furthermore, additional project-specific sustainability features incorporated into the project design of individual development projects would further reduce energy consumption.

As a result, the proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse impacts related to energy requirements, energy use inefficiencies, and/or the energy intensiveness of materials by amount and fuel type for during General Plan buildout, including during construction, operations, maintenance, and/or removal. MID and PG&E, the local electricity and natural gas providers, respectively, maintain sufficient capacity to serve the Planning Area. The City of Mountain House would comply with all existing energy standards in implementing the General Plan project and would not result in significant adverse impacts on energy resources.

For the reasons stated above, buildout of the General Plan would not be expected to cause an inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary use of energy resources nor conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. This is a ***less than significant*** impact.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-1: Comprehensive Land Use Planning. A balanced land use pattern that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options, offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities, and promoting a robust local economy.

Policy LU-1.2: Complete Neighborhoods. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.5: Town Center. Create opportunities for mixed-use development and pedestrian-friendly design within the Town Center to enable residents to live close to businesses and employment, improving multi-modal travel and increasing social interaction.

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.4: Targeted Infill Development. Allow and encourage infill development at densities consistent with applicable land use designations. Design review for infill projects shall focus on compatibility of building materials, landscaping, and architectural quality, and shall not be used as a basis for reducing density or intensity below what is allowed by the applicable land use designation.

Policy LU-2.6: Mixed-Use Design Integration. Require residential and non-residential portions of mixed-use buildings and sites to be well-integrated through site and building design that ensures compatibility among different uses on the same site.

Policy LU-3.2: Pedestrian-Friendly Environments. Prioritize pedestrian-oriented design and connectivity in new developments by incorporating tree-lined sidewalks, active street fronts, and human-scale building frontages to create visually appealing, safe environments with seamless access to the surrounding street network.

Policy LU-3.6: Sustainable Design. Promote environmentally responsive design by integrating natural elements, such as drought tolerant landscaping, efficient irrigation systems, and energy-efficient building materials and design, into public and private spaces.

Circulation Element

Goal CIR-1: Safe and Complete Streets. A safe and efficient roadway system that accommodates all users and provides connections between neighborhoods, employment areas, and regional transportation corridors.

Policy CIR-1.1: Multimodal Street Network. The City shall design and maintain a multimodal street network that accommodates motorists and freight vehicles while ensuring safe and accessible travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-1.2: Complete Streets. The City shall plan, design, construct, and maintain transportation facilities as Complete Streets that provide safe, accessible, and convenient travel for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets features shall be incorporated into all new roadway construction and significant reconstruction projects.

Policy CIR-1.6: Connectivity. Maintain strong connectivity within the roadway network to distribute traffic and reduce congestion.

Policy CIR-1.7: Traffic Calming. Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods and near schools to promote safety and minimize cut-through traffic on local streets.

Policy CIR-1.8: Truck Routes. Maintain a network of designated local truck routes to facilitate goods movement to regional roads and to discourage the use of residential roads.

Action CIR-1c: Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods, including roundabouts, curb extensions, speed feedback signs, median islands, and raised crosswalks. Priority should be given to neighborhoods with a demonstrated need based on public outreach and other criteria that may include safety data, vehicle speeds/volumes, and pedestrian activity.

Action CIR-1g: Monitor traffic volumes and safety conditions through monitored TDMs along major corridors and update improvement priorities as needed.

Action CIR-1h: Review and update the City's designated truck routes as needed while considering the potential mobility conflicts and the location of sensitive land uses.

Goal CIR-2: Connected Active Transportation. A safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle network linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, commercial areas, and community destinations.

Policy CIR-2.1: Pedestrian Network. Develop and maintain a continuous pedestrian network that enhances walkability through safe and attractive pedestrian infrastructure.

Policy CIR-2.2: Bicycle Network. Expand high-quality bicycle infrastructure to support riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-2.5: Bicycle Facilities. Provide secure bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities at key destinations and qualifying private development projects.

Policy CIR-2.6: Multi-Use Trails Network. Expand and enhance the City's active transportation network by providing multi-use trails along creek and utilities corridors and open space areas.

Policy CIR-2.7: Walkable Neighborhoods. Encourage development patterns that support walkable neighborhoods.

Action CIR-2a: Continue to implement and periodically update the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

Action CIR-2b: Construct bicycle lanes and shared-use paths along key corridors, including Central Parkway, Great Valley Parkway, De Anza Boulevard, Arturo Boulevard, and Mustang Way.

Action CIR-2c: Improve pedestrian crossings near schools, parks, and community facilities.

Action CIR-2d: Install bicycle parking, lighting, and wayfinding signage at major destinations.

Action CIR-2e: Explore opportunities to incorporate multi-use trail connections along Mountain House Creek and open space corridors.

Action CIR-2f: Pursue State and federal funding programs for active transportation improvements such as those identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Goal CIR-3: Transit and Regional Connectivity: Improve connections between Mountain House and regional transportation systems while expanding local transit opportunities.

Policy CIR-3.1: Regional Transit Service. Support regional transit service connecting Mountain House with surrounding communities.

Policy CIR-3.2: Transit-Supportive Development. Encourage transit-supportive development in the Town Center and near major activity centers.

Policy CIR-3.3: First- and Last-Mile Connections. Improve first- and last-mile connections between neighborhoods and transit services.

Policy CIR-3.4: Mobility Hubs. Support the development of mobility hubs to serve as centralized, convenient points linking a variety of transportation options

Policy CIR-3.5: Regional Coordination. Coordinate with regional transit providers to expand transit service in Mountain House.

Policy CIR-3.6: Innovation. Support innovative transit options including micro-transit and on-demand services.

Action CIR-3a: Coordinate with regional transportation providers to expand transit service and provide enhanced amenities for safe and comfortable transit access.

Action CIR-3b: Identify and plan for mobility hub locations within the Town Center, adjacent to I-205 and major activity centers.

Action CIR-3c: Improve first- and last-mile connections through sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and wayfinding.

Action CIR-3d: Evaluate the feasibility of local shuttle, circulator services, or autonomous shuttle.

Action CIR-3e: Advocate for the development of a regional mobility hub in Mountain House that includes park-and-ride facilities serving regional transit routes.

Action CIR-3f: Partner with neighboring jurisdictions and regional transit providers to expand regional rail and bus transit projects serving Mountain House to include ACE and Valley Link.

Goal CIR-4: Sustainable Mobility: Promote transportation choices that reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and support environmental sustainability.

Policy CIR-4.1: Compact Development Patterns. Coordinate land use and transportation planning to support compact development patterns.

Policy CIR-4.2: Transportation Demand Management. The City shall continue to implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program consistent with the requirements of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and regional air quality plans. The TDM program shall include measures such as carpooling, vanpooling, telecommuting, transit subsidies, and bicycle facilities. The City shall continue to require TDM programs for major employers and large development projects as a condition of approval.

Policy CIR-4.3: Reduce VMT. Incorporate Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction strategies into land use and transportation decisions, including promoting infill development, mixed-use projects, transit-oriented design, and pedestrian-friendly environments that reduce the need for vehicle travel. New development projects shall be evaluated for VMT performance consistent with Action CIR-4a and State CEQA guidelines.

Policy CIR-4.4: Shared Mobility. Promote shared mobility services.

Policy CIR-4.5: Reduce GHG Emissions. Support strategies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Action CIR-4a: Require proposed development projects that could have a potentially significant VMT impact to consider reasonable and feasible project modifications, transportation demand management programs, and other measures during the

project design and environmental review stage of project development that would reduce VMT effects in a manner consistent with State guidance on VMT reduction.

Action CIR-4b: Require new development to incorporate electric vehicle charging in accordance with the California Green Building Standards Code. Explore opportunities to install electric vehicle charging stations at public facilities.

Action CIR-4c: As need for transit grows, review and consider alternatives to conventional transit systems, such as smaller shuttle buses (micro-transit), on-demand transit services, or transportation networking company services that connect neighborhood centers to local and regional activity centers with greater cost efficiencies.

Action CIR-4d: As new and evolving transportation technologies and mobility services (e.g. autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, electric bicycles and scooters, micro-mobility options, transportation network companies, and smart cities infrastructure) are implemented and used by the public, review and update City policies and plans to maximize the benefit to the public of such technologies and services without adversely affecting the City's transportation network. Updates to the City's policies and plans may cover topics such as electric vehicle charging stations, smart parking sensors and curb space management, changes in parking supply requirements, policies regarding electric bicycle and scooter use, autonomous shuttle service, etc.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-1.6: Bicycle and Trail Network. Encourage a safe, accessible, and well-maintained bicycle and trail network that links neighborhoods with parks, open space areas, recreational trails, schools, and community destinations.

Goal RM-5: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions that support a healthier and more resilient community.

Policy RM-5.1: Regional Cooperation. Support regional efforts by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, California Air Resources Board, San Joaquin Council of Governments, regional transit providers, utilities, and other agencies to improve regional air quality and support implementation of greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies.

Policy RM-5.2: Sensitive Receptor Protection. Protect sensitive receptors from exposure to substantial pollutant concentrations, toxic air contaminants, particulate matter, and objectionable odors by enforcing minimum separation buffers between sensitive land uses and major pollution sources, consistent with California Air Resources Board (CARB) and San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) guidelines. Individual projects that could pose potential health risks shall perform prioritization screening and/or prepare a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) following SJVAPCD methodologies. If an individual project HRA identifies health risks

exceeding applicable SJVAPCD significance thresholds, the project shall incorporate appropriate mitigation to reduce impacts to a less than significant level prior to project approval.

Policy RM-5.3: Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Support the implementation of regional and Statewide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals through coordination with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, and other responsible agencies. Align local planning efforts with applicable State climate laws and regional planning frameworks by incorporating greenhouse gas reduction strategies into City plans, programs, and development review processes.

Policy RM-5.4: Community Design. Promote land use patterns and community design that reduce vehicle trip lengths and support convenient access between neighborhoods, schools, parks, employment areas, and services.

Policy RM-5.5: Clean Air Funding Opportunities. Pursue grant opportunities and strategic partnerships to fund and implement clean air and greenhouse gas reduction projects, including initiatives for community greening, zero-emission transportation, and building efficiency improvements.

Policy RM-5.6: Alternative Transportation. Promote transportation options such as walking, bicycling, transit, ridesharing, and other alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel in order to reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality.

Policy RM-5.7: Carbon Reduction. Expand the number of parks and trees in Mountain House to provide a larger carbon sink or area containing natural sources that retain more carbon than what those sources emit.

Policy RM-5.8: Public Education. Promote public awareness and community participation in efforts that improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and encourage sustainable transportation and energy use practices.

Action RM-5a: Review development applications, infrastructure projects, and planning efforts for consistency with applicable air quality and greenhouse gas requirements during discretionary project review and the CEQA process. Where appropriate, require project applicants to prepare technical analyses that address:

1. Construction and operational air pollutant emissions;
2. Potential exposure of sensitive receptors to roadway, stationary-source, and other pollutant sources;
3. Consistency with applicable greenhouse gas reduction requirements, plans, and thresholds; and

4. Feasible mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, or reduce identified impacts.

Action RM-5b: Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin Council of Governments, and other relevant agencies to align local planning efforts with regional air quality and greenhouse reduction targets, ensuring the City remains compliant with State requirements and identifying grant funding opportunities.

Action RM-5c: Review new development proposals for compliance with California Code of Regulations Title 24 standards and applicable State and local energy efficiency requirements as part of the City's development review process.

Action RM-5d: Review available grant programs and partnership opportunities annually to identify funding sources for community greening, zero-emission transportation infrastructure, building efficiency improvements, and other projects that improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Action RM-5e: Prepare and distribute educational materials on sustainable transportation choices, energy-efficient practices, and available incentive programs that support lower emissions and improved environmental quality.

Action RM-5f: Review City development standards, circulation improvements, and capital projects annually to identify opportunities to support walking, bicycling, transit access, electric vehicle infrastructure, and other measures that reduce vehicle emissions and greenhouse gas emissions.

Goal RM-6: Energy Resources: Reliable, efficient, and resilient energy systems that support long-term growth and sustainability.

Policy RM-6.1: Energy Compliance and Efficiency. Require new development and City operations to incorporate all applicable energy efficiency requirements and energy-saving design features.

Policy RM-6.2: Renewable Energy and Storage. Encourage the installation of renewable energy systems and battery storage, where feasible, and streamline permitting for rooftop solar and other clean energy technologies consistent with safety and design requirements.

Policy RM-6.4: Cooling Landscapes. Promote landscaping and site improvements that reduce building energy use, provide shade, and improve outdoor comfort while supporting water-efficient and sustainable site design.

Policy RM-6.5: EV Infrastructure Require electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in new development projects consistent with the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). The City shall encourage installation of EV charging at existing public

facilities and private commercial centers and shall coordinate with utilities to support adequate electrical grid capacity for EV charging.

Policy RM-6.6: Building Electrification. Support new development and building improvements that incorporate electrification and other clean energy technologies over time.

Action RM-6a: Review development proposals to ensure that new residential and nonresidential development complies with applicable State and local energy efficiency requirements, including Energy Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6) and CALGreen (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11) standards and other adopted energy conservation requirements.

Action RM-6b: Coordinate annually with Modesto Irrigation District, PG&E, and other relevant agencies to review projected energy demand, service reliability, renewable energy opportunities, and infrastructure needs for existing neighborhoods, future growth areas, and critical facilities.

Action RM-6c: Apply landscaping and site design standards during project review that promote shade trees, cooling landscape features, and water-efficient planting to reduce heat gain and improve energy performance.

Action RM-6d: Maintain and periodically update City regulations, permitting materials, application checklists, and public information resources to support rooftop solar, battery storage, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and other clean energy improvements consistent with applicable safety and design requirements.

Action RM-6e: Evaluate City-owned and community-serving facilities on a regular basis to identify feasible energy efficiency upgrades, shade and landscape improvements, backup power systems, renewable energy installations, battery storage, and electrification measures for future budgeting and capital improvement planning.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Pollution Exposure & Air Quality. Improved air quality and reduced pollution exposure for all.

Policy EJ-1.1: Emission Sources. Encourage feasible measures to reduce emissions from transportation, construction, agricultural activities, and other pollution-generating sources, and promote land use planning, site design, and operational practices that minimize exposure to ozone, particulate matter, pesticides, and other harmful pollutants, especially near sensitive receptors.

Policy EJ-1.2: Sensitive Receptors. Ensure land use planning, development review, and site design protect homes, schools, parks, childcare facilities, and other sensitive receptors from major sources of pollution exposure.

Policy EJ-1.3: Regional Coordination. Coordinate with San Joaquin County and applicable agencies to address key pollution exposure concerns, including regional air quality, pesticide use, drinking water contaminants, groundwater threats, hazardous waste, and impaired water bodies.

Policy EJ-1.4: Green Infrastructure. Promote tree planting, landscaping, and green infrastructure that improve air quality, provide buffering, reduce heat, and support healthier neighborhoods.

Policy EJ-1.7: Truck Routes. The City shall not designate truck routes on non-arterial residential streets. When evaluating truck route designations, the City shall consider the potential for disproportionate noise, air quality, and safety impacts on residents, and shall require feasible mitigation for new freight corridors that would pass within 500 feet of sensitive receptors.

Action EJ-1a: During development review, require discretionary development, infrastructure, and long-range planning projects to evaluate construction and operational emissions, exposure of sensitive receptors, and include feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality and pollution exposure impacts, as appropriate.

Action EJ-1b: Coordinate with San Joaquin County and other applicable agencies to share information regarding pesticide use, poor air quality conditions, and other pollution exposure risks, and provide residents with accessible guidance on practical measures to reduce exposure.

Action EJ-1c: Identify priority areas for tree planting, landscape buffers, and green infrastructure near residential neighborhoods, schools, parks, high-traffic corridors, and agricultural edges to improve air quality, reduce heat, and provide separation from pollution sources.

Goal EJ-6: Unique or Compounded Health Risks: A healthier and more resilient community with reduced exposure to environmental hazards.

Policy EJ-6.1: Vulnerability Planning. Incorporate health, environmental, and infrastructure vulnerability considerations into City planning and decision-making, using available data to identify overlapping risks and prioritize mitigation, adaptation, and emergency response actions for vulnerable populations.

Policy EJ-6.3: Smoke and Air Quality. Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, San Joaquin County Health Care Services Agency, and local schools and community facility operators on preparedness for wildfire smoke, ozone, particulate matter, and other poor air quality events, including public alerts, exposure-reduction guidance, and identification of clean indoor air spaces or community facilities where feasible.

Action EJ-6b: Maintain and update public information on extreme heat safety, wildfire smoke exposure, flooding preparedness, drinking water quality, and hazardous materials incidents, including clear guidance on how residents can reduce exposure and access assistance.

Action EJ-6d: Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, and water and health agencies to review preparedness procedures for air quality emergencies, extreme heat events, flooding, and hazardous materials incidents.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant Impact.

3.7.4 REFERENCES

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Hazards include man-made or natural materials or man-made or natural conditions that may pose a threat to human health, life, property, or the environment. Hazardous materials and waste present health hazards for humans and the environment. These health hazards can result during the manufacture, transportation, use, or disposal of such materials if not handled properly. In the Planning Area, hazards to humans can also occur from natural or human induced wildfire and air traffic accidents.

This section provides a background discussion of the hazardous materials and waste, fire hazards, and hazards from air traffic related to the Planning Area. This section is organized with an existing setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis. Additional analysis related to wildfire hazards is contained in Section 3.16, Wildfire, of this EIR.

One comment was received during the NOP comment period regarding this environmental topic; refer to Appendix A. The comment letter from Aldara Salinas of the San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department, dated May 19, 2026, provides information related to California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) protocols for onsite hazardous materials and waste storage.

3.8.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTE

Hazardous Materials

A hazardous material is a substance or combination of substances which, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may either (1) cause or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating irreversible illness; or (2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health and safety, or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, or disposed. Hazardous materials are mainly associated with industries involving chemical byproducts from manufacturing, petrochemicals, and hazardous building materials.

Hazardous Waste

Hazardous waste is the subset of hazardous materials that have been abandoned, discarded, or recycled and is not properly contained, including contaminated soil or groundwater with concentrations of chemicals, infectious agents, or toxic elements sufficiently high to increase human mortality or to destroy the ecological environment. If a hazardous material is spilled and cannot be effectively picked up and used as a product, it is considered to be hazardous waste. If hazardous material is unused, and it is obvious there is no realistic intent to use the material, it is also considered to be a hazardous waste. Examples of hazardous materials include flammable and combustible materials, corrosives, explosives, oxidizers, poisons, materials that react violently with water, radioactive materials, and chemicals.

Transportation of Hazardous Materials

The transportation of hazardous materials within California is subject to various federal, State, and local regulations. It is illegal to transport explosives or inhalation hazards on any public highway not designated for that purpose, unless the use of the highway is required to permit delivery, or the loading of such materials (California Vehicle Code Section 31602(b), 32104(a)). The California Highway Patrol (CHP) designates routes to be used for the transportation of hazardous materials. Transportation of hazardous materials is restricted to these routes, except in cases where additional travel is required from that route to deliver or receive hazardous materials to and from users.

HAZARDOUS SITES

EnviroStor Data Management System

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) maintains the *EnviroStor Data Management System*, which provides information on hazardous waste facilities (both permitted and corrective action) as well as any available site cleanup information. This site cleanup information includes Federal Superfund Sites (NPL), State Response Sites, Voluntary Cleanup Sites, School Cleanup Sites, Corrective Action Sites, Tiered Permit Sites, and Evaluation / Investigation Sites. The hazardous waste facilities include: Permitted–Operating, Post-Closure Permitted, and Historical Non-Operating.

There are 14 locations listed within the Planning Area that are listed in the EnviroStor database, as shown in Table 3.8-1.[1] Of these:

- 11 sites have a status of “No Action” or “No Further Action”, meaning an investigation of the site found no contamination and/or that the property does not pose a problem to public health or the environment. The majority of these sites are school evaluation sites. All proposed school sites that will receive State funding for acquisition or construction are required to go through a rigorous environmental review and cleanup process under DTSC's oversight. The school sites listed in Table 3.8-1 were evaluated by DTSC but required no remedial action.
- One site has a status of “Active”, meaning an investigation and/or remediation is currently in progress and that DTSC is actively involved in either a lead or support capacity. This site is a proposed school located at 1200 and 1525 South Traditions Street. Based on the results of the Revised PEA Workplan, which concluded that historic agricultural practices at the site do not pose a threat to human health or the environment, the DTSC recommends no further action is necessary under DTSC oversight prior to the development of the site as a school.[2]

[1] Department of Toxic Substances Control. EnviroStor Site / Facility Search. Available at: https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/search?CMD=search&city=Mountain+House&zip=&county=&case_number=&business_name=&FEDERAL_SUPERFUND=True&STATE_RESPONSE=True&VOLUNTARY_CLEANUP=True&SCHOOL_CLEANUP=True&CORRECTIVE_ACTION=True&tiered_permit=True&evaluation=True&cvci=True&operating=True&post_closure=True&non_operating=True&inspections=True&inspectionsother=True. Accessed May 2026.

[2] Department of Toxic Substances Control. MOUNTAIN HOUSE PROPOSED SCHOOL (60003742). Available at: https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60003742. Accessed May 2026.

- One site has a status of "Refer: RWQCB", meaning based on limited information available to DTSC, the site appears to be more appropriately addressed by the California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB).
- One site has a status of "Certified / Operation & Maintenance", meaning that the site has a certified cleanup in place and all planned activities necessary to address the contamination problems have been implemented; however, ongoing operation and maintenance activities are required to complete cleanup. For the Great Valley Parkway (Former Shea Homes - Neighborhood C) site, a Land Use Covenant has been recorded. The site is currently undergoing annual inspections and a five-year review inspection with DTSC oversight.[3]

TABLE 3.8-1: MOUNTAIN HOUSE SITE CLEANUP AND HAZARDOUS FACILITIES LIST (ENVIROSTOR)

Name	Program Type	Status	Address
Delta Express Inc	Inspection	No Action	498 Orinda Ct
Evelyn Costa Elementary School	School Evaluation	No Further Action	1675 South Gobind Boulevard
Great Valley Parkway (Former Shea Homes - Neighborhood C)	Voluntary Cleanup	Certified / Operation & Maintenance - Land Use Restrictions	19855 West Grant Line Road
Mountain House Development Site #3	Voluntary Cleanup	Refer: RWQCB	West Byron Road
Mountain House Proposed School	School Evaluation	Active	1200 And 1525 S. Traditions Street
Neighborhood E School	School Evaluation	No Further Action	Mountain House Parkway/Byron Road
Neighborhood G School	School Evaluation	No Further Action	Kelso Road/Byron Road
Neighborhood J School Site - Mountain House	School Evaluation	No Further Action	Calabria Drive And Robiolo Lane
Proposed Hansen Elementary School (Neighborhood C)	School Evaluation	No Action Required	1185 Vecindad Street
Proposed Julius Cordes Elementary School (Neighborhood D)	School Evaluation	No Further Action	397 East Ramsey Drive
Proposed Mountain House High School	School Evaluation	No Further Action	Mascot Boulevard/Central Parkway
Proposed Mountain House High School	School Evaluation	No Further Action	Neighborhood "D" Mascot Boulevard

[3] Department of Toxic Substances Control. GREAT VALLEY PARKWAY (FORMER SHEA HOMES - NEIGHBORHOOD C) (60000564). Available at: https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report.asp?global_id=60000564. Accessed May 2026.

Name	Program Type	Status	Address
Proposed Questa Elementary School (Neighborhood H)	School Evaluation	No Further Action	650 Esplanade Drive
Bethany Elementary	School Evaluation	No Further Action	Patterson Pass Road

Source: California Department of Toxic Substances Control, EnviroStor Database, May 2026.

CORTESE LIST

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies, and developers to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. The DTSC is responsible for a portion of the information contained in the Cortese List. Other State and local government agencies are required to provide additional hazardous material release information for the Cortese List. There are no hazardous materials release sites located in the Planning Area on the Cortese List.[4,5]

GEOTRACKER

GeoTracker is the State Water Resource Control Board's data management system for managing data related to authorized and unauthorized discharges, especially those that may impact groundwater and require cleanup such as Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites, Military sites, and Cleanup Program Sites.

Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST)

LUST sites refer to Underground Storage Tank (UST) sites that have had an unauthorized release (i.e. leak or spill) of a hazardous substance, usually fuel hydrocarbons, and are being (or have been) cleaned up. There are no LUST sites in the Planning Area.[6]

Cleanup Program Sites

Cleanup Program sites refer to all non-federally owned sites that are regulated under the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB's) Site Cleanup Program and/or similar programs conducted by each of the nine RWQCBs. These can include but are not limited to pesticide and fertilizer facilities, rail yards, equipment supply facilities, metals facilities, industrial manufacturing

[4] California Environmental Protection Agency. Cortese List Data Resources. Available at: https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/. Accessed May 2026.

[5] Department of Toxic Substances Control. Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (Cortese). Available at: https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/search?cmd=search&reporttype=CORTESE&site_type=CSITES,FUDS&status=ACT,BKLG,COM&reporttitle=HAZARDOUS+WASTE+AND+SUBSTANCES+SITE+LIST+%28CORTESE%29. Accessed May 2026.

[6] State Water Resources Control Board. GeoTracker Database. Available at: https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/?CMD=runreport&myaddress=Sacramento. Accessed May 2026.

and maintenance sites, dry cleaners, bulk transfer facilities, refineries, landfills, and some brownfields.

There is one open Cleanup Site located in the Planning Area: the Vacant Property Mountain House site (T10000016867) located at 23577 South Mountain House Parkway.[7] The site is listed as "Open – Assessment and Interim Remedial Action" as of January 21, 2021, meaning interim remedial action is occurring at the site and additional activities such as site characterization, investigation, risk evaluation, and/or site conceptual model development are occurring as of that date.

SOLID WASTE INFORMATION SYSTEM (SWIS)

Facility/Site Listing

The Solid Waste Information System (SWIS) is a database of solid waste facilities that is maintained by the California's Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). The SWIS database contains information on solid waste facilities, operations, and disposal sites throughout the State of California. The types of facilities found in this database include landfills, transfer stations, material recovery facilities, composting sites, transformation facilities, waste tire sites, and closed disposal sites. For each facility, the database contains information about location, owner, operator, facility type, regulatory and operational status, authorized waste types, local enforcement agency and inspection and enforcement records.

There are no solid waste facilities listed in the database within the Planning Area.[8] SWIS facility/site search details for all ten active and permitted sites within San Joaquin County are listed in Table 3.8-2 below.

TABLE 3.8-2: SWIS FACILITY/SITE – SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY (ACTIVE AND PERMITTED SITES ONLY)

SWIS Number	Site Name	Site Regulatory Status	Site Operational Status
39-AA-0004	Foothill Sanitary Landfill	Permitted	Active
39-AA-0008	Lovelace Transfer Station	Permitted	Active
39-AA-0015	Foothill Sanitary Landfill	Permitted	Active
39-AA-0017	Central Valley Waste Services	Permitted	Active
39-AA-0018	GreenWaste Stockton Material Recovery Facility and Transfer Station	Permitted	Active
39-AA-0020	Forward Resource Recovery Facility	Permitted	Active
39-AA-0022	North County Landfill & Recycling Center	Permitted	Active
39-AA-0024	Tracy Material Recovery & T.S.	Permitted	Active

[7] State Water Resources Control Board. GeoTracker Database. VACANT PROPERTY MOUNTAIN HOUSE (T10000016867). Available at: https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/profile_report.asp?global_id=T10000016867. Accessed May 2026.
[8] California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). SWIS Facility/Site Search. Available at: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/Site/Search. Accessed May 2026.

SWIS Number	Site Name	Site Regulatory Status	Site Operational Status
39-AA-0045	Clean Planet, Inc.	Permitted	Active
39-AA-0051	Central Valley Compost	Permitted	Active

Source: California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). SWIS Facility/Site Search. Available at: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/Site/Search. Accessed May 2026.

OTHER POTENTIAL HAZARDS

Aircraft and Airport Facilities

There are no local, major, military, or private airports located within the Planning Area. The nearest airports include the Byron and Tracy Municipal Airports.

Byron Airport

The Byron Airport is located in Contra Costa County, approximately four miles northwest of the Planning Area. Byron Airport is a general aviation airport that opened to the public in 1994. It serves the eastern part of Contra Costa County and is a popular base for skydivers, gliders, and other recreational flight activities.[9]

Airfield Configuration: Byron Airport is served by two runways. Runway 5-23 is 3,000 feet long and 75 feet wide, and is oriented to the northeast and southwest. Runway 12-30 is 4,500 feet long and 100 feet wide and aligned to the northwest and southeast. The Byron Airport Master Plan (2005) did not anticipate any change to the runways within the 20-year planning period. It did, however, make a strategic recommendation to extend Runway 12-30 to 6,000 feet and Runway 05-23 to 3,900 feet to better accommodate corporate jet activity.[10]

Airport Activity: The 2022 Byron Airport background data update in the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) accounted for approximately 83,075 annual aircraft operations in 2022 and predicted there would be 190,200 annual operations in the future.

Airport Influence Area: The airport influence area boundary is defined by the outer edge of the airport's conical surface as defined by Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 77, Safe, Efficient Use and Preservation of Navigable Airspace.[11]

The Planning Area is not within the Byron Airport Influence Area and is outside of its safety zones and noise contours. A small northwest portion of the Planning Area is within a Federal Aviation

[9] Contra Costa Public Works. Byron Airport. Available at: https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/3802/Byron-Airport-C83. Accessed May 2026.

[10] Leigh Fisher Associates. Byron Airport Master Plan. 2005. Available at: https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/3958/Byron-Airport-Master-Plan. Accessed May 2026.

[11] Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission, Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, Adopted December 2000. Available at: https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/851/Cover-Introduction-and-County-wide-Policies?bidId=. Accessed May 2026.

Administration (FAA) Height Notification zone, which states that based on Federal Aviation Records (FAR) Part 77, the FAA shall be notified of any proposed construction or alteration having a height greater than an imaginary surface extending 100 feet outward and 1 foot upward (slope of 100 to 1) for a distance of 20,000 feet from the nearest point of any runway (see Figure 4D in Chapter 6, Background Data: Byron Airport, of the Contra Costa County ALUCP).

Tracy Municipal Airport

The Tracy Municipal Airport is a general aviation airport located approximately 5.8 miles southeast of the Planning Area in San Joaquin County that serves private, business, and corporate tenants and customers. It is owned and operated by the City of Tracy and opened in 1929.

Airfield Configuration: Tracy Municipal Airport is served by two runways: 8-26 and 12-30. Runway 8-26 is 3,438 feet long and oriented east-west. Runway 12-30 is 4,002 feet long and aligned to the northwest-southeast. The 1998 Airport Master Plan for Tracy Municipal Airport has no plans for extending either runway.[12]

Airport Activity: The 20-year forecast is based upon the 1998 Airport Master Plan for Tracy Municipal Airport. The long-range operations are forecast to reach 107,200 at Tracy Municipal Airport.

Airport Influence Area: The Planning Area is not within the Tracy Municipal Airport Influence Area and is outside of its safety zones and noise contours, as shown in Exhibit 3TM-1 in the San Joaquin County ALUCP.

Other Local airport facilities near Mountain House

Other local airport facilities near the City include New Jerusalem Airport in Tracy, California, approximately 13 miles from the Planning Area; Livermore Municipal Airport in Livermore, California, approximately 14 miles from the Planning Area; and Oakdale Airport in Oakdale, California, approximately 40 miles from the Planning Area. The Planning Area is not within the Airport Influence Area of any of these airports.

Wildland Fire Hazards

The State has charged the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) with the identification of Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) within State Responsibility Areas (SRA) and Local Responsibility Areas (LRA). FHSZs are classified as moderate, high, and very high. The FHSZ maps are used by the State Fire Marshall as a basis for the adoption of applicable building code standards. On July 23, 2025, the Mountain House City Council adopted an ordinance designating FHSZs within LRA based on CAL FIRE's recommendations. Figure 3.16-1 shows FHSZs within the Planning Area. As shown, portions of Mountain House and the surrounding area are classified as Moderate and High FHSZs.

[12] Coffman Associates, Inc. San Joaquin County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Update. July 2009, Amended January 2018. Available at: https://www.sjcog.org/DocumentCenter/View/17/2009-San-Joaquin-County-ALUCP---Amended-January-2018?bidId=. Accessed May 2026.

LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

The Planning Area is located within an LRA. CAL FIRE has not identified any Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) within the Planning Area. As shown, there are limited areas designated as Moderate and High FHSZs within the southwestern portion of the Planning Area, generally located south of Grant Line Road and west of Central Parkway.

STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

There are no SRAs within the Planning Area. Moderate to High FHSZs in SRAs are located along the southwestern SOI boundary and expand into Alameda County.

3.8.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Aviation Act of 1958

The Federal Aviation Act resulted in the creation of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), charged with the creation and maintenance of a National Airspace System.

Federal Aviation Regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 14)

Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) establishes regulations related to aircraft, aeronautics, and inspection and permitting. Part 77 establishes standards and notification requirements for objects affecting navigable airspace. This notification allows the FAA to identify potential aeronautical hazards in advance thus preventing or minimizing the adverse impacts to the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace.

Clean Air Act

The federal Clean Air Act (CAA) was first signed into law in 1970 and was substantially amended in 1977 and 1990. The CAA is the foundation for a national air pollution control effort and is composed of the following basic elements: National Ambient Air Quality Standards for criteria air pollutants; hazardous air pollutant standards; State attainment plans; motor vehicle emissions standards; stationary source emissions standards and permits; acid rain control measures; stratospheric ozone protection; and enforcement provisions.

The CAA's air toxics provisions require the EPA to develop and enforce regulations to protect the public from exposure to airborne contaminants that are known to be hazardous to human health. In accordance with CAA Section 112, the EPA has established National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants. This list of hazardous air pollutants includes specific compounds that are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects.

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA), which amended the Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, sets forth the Section 404 program to regulate the discharge of dredged and fill material into Waters of the United States and the Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) to regulate the

discharge of pollutants into Waters of the United States. The Section 401 Water Quality Certification program establishes a framework of water quality protection for activities requiring a variety of Federal permits and approvals (including CWA Section 404, CWA Section 402, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Hydropower and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act).

Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. EPA is the agency primarily responsible for enforcement and implementation of Federal laws and regulations pertaining to hazards and hazardous materials. These laws include requirements for facilities that process hazardous materials (i.e., treatment, storage, disposal). U.S. EPA provides oversight for Federal Superfund investigation/remediation projects, evaluates remediation technologies, and develops hazardous materials disposal restrictions and treatment standards.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, as amended by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) establishes the framework for a national system of solid waste control. This act established EPA's "cradle to grave" control (generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal) over hazardous materials and wastes. RCRA Subtitle C establishes standards for the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste in the United States. In California, the DTSC has authorization to implement the RCRA Subtitle C requirements and the associated regulations.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act and the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980 introduced active federal involvement to emergency response, site remediation, and spill prevention, most notably the Superfund program. CERCLA was intended to be comprehensive in encompassing both the prevention of, and response to, uncontrolled hazardous material releases, as well as addressing environmental response, providing mechanisms for reacting to emergencies and to chronic hazardous material releases. In addition to establishing procedures to prevent and remedy problems, CERCLA establishes a system for compensating appropriate individuals and assigning appropriate liability. It is designed to plan for and respond to failure in other regulatory programs and to remedy problems resulting from action taken before the era of comprehensive regulatory protection.

The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) amended CERCLA in October of 1986. SARA required Superfund actions to consider the requirements found in other State and Federal laws, provided new enforcement authorities and settlement tools, and increased State involvement in each phase of the Superfund program. SARA also required the EPA to revise the Hazard Ranking System (HRS), which is the tool the EPA uses to place uncontrolled waste sites on the National Priorities List. The HRS was modified to accurately assess the sites and their risk to human health and the environment.

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) of 1986 was established under Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act. It requires industries to report the storage, use, and release of specific chemicals to federal, State, tribal, territorial, and local authorities. These reports are also used to form strategies to prepare and protect communities from potential risks.

Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 amended the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act). It created the framework for state, local, territorial, and tribal authorities to engage in hazard mitigation planning in order to receive specific types of non-emergency disaster assistance. Additional laws have been passed since the establishment of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 to help shape hazard mitigation policy.

Toxic Substances Control Act

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 provides the EPA with authority to regulate standards related to chemical substances and mixtures, such as reporting, testing requirements, and restrictions. TSCA addresses the production, importation, use, and disposal of particular chemicals such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), asbestos, radon, and lead-based paint. The EPA evaluates new and existing chemicals, along with their risks, and proposes strategies to prevent or reduce pollution.

National Response Framework

The National Response Framework (NRF) was created as a guide to explain how the U.S. responds to all types of disasters and emergencies, including natural disasters, man-made hazards, and cyberattacks. With its support from the National Incident Management System, the NRF helps jurisdictions, citizens, businesses, and nongovernmental organizations develop community and continuity plans.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act

The Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, as amended, is the statute regulating hazardous materials transportation in the United States. The purpose of the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act is to provide adequate protection against the risks to life and property inherent in transporting hazardous materials in interstate commerce, giving USDOT and other agencies the authority to issue and enforce rules and regulations governing the safe transportation of hazardous materials.

Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act

The Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act authorizes the USDOT Office of Pipeline Safety to regulate pipeline transportation of natural (flammable, toxic, or corrosive) gas and other gases as well as the transportation and storage of liquefied natural gas. The Office of Pipeline Safety regulates the design, construction, inspection, testing, operation, and maintenance of pipeline facilities. While the

federal government is primarily responsible for developing, issuing, and enforcing pipeline safety regulations, the pipeline safety statutes provide for state assumption of the intrastate regulatory, inspection, and enforcement responsibilities under an annual certification. To qualify for certification, a state must adopt the minimum federal regulations and may adopt additional or more stringent regulations as long as they are not incompatible.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is the federal agency responsible for ensuring worker safety. These regulations provide standards for safe workplaces and work practices, including those relating to hazardous materials handling.

STATE

Airport Land Use Commission Law (Public Utilities Code Section 21670 et seq.)

The Airport Land Use Commission Law, passed in 1967, authorized the creation of ALUCs in California. Per the Public Utilities Code, the purpose of an ALUC is to protect public health, safety, and welfare by encouraging orderly expansion of airports and the adoption of land use measures that minimizes exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards within areas around public airports to the extent that these areas are not already devoted to incompatible uses (Public Utilities Code Section 21670). Furthermore, each ALUC must prepare an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). Each ALUCP must be based on a twenty-year planning horizon and should focus on broadly defined noise and safety impacts.

California Environmental Protection Agency

The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) develops, implements, and enforces environmental laws that regulate air, water, soil, pesticide use, and waste recycling and reduction. CalEPA consists of the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR), the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

State Oversight of Hazards and Hazardous Materials

DTSC is primarily responsible for regulating the handling, use, and disposal of toxic materials. The SWRCB regulates discharge of potentially hazardous materials to waterways and aquifers and administers the basin plans for groundwater resources in the various regions of the state. The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) oversees surface and groundwater. Programs intended to protect workers from exposure to hazardous materials and from accidental upset are covered under OSHA at the federal and state level (Cal OSHA) and the California Department of Health Services at the state level. Air quality is regulated through CARB and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). The State Fire Marshal is responsible for the protection of life and property through the development and application of fire prevention engineering,

education, and enforcement; CAL FIRE provides fire protection services for State and privately-owned wildlands.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) serve over 31 million acres of California's privately-owned wildlands. The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection is a government-appointed body within CAL FIRE. It is responsible for developing the general forest policy of the state, for determining CAL FIRE's guidance policies, and for representing the State's interest in federal forestland in California.

Assembly Bill (AB) 337, requires CAL FIRE to assess fire risks in certain areas and identify places that are at high risk for fires. Senate Bill (SB) 63 requires FHSZ classifications for Moderate, High, and Very High zones. AB 211 requires local agencies to adopt Moderate, High, and Very High FHSZ designations within 120 days of the state recommendations.

California Code of Regulations

Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) pertains to the application of pesticides and related chemicals. Parties applying regulated substances must continuously evaluate application equipment, the weather, the treated lands, and all surrounding properties. CCR Title 3 prohibits any application that would:

- Contaminate persons not involved in the application;
- Damage non-target crops or animals or any other public or private property; and
- Contaminate public or private property or create health hazards on said property.

Title 8 of the CCR establishes California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal OSHA) requirements related to public and worker protection. Topics addressed in CCR Title 8 include materials exposure limits, equipment requirements, protective clothing, hazardous materials, and accident prevention. Construction safety and exposure standards for lead and asbestos are set forth in CCR Title 8.

Title 14 of the CCR establishes minimum standards for solid waste handling and disposal.

Title 17 of the CCR establishes regulations relating to the use and disturbance of materials containing naturally occurring asbestos.

Title 19 of the CCR establishes a variety of emergency fire response, fire prevention, and construction and construction materials standards.

Title 22 of the CCR sets forth definitions of hazardous waste and special waste. The section also identifies hazardous waste criteria and establishes regulations pertaining to the storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous waste.

Title 26 of the CCR is a combination of state regulations pertaining to hazardous materials and waste that are presented in other regulatory sections. CCR Title 26 mandates specific management criteria related to hazardous materials identification, packaging, and disposal. In addition, CCR Title 26

establishes requirements for hazardous materials transport, containment, treatment, and disposal. Finally, staff training standards are set forth in CCR Title 26.

Title 27 of the CCR sets forth a variety of regulations relating to the construction, operation, and maintenance of the state's landfills. CCR Title 27 establishes a landfill classification system and categories of waste. Each class of landfill is constructed to contain specific types of waste (household, inert, special, and hazardous).

California Department of Conservation, California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM)

CalGEM is responsible for implementing PRC Section 3208.1, which authorizes CalGEM to order the reabandonment of a previously abandoned well when construction of any structure over or in proximity to a well could result in a hazard. CalGEM's Construction Site Well Review Program assists local permitting agencies in identifying and reviewing the status of oil or gas wells located near or beneath proposed structures. Before issuing building or grading permits, local permitting agencies review and implement CalGEM's preconstruction well requirements.

California Health and Safety Code

Division 11 of the California Health and Safety Code establishes regulations related to a variety of explosive substances and devices, including high explosives and fireworks. Section 12000 et seq. establishes regulations related to explosives and explosive devices, including permitting, handling, storage, and transport (in quantities greater than 1,000 pounds).

California Health and Safety Code Division 12 establishes requirements for buildings used by the public, including essential services buildings, earthquake hazard mitigation technologies, school buildings, and postsecondary buildings. Section 13000 et seq. establishes state fire regulations and broadly applicable regulations, such as standards for buildings and fire protection devices, in addition to regulations for specific land uses, such as childcare facilities and high-rise structures.

California Health and Safety Code Division 20 establishes DTSC authority and sets forth hazardous waste and underground storage tank regulations. In addition, the division creates a state superfund framework that mirrors the Federal program.

California Health and Safety Code Division 26 establishes California Air Resources Board (CARB) authority. The division designates CARB as the air pollution control agency per federal regulations and charges the Board with meeting CAA requirements.

California Health and Safety Code Section 17920.10 defines "lead hazards" as deteriorated lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust, lead-contaminated soil, or disturbing lead-based paint without containment, when present in amounts equal to or exceeding thresholds established in regulations and likely to endanger public or occupant health due to proximity. The section specifies that in the absence of new regulations from the State Department of Health Services, existing regulations in Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations interpret key terms like "deteriorated lead-based paint" and "lead-contaminated dust".

California Health and Safety Code Section 105256 outlines the authority and penalties related to lead-based paint hazard abatement. It states that when the department or a local enforcement agency determines that a condition at a location or premises, or the activity of any person, is creating or has created a lead hazard, they may order the owner to abate or correct the hazard, or order the person whose activity is creating the hazard to cease and desist, providing a reasonable opportunity to correct the issue. It is unlawful for any person to refuse or disobey such an order, and a violation of this provision is punishable by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars ($1,000).

California Vehicle Code Section 31600 (Transportation of Explosives)

The California Vehicle Code establishes requirements related to the transportation of explosives in quantities greater than 1,000 pounds, including licensing and route identification.

California Public Resources Code

The State's fire safety regulations are set forth in PRC Section 4290, which include the establishment of SRA.

PRC Section 4291 sets forth defensible space requirements, which are applicable to anyone who "…owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, grass-covered lands, or land that is covered with flammable material" (Section 4291(a)).

California Building Code (California Code of Regulations Title 24)

The California Building Code (CBC) contains general building design and construction requirements relating to fire and life safety, structural safety, and access compliance. CBC provisions provide minimum standards to safeguard life or limb, health, property, and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all buildings and structures and certain equipment. Chapter 7A of the CBC, specifically addresses wildfire exposure, mandating fire-resistant construction for new buildings and structures in designated high-risk areas, including the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI). This code focuses on preventing the intrusion of flames and embers, thereby reducing conflagration losses

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code (CCR Title 24, Part 9) establishes regulations to safeguard against the hazards of fire, explosion, or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures, and premises. The Fire Code also establishes requirements intended to provide safety for and assistance to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. The provisions of the Fire Code apply to the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal, and demolition of every building or structure throughout California. The Fire Code includes regulations regarding fire-resistance-rated construction, fire protection systems such as alarm and sprinkler systems, fire services features such as fire apparatus access roads, means of egress, fire safety during construction and demolition, and wildland-urban interface areas.

Water Code

Division 7 of the California Water Code, commonly referred to as the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, created the SWRCB and the RWQCB. In addition, water quality responsibilities are established for the SWRCB and RWQCBs. The California Water Code regulates discharges such as hazardous substances, requires permits for certain activities, and addresses various sources of pollution. The Act also includes standards to ensure adequate protection of water quality and statewide uniformity in the siting, operation, and closure of specific waste disposal sites.

LOCAL

San Joaquin County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Amended January 2018)

Airport Land Use Commission Law (Public Utilities Code §21670 et seq.) passed in 1967, authorized the creation of Airport Land Use Commissions (ALUC) in California. Per the Public Utilities Code, the purpose of an ALUC is to protect public health, safety, and welfare by encouraging orderly expansion of airports and the adoption of land use measures that minimizes exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards within areas around public airports to the extent that these areas are not already devoted to incompatible uses (§21670). Furthermore, each ALUC must prepare an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). Each ALUCP, which must be based on a twenty-year planning horizon, should focus on broadly defined noise and safety impacts.

The San Joaquin County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) includes all components of the Updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan for five of the six public-use airports within San Joaquin County: Kingdom Airpark, Lodi Airpark, Lodi Airport, New Jerusalem Airport, and Tracy Municipal Airport.[13] A separate ALUCP addresses the Stockton Metropolitan Airport. Additionally, the San Joaquin County ALUCP includes policies for the portion of the County affected by the operations at Byron Airport in neighboring Contra Costa County.

Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Adopted December 2000)

Adopted by the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission, the plan serves as a tool for use by the commission in fulfilling its duty to review airport and adjacent land use development proposals.[14] The plan is primarily concerned with the land uses near the Byron Airport and the Buchanan Field Airport. Although the authority of the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use

[13] San Joaquin County, San Joaquin County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Update, Amended 2018. Available at: https://www.sjcog.org/DocumentCenter/View/17/2009-San-Joaquin-County-ALUCP---Amended-January-2018?bidId=. Accessed May 2026.

[14] Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission, Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, Adopted December 2000. Available at: https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/851/Cover-Introduction-and-County-wide-Policies?bidId=. Accessed May 2026.

Commission does not extend into Alameda and San Joaquin County, policies in the Compatibility Plan address the importance of regional coordination on airport land use compatibility matters.

San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department

The San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department is the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for San Joaquin County and is responsible for consolidating, coordinating, and making consistent the administrative requirements, permitting, inspection activities, and enforcement activities for hazardous waste and hazardous materials programs in the County, including the City. The San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department administers the Hazardous Material Business Plan, California Accidental Release Prevention (Cal-ARP), Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act, Hazardous Waste Generator, Hazardous Waste Onsite Treatment (Tiered Permitting) and Underground Storage Tank program.

San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) was last updated in January 2023 in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000. It is a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan that covers the County's geographical area and was developed with input from various San Joaquin County departments, four cities within the County, and other agencies. The LHMP is intended to guide hazard mitigation planning to reduce the effects of hazard events, including wildfires.

San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services

The San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services (OES) provides emergency management services in cooperation with local cities and special districts. The OES is the key disaster preparedness office of the County and has direct responsibility to support and coordinate the efforts of County departments carrying out their functions in the field. To ensure a coordinated response to their disaster needs, OES also provides disaster information, logistical support, facilitates mutual aid requests, and facilitates inter-jurisdictional coordination with agencies from eight cities, 120 special districts, and locally based State and federal agencies.

San Joaquin County Emergency Operations Plan

The San Joaquin County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) was developed by the San Joaquin County OES and adopted on February 17, 2022. The EOP establishes the County's emergency management structure, overall operational concepts, and provides the guidelines needed for emergency response planning, preparation, training and execution throughout unincorporated San Joaquin County. The EOP also facilitates and/or coordinates information, resources, and decisions regarding priorities among local governments within the Operational Area, which includes the City of Mountain House.

Mountain House Municipal Emergency Management Plan

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) addresses the City's planned response to emergency situations. It outlines the City's protocols related to emergency operations and

preparedness and conforms with the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

City of Mountain House Municipal Code

Title 4, Division 1, *Fire Prevention*, of the Mountain House Municipal Code adopts and establishes the California Fire Code, as adopted by the California Building Standards Commission in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. These provisions establish local fire prevention and fire safety requirements applicable to development, building occupancy, emergency access, fire protection systems, and the storage and handling of hazardous materials where regulated by the California Fire Code.

Municipal Code Section 5-2-111, *Explosives or Hazardous Materials*, prohibits any person from depositing explosive, highly flammable, radioactive, or otherwise hazardous materials or substances in containers used for solid waste, green waste, or recyclables. This provision supports the safe handling and disposal of hazardous materials and reduces the potential for hazardous substances to enter the municipal solid waste stream.

Title 9 of the Municipal Code contains the City's Development Code and establishes local regulations governing the use and development of land in the City. The Development Code is intended, in part, to secure safety from fire and other dangers, facilitate the provision of needed community facilities, and promote orderly development review. These provisions provide the broader local development review framework through which future projects would be evaluated for consistency with applicable fire safety, flood hazard, emergency access, and hazardous materials requirements.

3.8.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G contains the Initial Study Environmental Checklist, which includes questions related to hazards and hazardous materials. The City relies on the questions included in Appendix G as the thresholds of significance for assessing impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials. A significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed Project would:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;
- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;
- Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment;

- For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area;
- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; and
- Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.8-1: The Project could create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials (Less Than Significant)

Implementation of the proposed Project would not directly approve or construct any specific development or infrastructure project. However, buildout of the General Plan would accommodate future development of residential and non-residential uses within the Planning Area. These uses could involve the routine transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials. Typical hazardous materials associated with future development could include fuels, lubricants, paints, solvents, cleaning products, pesticides, herbicides, pool chemicals, laboratory materials, medical materials, refrigerants, batteries, and other materials commonly used in residential, commercial, school, public facility, industrial, construction, and maintenance activities. Future freeway service commercial, limited industrial, general industrial, public facility, infrastructure, and utility uses could involve greater quantities or more frequent handling of hazardous materials than typical residential or neighborhood-serving uses. Exposure to hazardous materials could occur through the operations of future developments associated with the improper handling of hazardous materials, particularly by untrained personnel; an accident during transport; environmentally unsound disposal methods; or fire, explosion, or other emergencies. These types of incidents could contaminate soil, surface water, and groundwater, and generate toxic vapors. The severity of potential effects varies with the activity conducted, the concentration and type of hazardous material or wastes present, and the proximity of sensitive receptors.

The routine transport of hazardous materials to and from future uses in the Planning Area would be regulated by applicable federal and State requirements, including U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, California Highway Patrol requirements, California Vehicle Code provisions, and applicable hazardous materials transportation standards. The routine use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials is also regulated and monitored by local fire departments, CUPAs, Cal OSHA, and the DTSC consistent with the requirements of federal, State, and local regulations and policies. Facilities that store hazardous materials on-site are required to maintain a Hazardous Materials Business Plan in accordance with State regulations. In the event of an accidental release of hazardous materials, the local CUPA (i.e., San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department) and emergency management agencies (e.g., San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, French Camp McKinley Fire District) would respond. All future development projects accommodated through implementation of the General Plan would be required to comply with the

provisions of federal, State, and local requirements related to hazardous materials. As the City considers future development and infrastructure projects, each project would be evaluated for potential project-specific impacts associated with hazardous materials, as required under CEQA.

Local requirements would further reduce potential hazards associated with routine hazardous materials use. Title 4, Division 1, *Fire Prevention*, of the Mountain House Municipal Code establishes local fire prevention requirements, including requirements related to building occupancy, fire protection systems, emergency access, and hazardous materials where regulated by the California Fire Code. Municipal Code Section 5-2-111, *Explosives or Hazardous Materials*, prohibits disposal of explosive, highly flammable, radioactive, or otherwise hazardous materials or substances in containers used for solid waste, green waste, or recyclables. Title 9, Development Title, contains the City's Development Code and provides the local development review framework through which future projects would be reviewed for consistency with applicable fire safety, emergency access, and hazardous materials requirements.

Household hazardous waste generated by future residents and businesses would be addressed through existing hazardous waste collection programs operated in coordination with San Joaquin County. These programs provide opportunities for residents and small business generators to properly dispose of materials such as pesticides, batteries, old paint, solvents, used oil, antifreeze, and other chemicals that should not be disposed of in the regular municipal waste stream.

In addition to the requirements associated with federal, State, and local regulations, the General Plan includes policies and actions to further minimize potential hazards associated with the routine transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and household hazardous waste. Proposed Safety Element Policy SAF-3.1 requires the proper handling, transport, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations. Policy SAF-3.2 requires enforcement of the California Fire Code requirements applicable to the use of hazardous materials. Policy SAF-3.3 requires coordination with responsible federal, State, and County agencies to identify and regulate the disposal of toxic materials. Policy SAF-3.5 requires coordination with the County, West Valley Disposal, and other regional partners to reduce the production of household hazardous waste. Policy SAF-3.6 requires preparation and distribution of educational materials concerning illegal dumping, hazardous waste dangers, and applicable hazardous waste management plans. Action SAF-3a requires projects that would result in significant hazardous materials risks to incorporate measures that address the hazards and reduce the risks to an acceptable level. Action SAF-3b promotes off-site hazardous materials and electronic waste drop-off opportunities. Action SAF-3c requires existing and proposed businesses and developments to submit applicable hazardous materials manufacturing, storage, use, transport, and disposal information to the County Certified Unified Program Agency. Proposed Public Services and Facilities Element Policy PSF-7.5 promotes the proper use, storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous waste through education, monitoring, and enforcement. Action PSF-7c requires educational outreach regarding the proper disposal of household hazardous waste.

With implementation of the General Plan policies and actions described above, as well as compliance with applicable federal, State, regional, and local regulations, future development and

operations accommodated by the General Plan would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-3: Hazardous Materials. A community that is protected from dangers related to the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials within the City.

Policy SAF-3.1: Hazardous Materials Regulatory Compliance. Ensure proper handling, transport, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations.

Policy SAF-3.2: California Fire Code. Enforce the California Fire Code as it regulates the use of hazardous materials, ensuring appropriate laws are followed and precautions are taken for the type and amount of hazard being created.

Policy SAF-3.3: Regional Compliance. Coordinate with responsible federal, State, and County agencies to identify and regulate the disposal of toxic materials.

Policy SAF-3.5: Household Hazardous Waste. Coordinate with the County, West Valley Disposal, and other regional partners to reduce the per capita production of household hazardous waste in Mountain House.

Policy SAF-3.6: Education. Prepare and distribute educational materials to the community regarding illegal dumping, the dangers of hazardous waste, and City and County hazardous waste management plans.

Action SAF-3a: As part of the development review process, require projects that would result in significant risks associated with hazardous materials to include measures to address the hazards and reduce the risks to an acceptable level.

Action SAF-3b: Promote off-site hazardous materials and/or electronic waste drop-off.

Action SAF-3c: Continue to require the submittal of information to the County Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) regarding hazardous materials manufacturing, storage, use, transport, and/or disposal by existing and proposed businesses and developments.

Public Services and Facilities Element

Goal PSF-7: Waste Management and Recycling. A community that integrates solid waste management and recycling practices to protect the environment and promote sustainability.

Policy PSF-7.5: Hazardous Waste. Promote the proper disposal of hazardous waste through education, monitoring, and enforcement of proper use, storage, handling, and disposal.

Action PSF-7c: Use educational flyers and workshops to inform residents of the proper method to dispose household hazardous waste that includes paint, tires, medications, medical sharps, infectious waste, asbestos waste, construction waste, and electronic waste.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.8-2: The Project could create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment (Less Than Significant)

Implementation of the proposed Project could accommodate future development and infrastructure activities that involve hazardous materials during construction and operation. Construction activities could involve the use of fuels, oils, lubricants, solvents, paints, concrete additives, cleaning agents, and other materials that could be released to soil, surface water, groundwater, or the storm drain system if improperly handled. Future operation of residential and non-residential uses could also involve hazardous materials storage, use, or disposal. Reasonably foreseeable upset or accident conditions could include spills during transport or delivery, leaks from equipment or storage containers, accidental mixing of incompatible materials, release from underground or aboveground storage tanks, improper disposal, or discovery and disturbance of contaminated soil or groundwater during construction.

The public could be exposed to hazardous materials if new development or redevelopment were to be located on a current or historical hazardous material site. As discussed above in the Environmental Setting section, the Planning Area contains documented hazardous materials database listings. There are 14 locations listed within the Planning Area that are listed in the EnviroStor database. Of these, 11 sites have a status of "No Action" or "No Further Action", meaning an investigation of the site found no contamination and/or that the property does not pose a problem to public health or the environment; one site has a status of "Active", meaning an investigation and/or remediation is currently in progress and that DTSC is actively involved in either a lead or support capacity; one site has a status of "Refer: RWQCB", meaning based on limited information available to DTSC, the site appears to be more appropriately addressed by the RWQCB; and one site has a status of "Certified / Operation & Maintenance", meaning that while the site has a certified cleanup in place and all planned activities necessary to address the contamination problems have been implemented, ongoing operation and maintenance activities are required to complete cleanup. In addition, there is one open Cleanup Site listed in the GeoTracker database. The site is listed as "Open – Assessment and Interim Remedial Action" as of January 21, 2021, meaning interim remedial action is occurring at the site and additional activities such as site characterization, investigation, risk evaluation, and/or site conceptual model development are occurring as of that date. These database listings indicate that hazardous materials conditions exist or have existed in the Planning Area and that subsequent development could encounter known or

previously unidentified contamination. However, these sites are subject to oversight by the DTSC, SWRCB, RWQCB, or other responsible agencies, as applicable.

Future development associated with General Plan implementation would be reviewed at the project level during the City's development review process and undergo environmental review as applicable. Where a future project would occur on or near a known hazardous materials site, or where past land use indicates the potential for contamination, the project applicant may be required to prepare a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, conduct additional Phase II soil or groundwater investigation if warranted, and undergo remediation and cleanup under the oversight of the appropriate regulatory agency, such as DTSC and the RWQCB. Construction activities would also be required to comply with applicable OSHA requirements, hazardous waste handling requirements, stormwater pollution prevention requirements, and disposal requirements for contaminated materials, if encountered.

Future operational uses involving hazardous materials would be required to comply with applicable hazardous materials regulations, including Hazardous Materials Business Plan requirements, hazardous waste generator requirements, California Accidental Release Prevention requirements, Underground Storage Tank requirements, Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act requirements, and Fire Code requirements. These regulations include preventative planning, hazardous materials inventory disclosure, emergency response procedures, secondary containment, employee training, proper labeling and storage, spill prevention measures, and agency inspection requirements. Compliance with these regulations would reduce the likelihood and consequences of accidental hazardous materials releases.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions to reduce the potential for accidental hazardous materials releases and resulting contamination. Proposed Safety Element Policy SAF-3.1 requires the proper handling, transport, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials in accordance with applicable regulations. Policy SAF-3.2 requires enforcement of the California Fire Code requirements applicable to hazardous materials. Policy SAF-3.3 requires coordination with responsible federal, State, and County agencies regarding toxic materials. Policy SAF-3.4 requires coordination with the French Camp McKinley Fire District and other responding agencies to support safe and effective response to hazardous materials incidents. Policy SAF-3.6 requires public education regarding illegal dumping, hazardous waste risks, and applicable City and County hazardous waste management plans. Action SAF-3a requires projects that would result in significant hazardous materials risks to incorporate measures that reduce those risks to an acceptable level. Action SAF-3c requires applicable hazardous materials information to be submitted to the County Certified Unified Program Agency. Proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-3.6 requires protection of groundwater and soils from contamination through appropriate land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies. Action RM-3a requires new development and redevelopment to incorporate stormwater treatment, runoff controls, Best Management Practices, and Low Impact Development measures to reduce pollutants in runoff and protect downstream water quality. Proposed Environmental Justice Element Policy EJ-1.6 requires coordination with responsible agencies to identify and address hazardous materials sites, leaking underground storage tanks, and other contamination risks that may affect public

health. Policy EJ-6.6 supports preparedness for hazardous materials incidents and contamination risks through emergency planning, development review, public education, and coordination with emergency responders and regulatory agencies.

Because the General Plan would not directly approve construction and because future development would remain subject to site-specific review, regulatory agency oversight, hazardous materials investigation and remediation requirements where applicable, and federal, State, and local hazardous materials regulations, implementation of the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-3: Hazardous Materials. A community that is protected from dangers related to the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials within the City.

Policy SAF-3.1: Hazardous Materials Regulatory Compliance. Ensure proper handling, transport, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations.

Policy SAF-3.2: California Fire Code. Enforce the California Fire Code as it regulates the use of hazardous materials, ensuring appropriate laws are followed and precautions are taken for the type and amount of hazard being created.

Policy SAF-3.3: Regional Compliance. Coordinate with responsible federal, State, and County agencies to identify and regulate the disposal of toxic materials.

Policy SAF-3.4: Emergency Response. Work with the French Camp McKinley Fire District and other responding agencies to ensure that emergency personnel respond safely and effectively to a hazardous materials incident in the City.

Policy SAF-3.6: Education. Prepare and distribute educational materials to the community regarding illegal dumping, the dangers of hazardous waste, and City and County hazardous waste management plans.

Action SAF-3a: As part of the development review process, require projects that would result in significant risks associated with hazardous materials to include measures to address the hazards and reduce the risks to an acceptable level.

Action SAF-3c: Continue to require the submittal of information to the County Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) regarding hazardous materials manufacturing, storage, use, transport, and/or disposal by existing and proposed businesses and developments.

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-3: Water Resources. A community that conserves and protects water resources to support long-term sustainability.

Policy RM-3.6: Groundwater and Soil Protection. Protect groundwater and soils from contamination through appropriate land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies.

Action RM-3a: Require new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. During project review, ensure that development proposals incorporate stormwater treatment, runoff control measures, and low impact development (LID) techniques. Coordinate with responsible agencies, including the Regional Water Quality Control Board and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Pollution Exposure and Air Quality. Improved air quality and reduced pollution exposure for all.

Policy EJ-1.6: Water Quality and Hazardous Sites. Ensure drinking water, groundwater, and surface water quality, including conditions affecting Mountain House Creek and Old River, are protected, and coordinate with responsible agencies to identify and address hazardous materials sites, leaking underground storage tanks, and other contamination risks that may affect public health.

Goal EJ-6: Unique or Compounded Health Risks. A healthier and more resilient community with reduced exposure to environmental hazards.

Policy EJ-6.6: Hazardous Materials. Support preparedness for hazardous materials incidents and contamination risks through coordination with emergency responders and regulatory agencies, public education, and integration of response procedures into emergency planning and development review.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.8-3: The Project could emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school (Less Than Significant)

The Planning Area is served by a variety of public and private schools. The proposed Project would not directly approve any school, specific land use, or development project; however, buildout of the General Plan would accommodate future residential and non-residential uses, including schools, within the Planning Area. As noted above, future development under the General Plan could utilize, transport, store, or dispose of hazardous materials during construction or operation. Excavation and grading activities associated with future development could expose the public to unknown hazardous materials present in soil or groundwater. Remediation activities could involve the transport of hazardous materials to an approved landfill facility. As a result, future development

within the Planning Area could potentially emit or handle hazardous materials within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.

Construction activities within one-quarter mile of a school could temporarily use hazardous materials or generate hazardous wastes. If future development involves demolition, renovation, or redevelopment of existing structures, hazardous building materials such as asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, treated wood waste, universal wastes, or polychlorinated biphenyl-containing materials could be encountered, depending on the age and type of structures affected. Construction activities could also encounter contaminated soil or groundwater associated with known or previously unidentified hazardous materials conditions. These potential hazards would be addressed through compliance with applicable worker safety, hazardous waste handling, demolition, air quality, and disposal requirements, as well as project-specific environmental review where required.

Operational activities within one-quarter mile of a school could include the use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials by commercial, industrial, public facility, school, utility, or maintenance uses. However, facilities that use hazardous materials would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, regional, and local regulations. Hazardous Materials Business Plan requirements would require qualifying businesses to disclose the location and quantities of hazardous materials stored on-site and to provide emergency response information. California Fire Code requirements would regulate storage, separation, containment, signage, emergency access, and fire protection systems. California Accidental Release Prevention requirements would apply to facilities using regulated substances above threshold quantities. These requirements are intended to prevent hazardous materials releases and provide information needed by emergency responders.

Future school sites and projects involving school facilities would also be subject to applicable State and local review requirements, including environmental review and hazardous materials database review where required. CEQA Guidelines Section 15186, *School Facilities*, requires that school projects, as well as projects proposed to be located near schools, examine potential health impacts resulting from exposure to hazardous materials, wastes, and substances. Furthermore, permitting requirements for individual hazardous material handlers or emitters would require evaluation and notification where potential hazardous materials handling and emissions could occur in proximity to existing schools. Future school development or development near schools would be required to address hazardous materials conditions through applicable regulatory processes before construction or occupancy, as necessary.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions to protect schools and other sensitive receptors from hazardous materials and emissions. Proposed Land Use Element Policy LU-2.5 requires land use compatibility analysis for development near sensitive receptors, including schools, and requires appropriate buffers, setbacks, landscaping, operational restrictions, or architectural treatments. Action LU-2a requires land use compatibility analysis during development review and appropriate buffers or architectural enhancements to protect schools and other sensitive receptors from health risks. Proposed Safety Element Policy SAF-3.1 requires the proper handling, transport, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials in accordance with applicable regulations.

Policy SAF-3.2 requires enforcement of the California Fire Code requirements applicable to hazardous materials. Action SAF-3a requires projects that would result in significant hazardous materials risks to incorporate measures that address the hazards and reduce the risks to an acceptable level. Action SAF-3c requires existing and proposed businesses and developments to submit applicable hazardous materials information to the County Certified Unified Program Agency. Proposed Public Services and Facilities Element Policy PSF-3.2 establishes school siting criteria, including separation of school classrooms and core facilities from commercial areas. Proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-5.2 requires enforcement of minimum separation buffers between sensitive receptors and uses that generate toxic or harmful air emissions and requires a Health Risk Assessment for projects presenting potential health risks. Proposed Environmental Justice Element Policy EJ-1.2 requires land use planning, development review, and site design to protect schools and other sensitive receptors from major sources of pollution exposure. Action EJ-1a requires discretionary development, infrastructure, and long-range planning projects to evaluate construction and operational emissions, assess exposure of sensitive receptors, and incorporate feasible mitigation measures where appropriate.

With implementation of the General Plan policies and actions, as well as compliance with applicable federal, State, regional, and local hazardous materials regulations, future construction and operation associated with buildout of the General Plan would not expose existing or proposed schools to significant hazards from hazardous emissions or hazardous materials. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.5: Land Use Compatibility. The City shall require that land use decisions and development approvals include analysis of compatibility between adjacent land uses, with particular attention to potential nuisance impacts (noise, odor, light, vibration, and truck traffic) on sensitive receptors including residences, schools, daycare centers, and medical facilities. The City shall require appropriate buffers, setbacks, landscaping, hours of operation restrictions, or architectural treatments to ensure compatibility and protect sensitive receptors from significant adverse impacts.

Action LU-2a: Analyze land use compatibility through the development review process to require adequate buffers and/or architectural enhancements that protect sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, schools, day care centers, hospitals, nursing homes) from intrusion of development activities that may cause unwanted nuisances and health risks.

Safety Element

Goal SAF-3: Hazardous Materials. A community that is protected from dangers related to the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials within the City.

Policy SAF-3.1: Hazardous Materials Regulatory Compliance. Ensure proper handling, transport, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations.

Policy SAF-3.2: California Fire Code. Enforce the California Fire Code as it regulates the use of hazardous materials, ensuring appropriate laws are followed and precautions are taken for the type and amount of hazard being created.

Action SAF-3a: As part of the development review process, require projects that would result in significant risks associated with hazardous materials to include measures to address the hazards and reduce the risks to an acceptable level.

Action SAF-3c: Continue to require the submittal of information to the County Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) regarding hazardous materials manufacturing, storage, use, transport, and/or disposal by existing and proposed businesses and developments.

Public Services and Facilities Element

Goal PSF-3: Educational Resources. Educational environments and learning opportunities that empower residents of all ages to cultivate the knowledge, skills, and resources to thrive.

Policy PSF-3.2: School Siting. Ensure that educational facilities are designated and planned to accommodate existing and future capacity and are located nearby planned residential development. The following school siting criteria shall be used:

- K-8 school centrally located in each neighborhood (except for Neighborhoods B and L);
- Core facilities and classrooms separated from commercial areas using playfields;
- No direct pedestrian access between school and Neighborhood Commercial;
- Each K-8 school shall have shared use of adjacent Neighborhood Park (joint-use design requirements); and
- All school sites shall have frontage on minimum two intersecting streets.

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-5: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions that support a healthier and more resilient community.

Policy RM-5.2: Sensitive Receptor Protection. Protect sensitive receptors from exposure to substantial pollutant concentrations, toxic air contaminants, particulate matter, and objectionable odors by enforcing minimum separation buffers between sensitive land uses and major pollution sources, consistent with California Air Resources Board (CARB) and San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)

guidelines. Individual projects that could pose potential health risks shall perform prioritization screening and/or prepare a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) following SJVAPCD methodologies. If an individual project HRA identifies health risks exceeding applicable SJVAPCD significance thresholds, the project shall incorporate appropriate mitigation to reduce impacts to a less than significant level prior to project approval.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Pollution Exposure and Air Quality. Improved air quality and reduced pollution exposure for all.

Policy EJ-1.2: Sensitive Receptors. Ensure land use planning, development review, and site design protect homes, schools, parks, childcare facilities, and other sensitive receptors from major sources of pollution exposure.

Action EJ-1a: During development review, require discretionary development, infrastructure, and long-range planning projects to evaluate construction and operational emissions, exposure of sensitive receptors, and include feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality and pollution exposure impacts, as appropriate.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.8-4: Implementation of the Project could allow future development on a site included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, but would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment (Less Than Significant)

Government Code Section 65962.5 requires CalEPA to develop and update the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List, commonly referred to as the Cortese List. The Cortese List is used by public agencies, local agencies, and project applicants to identify hazardous materials release sites that may require consideration during development review and environmental analysis. As previously discussed, there are no hazardous materials release sites located in the Planning Area on the Cortese List.

Although site-specific development is not currently proposed, there is the potential that future development associated with implementation of the General Plan could occur on a site included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 at that time. Future development applications would be reviewed by the City for consistency with the General Plan, the Development Code, CEQA, and applicable federal, State, and local regulatory requirements. Any development activities that may occur on documented hazardous materials sites would be required to disclose to the City whether the project is located on or near a listed site, consistent with Government Code Section 65962.5, and would be required to undergo remediation

and cleanup under the supervision of the regulatory agencies, such as DTSC and the Central Valley RWQCB, prior to development approval.

In addition to the requirements associated with federal, State, and local regulations, the General Plan includes policies and actions to further minimize potential impacts associated with hazardous materials sites and contamination risks during development review. Proposed Safety Element Policy SAF-3.1 requires the proper handling, treatment, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials in accordance with applicable regulations. Policy SAF-3.3 requires coordination with responsible federal, State, and County agencies to identify and regulate the disposal of toxic materials. Action SAF-3a requires projects that would result in significant hazardous materials risks to incorporate measures that address the hazards and reduce the risks to an acceptable level. Proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-3.6 requires protection of groundwater and soils from contamination through land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies. Proposed Environmental Justice Element Policy EJ-1.6 requires coordination with responsible agencies to identify and address hazardous materials sites, leaking underground storage tanks, and other contamination risks that may affect public health. Policy EJ-6.6 supports preparedness for contamination risks through regulatory agency coordination, public education, emergency planning, and development review. Action EJ-6a requires review of available hazardous materials information to identify priority environmental health risks and inform City planning and capital improvement priorities.

Because the Planning Area does not contain sites listed on the Cortese List, and because future development on or near other hazardous materials database sites would be subject to project-level review, site assessment, regulatory oversight, and remediation where required, implementation of the General Plan would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment from development on a listed hazardous materials site. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-3: Hazardous Materials. A community that is protected from dangers related to the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials within the City.

Policy SAF-3.1: Hazardous Materials Regulatory Compliance. Ensure proper handling, transport, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations.

Policy SAF-3.3: Regional Compliance. Coordinate with responsible federal, State, and County agencies to identify and regulate the disposal of toxic materials.

Action SAF-3a: As part of the development review process, require projects that would result in significant risks associated with hazardous materials to include measures to address the hazards and reduce the risks to an acceptable level.

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-3: Water Resources. A community that conserves and protects water resources to support long-term sustainability.

Policy RM-3.6: Groundwater and Soil Protection. Protect groundwater and soils from contamination through appropriate land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Pollution Exposure and Air Quality. Improved air quality and reduced pollution exposure for all.

Policy EJ-1.6: Water Quality and Hazardous Sites. Ensure drinking water, groundwater, and surface water quality, including conditions affecting Mountain House Creek and Old River, are protected, and coordinate with responsible agencies to identify and address hazardous materials sites, leaking underground storage tanks, and other contamination risks that may affect public health.

Goal EJ-6: Unique or Compounded Health Risks. A healthier and more resilient community with reduced exposure to environmental hazards.

Policy EJ-6.6: Hazardous Materials. Support preparedness for hazardous materials incidents and contamination risks through coordination with emergency responders and regulatory agencies, public education, and integration of response procedures into emergency planning and development review.

Action EJ-6a: Review available air quality alerts, water quality reports, drainage maintenance records, and hazardous materials information to identify priority environmental health risks and inform City outreach, planning, and capital improvement priorities.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.8-5: The Project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area due to airport operations (Less Than Significant)

There are no airports within the Planning Area. The closest airport to the Planning Area is Byron Airport, located approximately four miles northwest of the Planning Area in Contra Costa County. The City of Mountain House is not within the Byron Airport Influence Area and is outside of its safety zones and noise contours. A small northwestern portion of Mountain House is located within a FAA height notification zone associated with Byron Airport. This height notification zone does not prohibit development, but it requires notification to the FAA for certain proposed construction or alterations that exceed applicable Part 77 imaginary surface thresholds.

In addition to the Byron Airport, the Tracy Municipal Airport is located approximately 5.8 miles southeast of the Planning Area in San Joaquin County. The Planning Area is not within the Tracy Municipal Airport Influence Area and is outside of its safety zones and noise contour. Further, the Planning Area is not within the Airport Influence Area of any other airport.

Future development in the northwestern portion of the Planning Area that is subject to FAA height notification requirements would be required to comply with applicable federal aviation review requirements. Future projects involving tall structures, transmission lines, towers, or other features that could affect navigable airspace would also be subject to applicable FAA review and local development review. Compliance with these requirements would reduce the potential for conflicts with airport operations or navigable airspace.

Because the Planning Area is not located within the Byron Airport Influence Area or the Tracy Municipal Airport Influence Area, is outside applicable airport safety zones and noise contours, and because future projects subject to FAA height notification would be required to comply with applicable review requirements, implementation of the General Plan would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area due to airport operations. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

There are no General Plan goals, policies, or actions specific to airports.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.8-6: The Project could increase demand on emergency response and evacuation systems, but would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan (Less Than Significant)

Implementation of the proposed Project would not directly approve or construct any specific development or infrastructure project. However, buildout of the General Plan would accommodate future development of residential and non-residential uses within the Planning Area, resulting in increased jobs and population. This growth could increase demand for emergency response services and could increase the number of people requiring notification, response, sheltering, or evacuation during a hazard event or other major emergency.

The General Plan would not revise or replace an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, including the City's MEMP or the County's EOP. The General Plan establishes a long-term policy and regulatory framework for future development and public improvements. The proposed Circulation Element establishes a hierarchical street network through roadway classifications and identifies priority improvements along key transportation corridors but does not

propose any changes to existing roadways or evacuation routes. Future projects associated with buildout of the General Plan are not anticipated to remove or impede evacuation routes, and the General Plan does not include land uses, policies, or other components that conflict with adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. Any future development projects would be subject to all applicable City regulations, reviews, and requirements pertaining to emergency response, emergency access, and maintaining emergency evacuation routes, as well as further CEQA analysis of project-specific impacts as applicable. These requirements would ensure that future development provides adequate emergency access, fire access, site circulation, and access for emergency vehicles, as applicable.

While road and infrastructure improvements could occur to accommodate the new growth, future development within the Planning Area is not anticipated to result in the substantial modification of roadways surrounding specific development sites or the placement of any permanent physical barriers on adjacent roadways. Construction activities that could temporarily affect roadways, access points, or circulation would be subject to encroachment permits, traffic control requirements, construction management requirements, and coordination with City staff and emergency service providers as applicable. Operationally, future development would be required to maintain required access, fire lanes, driveway widths, turning radii, signage, address visibility, water supply for fire protection, and other fire and emergency access features required by the Fire Code and Development Code. These requirements would ensure that future projects do not physically interfere with emergency response or evacuation.

The General Plan includes policies and actions to further minimize impacts associated with emergency response and evacuation. Proposed Safety Element Policy SAF-2.3 requires coordination with regional agencies to preplan for flood disaster response, including evacuation following a serious breach of an upstream dam. Policy SAF-5.1 requires regular updates to the Mountain House Municipal Emergency Management Plan to reflect changing conditions, best practices, and regulatory requirements. Policy SAF-5.3 requires the City to establish minimum evacuation standards and to maintain, update, and regularly exercise emergency access protocols and evacuation routes. Policy SAF-5.4 requires coordination with emergency response agencies, special districts, utility providers, and local businesses to support effective emergency preparation, response, and recovery. Policy SAF-5.5 requires participation in automatic and mutual aid agreements with local, State, federal, and nongovernmental emergency service providers. Action SAF-5a requires regular exercises and updates of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan. Action SAF-5b requires regular review of County and State emergency response procedures that must be coordinated with City procedures. Action SAF-5c requires periodic review, maintenance, and repair of City roadways and emergency access routes and the installation of signage where necessary to clearly identify emergency access routes. Action SAF-5d requires regular emergency response training exercises and assessments of critical-facility supplies. Action SAF-5e requires consultation with police and fire departments during development review to ensure that projects provide adequate emergency access. Action SAF-5f requires preparation and periodic updating of a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Action SAF-5g requires preparation of a Continuity of Operations Plan to maintain essential City functions during and after emergencies. Action SAF-5h requires the City

to publicize and regularly update emergency preparedness and evacuation information at public locations and through the City's website.

Although buildout of the General Plan could increase demand on emergency response and evacuation systems, the Project would not include land uses, circulation changes, policies, or other components that would conflict with adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. Future projects would be subject to project-level review and applicable public safety requirements. Therefore, implementation of the General Plan would not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. This impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-2: Flooding. Flood hazard and inundation risk reduction to safeguard residents, property, and the natural environment.

Policy SAF-2.3: Regional Coordination. Continue to work cooperatively with the San Joaquin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, County Office of Emergency Services, San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency, local reclamation districts and other agencies to:

A. Consider the need to expand the capacity of flood control facilities based on changing flood conditions associated with climate change and extreme weather;
B. Address storm drainage issues; and
C. Preplan for flood disaster response, such as required evacuation in the event of a serious breach of an upstream dam capable of flooding the community.

Goal SAF-5: Emergency Preparedness and Response. A community that is well-prepared for emergency response and disaster management to mitigate impacts on all people, property, and the environment.

Policy SAF-5.1: Emergency Operations Plan. Update the Mountain House Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) on a regular basis to reflect changing conditions, best practices, regulatory environment, and to maintain eligibility for public assistance grants.

Policy SAF-5.3: Emergency Evacuation. Work with the French Camp Mckinley Fire District and San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office to define minimum standards for evacuation of residential areas, particularly in Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, and to maintain, update, and regularly exercise emergency access, protocols, and evacuation routes to assess their effectiveness under a range of emergency scenarios. If areas with inadequate evacuation routes are identified, develop appropriate mitigation measures, improvement plans, or education programs to ensure safe evacuation.

Policy SAF-5.4: Multi-Agency Emergency Collaboration. Coordinate with the French Camp McKinley Fire District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, special districts, local utility providers, and local businesses to ensure effective preparation, response, and recovery services are available throughout the community before, during, and after an emergency event.

Policy SAF-5.5: Automatic and Mutual Aid. Participate in agreements for automatic and mutual aid with other local, State, federal, and non-governmental emergency service providers to improve emergency response throughout the region.

Action SAF-5a: Regularly practice implementation of the City's Municipal Emergency Management Plan and update the plan regularly.

Action SAF-5b: Regularly review County and State emergency response procedures that must be coordinated with City procedures.

Action SAF-5c: Periodically review, maintain, and repair City roadways and emergency access routes, and provide signage, where necessary, to clearly identify emergency access routes.

Action SAF-5d: Conduct regular emergency response training exercises and/or participate in regional exercises to ensure that emergency response personnel are adequately trained and prepared for emergency situations. Critical facilities within the city should also be annually assessed to ensure they are properly supplied.

Action SAF-5e: As part of the development review process, consult with the police and fire departments in order to ensure that the project provides adequate emergency access.

Action SAF-5f: Develop and adopt a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for Mountain House and update it at least every five years to maintain eligibility for federal hazard mitigation funding and to reflect changing conditions, best practices, and regulatory requirements.

Action SAF-5g: Develop and adopt a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to ensure that essential City functions are able to continue during and after an emergency event.

Action SAF-5h: Publicize and regularly update information at City Hall, other public locations, and via the City website related to emergency and disaster preparedness including evacuation routes and specific steps to take in the event of a flood, fire, earthquake, or other emergency. Improve the visibility and accessibility of emergency and disaster preparedness information on the City's website by making information more prominent, more detailed, and by providing critical information in multiple languages.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

Impact 3.8-7: The Project could expose additional people and structures to wildfire risk, but would not directly or indirectly expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fire (Less Than Significant)

CAL FIRE has not identified any VHFHSZs within the Planning Area. However, there are designated Moderate and High FHSZs within LRA in the southwestern portion of the Planning Area, generally located south of Grant Line Road and west of Central Parkway. Moderate to High FHSZs in SRAs are located approximately 500 feet southwest of Mountain House's southwestern boundary, south of the Delta-Mendota Canal in unincorporated Alameda and San Joaquin Counties.

Implementation of the proposed Project would not directly approve or construct any specific development or infrastructure project. However, buildout of the General Plan would accommodate future development of residential and non-residential uses within the Planning Area, resulting in increased jobs and population. These future uses could increase the number of people and structures subject to fire hazards originating within or outside the Planning Area.

Future development projects would be required to comply with applicable fire safety requirements, including the California Fire Code, California Building Code, California Residential Code, California Wildland-Urban Interface requirements where applicable, local fire prevention requirements, Fire Code access and water supply requirements, and City development review requirements. These regulations address building construction, fire protection systems, emergency access, fire apparatus access roads, fire flow, hydrant placement, vegetation management, hazardous vegetation abatement, and other fire prevention and response measures. Compliance with these requirements would reduce the potential for future development to expose people or structures to significant wildfire-related loss, injury, or death.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions to further minimize the risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. Proposed Safety Element Policy SAF-4.1 requires the City to maintain accurate and current mapping of Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Policy SAF-4.2 requires new development to comply with applicable California Fire and Building Codes and other fire-safety standards. Policy SAF-4.4 requires adequate fire prevention services and facilities consistent with French Camp McKinley Fire District service standards and the Mountain House Fire Protection Plan. Policy SAF-4.5 requires coordination with the City's water purveyor to provide and maintain adequate water supplies and fire flow for structural fire suppression. Policy SAF-4.6 requires consideration of fire-resistant building and site design, materials, and landscaping for development within High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Policy SAF-4.7 requires adequate fire protection plans and emergency vehicle access for new development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Policy SAF-4.8 requires brush management, fuel management, defensible space, fire-resistant landscaping, visible addressing and signage, and other fire-safe design features for new development in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Policy SAF-4.12 requires coordination with federal, State, and regional fire protection agencies concerning fire suppression, rescue, training, education, emergency evacuation, and hazard mitigation planning. Policy SAF-4.13 requires education of residents, builders, property owners, and employers regarding fire hazards,

fire-safety measures, and available assistance programs. Action SAF-4a requires the City to maintain and regularly update its Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map. Action SAF-4b requires development to be located, designed, and constructed to provide adequate defensibility against wildland fires and minimize structural loss. Action SAF-4c requires an ongoing inspection program to reduce fire hazards associated with multifamily development, critical facilities, public assembly facilities, industrial buildings, and other nonresidential buildings. Action SAF-4d requires new habitable structures to comply with the most recent California Building and Fire Codes and applicable local amendments. Action SAF-4e requires new development to provide adequate water supplies, fire flow, sprinklers, fire hose terminals, and fire-suppression systems. Action SAF-4g requires implementation of the Mountain House Fire Protection Plan, fair-share funding for fire infrastructure, and adjustments to station siting and staffing necessary to maintain the Plan's response-time standard.

Future development allowed under the General Plan would be required to comply with the provisions of federal, State, and local requirements related to wildland fire hazards, including State fire safety regulations associated with wildland-urban interfaces, fire-safe building standards, and defensible space requirements. As future development projects are considered by the City, each would be subject to project-specific review, as well as further CEQA analysis as applicable. Therefore, through compliance with existing federal, State, and local regulations related to wildland fire hazards and implementation of the General Plan policies and actions, impacts regarding the exposure of people or structures to significant loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-4: Fire Hazards. A community with reduced exposure to urban and wildland fire hazards.

Policy SAF-4.1: Wildfire Hazard Mapping. Maintain accurate and current geographic information system mapping of the City's Fire Hazard Severity Zones and update consistent with changes in hazard designations by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Policy SAF-4.2: Fire and Building Codes. Require that all new developments in the City comply with local, State, and federal regulatory standards such as the California Fire and Building Codes as well as other applicable fire safety standards.

Policy SAF-4.4: Services and Facilities. Provide adequate fire prevention services and facilities to meet the service standards identified by the French Camp McKinley Fire District. Fire station siting, staffing levels, response times, and equipment standards shall be consistent with the adopted Mountain House Fire Protection Plan and any updates thereto.

Policy SAF-4.5: Water Supply and Fire Flow. Coordinate with the City's water purveyor to ensure necessary water supply systems and fire flow for structural fire suppression are provided and maintained.

Policy SAF-4.6: Fire Safe Design. Consider fire safe design (i.e., fire-resistant building and site design, materials, and landscaping) for development within Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as part of the development review process.

Policy SAF-4.7: Fire Protection Plans. Require adequate fire protection plans and emergency vehicle access for new development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Policy SAF-4.8: Standards for New Development. Require ongoing brush management, fuel management/modification, defensible space, fire-resistant landscaping, visible home and street addressing and signage, and other project design features for new development located in Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as part of the review process.

Policy SAF-4.12: Fire Hazards Agency Coordination. Coordinate with federal, State, and regional fire protection agencies on fire suppression, rescue, training, education and to update emergency evacuation and hazard mitigation plans, as necessary.

Policy SAF-4.13: Education. Educate community members (residents, builders, property owners, employers) on fire hazards, fire safety measures, and local, regional, State, and Federal assistance programs, with a special focus on at-risk populations, such as those with limited mobility.

Action SAF-4a: Maintain and regularly update the City's Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map for changes in fire hazard severity zones consistent with changes in hazard designations by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Action SAF-4b: Locate, design, and construct development to provide adequate defensibility against wildland fires and minimize the risk of structural loss from wildland fires.

Action SAF-4c: Maintain an ongoing fire inspection program to reduce fire hazards associated with multifamily development, critical facilities, public assembly facilities, industrial buildings, and nonresidential buildings.

Action SAF-4d: Require that all new habitable structures be designed in accordance with the most recent California Building and Fire Codes with local amendments adopted by the City, including the use of fire sprinklers in residential structures.

Action SAF-4e: During the development review process, require that all new development projects have an adequate water supply (e.g., sprinklers, fire hose terminals, and fire suppression systems) and fire flow to meet the fire protection needs of project occupants.

Action SAF-4g: The City shall implement the Mountain House Fire Protection Plan to maintain an urban level of fire and emergency medical service. The City shall ensure that all new development projects provide their fair share of funding for fire infrastructure and that station siting and staffing levels are adjusted according to the Fire Protection Plan's performance standards to maintain a 5-minute response time for 90 percent of calls.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

3.8.4 REFERENCES

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This section provides a background discussion of the regional hydrology, flooding, water quality, water purveyors, and water sources in Mountain House. This section is organized with an existing setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis.

There were no comments received during the NOP comment period related to this environmental topic.

KEY TERMS

Groundwater: Water that is underground and below the water table, as opposed to surface water, which flows across the ground surface. Water beneath the earth's surface fills the spaces in soil, gravel, or rock formations. Pockets of groundwater are often called "aquifers" and are the source of drinking water for a large percentage of the population in the United States. Groundwater is often extracted using wells which pump the water out of the ground and up to the surface. Groundwater is naturally replenished by surface water from precipitation, streams, and rivers when this recharge reaches the water table.

Surface water: Water collected on the ground or from a stream, river, lake, wetland, or ocean. Surface water is naturally replenished through precipitation but is naturally lost through evaporation and seepage into soil.

3.9.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

REGIONAL HYDROLOGY

The Planning Area is located in southwestern San Joaquin County, just east of the Alameda County line, north of Interstate 205 (I-205), and northwest of the City of Tracy. The Planning Area is in the San Joaquin River Hydrologic Region. The hydrologic region is bordered on the east by the Sierra Nevada and on the west by the coastal mountains of the Diablo Range. It includes all of the San Joaquin River drainage area extending south from the southern boundaries of the Delta to include the headwaters of the San Joaquin River in Madera County and its southern drainage in Fresno County. The region is hydrologically separated from the Tulare Lake Hydrologic Region by a low broad ridge that extends across the San Joaquin Valley between the San Joaquin and Kings rivers.[1]

The San Joaquin River originates in the high-elevation Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountain range, flowing southwest to the San Joaquin Valley floor, before turning northwest to its confluence with the Sacramento River at the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta). The San Joaquin River has three major tributaries: the Merced, Tuolumne, and Stanislaus rivers. The Cosumnes (a tributary to Mokelumne River), Mokelumne, and Calaveras rivers also flow into the San Joaquin River where the river joins the tidally influenced Delta.

WATERSHEDS

A watershed is a region that is bound by a divide that drains to a common watercourse or body of water. Watersheds serve an important biological function, oftentimes supporting an abundance of aquatic and

[1] California Department of Water Resources, 2013, California Water Plan. Available at: https://cawaterlibrary.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/CWP-Update-2013-San-Joaquin-River-Hydrologic-Region.pdf. Accessed May 4, 2026.

terrestrial wildlife including special-status species and anadromous and native local fisheries. Watersheds provide conditions necessary for riparian habitat.

Watersheds are delineated by the United States Geological Survey (USGS), using a nationwide system based on surface hydrologic features.[2] These hydrologic units are classified into four levels (regions, subregions, accounting units, and cataloging units), with each unit being identified by a unique hydrologic unit code (HUC) based on its level within the hierarchical system. This means that boundaries are defined according to size and topography, with multiple sub-watersheds within larger watersheds. The USGS system divides the United States into regions (HUC-2), subregions (HUC-4), basins (HUC-6), subbasins (HUC-8), watersheds (HUC-10), and sub-watersheds (HUC-12). Table 3.9-1 shows the primary watershed classification levels used by the USGS in relation to Mountain House.

Figure 3.9-1 shows the regional hydrologic basins and sub-basins surrounding the Planning Area, including its location within the San Joaquin Hydrologic Basin and San Joaquin Delta sub-basin, as well as nearby major rivers, creeks, aqueducts, basin boundaries, and county boundaries. Figure 3.9-2 shows the watersheds and surface waters in and around the Planning Area, including the Planning Area's location within the Old River Watershed, as well as nearby creeks, canals, ditches, surface water features, Clifton Court Forebay, watershed boundaries, and county boundaries.

TABLE 3.9-1: WATERSHED HIERARCHY NAMING CONVENTION

USGS Watershed Level	Description
Subregion (HUC-4)	Mountain House is located in the San Joaquin subregion, also known as the San Joaquin River Hydrologic Region; refer to Figure 3.9-1.
Subbasin (HUC-8)	Within the San Joaquin subregion, Mountain House is located within the San Joaquin Delta; refer to Figure 3.9-1.
Watershed (HUC-10)	Within the San Joaquin Delta, Mountain House is located within the Old River Watershed; refer to Figure 3.9-2.
Sub-watershed (HUC-12)	There are two sub-watersheds within Mountain House. The majority of Mountain House is in the Lower Old River sub-watershed; a portion of land along Mountain House Creek is within the Mountain House Creek sub-watershed. Analysis of sub-watersheds is appropriate for the review of individual projects but is not appropriate for the watershed analysis of the City.

Source: USGS Watershed Boundary Dataset; USGS National Hydrography Dataset; San Joaquin County GIS.

Level 2 – Subregion (HUC-4)

San Joaquin County is located in the San Joaquin subregion, also known as the San Joaquin Hydrologic Basin. The San Joaquin River is the principal river of the region, and all other streams of the region are tributary to it. The Mokelumne River and its tributary the Cosumnes River originate in the central Sierra Nevada, along with the more southerly Stanislaus and Tuolumne rivers. The Merced River flows from the south-central Sierra Nevada and enters the San Joaquin near the City of Newman. The Chowchilla and Fresno rivers also originate in the Sierra south of the Merced River and trend westward toward the San

[2] United States Geological Survey (USGS). Hydrologic Unit Maps: What are Hydrologic Units? Available at: https://water.usgs.gov/GIS/huc.html. Accessed May 4, 2026.

Joaquin River. Creeks originating in the Coast Range and draining eastward into the San Joaquin River include Del Puerto Creek, Orestimba Creek, and Panoche Creek. Del Puerto Creek enters the San Joaquin near the City of Patterson, and Orestimba Creek enters north of the City of Newman. During flood years, Panoche Creek may enter the San Joaquin River or the Fresno Slough near the town of Mendota. The King's River is a stream of the Tulare Lake Hydrologic Region, but in flood years it may contribute to the San Joaquin River, flowing northward through the James Bypass and Fresno Slough to enter near the City of Mendota. The Mud, Salt, Berrenda, and Ash Sloughs also add to the San Joaquin River, and numerous lesser streams and creeks also enter the system, originating in both the Sierra Nevada and the Coast Range. The entire San Joaquin River system drains northwesterly through the Delta to Suisun Bay.[3]

Level 4 – Subbasin (HUC-8)

Within the San Joaquin River Hydrologic Region, the Planning Area is located within the San Joaquin Delta subbasin (HUC 18040003).

Level 5 – Watershed (HUC-10)

Within the San Joaquin Delta subbasin, the Planning Area is located within the Old River watershed (HUC 1804000306).

Level 6 – Sub-Watershed (HUC-12)

At the Planning Area scale, the Old River watershed is the primary watershed unit. For more localized or project-level review, the HUC-12 sub-watershed level may provide more detailed hydrologic context. The majority of the Planning Area is located within the Lower Old River sub-watershed (HUC 180400030605), while the portion of the Planning Area along Mountain House Creek is located within the Mountain House Creek sub-watershed (HUC 180400030602).

LOCAL DRAINAGE

The Planning Area is located on a relatively flat alluvial surface near the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and is bordered by Old River to the north. Mountain House Creek is the primary local drainage feature and flows generally southwest to northeast through the Planning Area before discharging to Old River. Prior to development of Mountain House, Mountain House Creek was a naturally ephemeral stream that had been substantially modified for agricultural drainage; however, the creek corridor has since been restored in portions of the Planning Area. The Planning Area is served by a gravity-based stormwater collection system that conveys runoff to a series of wet and dry detention basins located within the Mountain House Creek corridor. These detention basins provide regional best management practices (BMPs) treatment by capturing and detaining stormwater runoff, controlling erosion, removing

[3] California Department of Water Resources (DWR), *California Water Plan Update 2013: San Joaquin River Hydrologic Region*, https://cawaterlibrary.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/CWP-Update-2013-San-Joaquin-River-Hydrologic-Region.pdf, accessed April 20, 2026.

pollutants, and providing water quality treatment through sedimentation, absorption, filtration, and biological uptake before runoff is released to Mountain House Creek and ultimately Old River.[4]

Other surface water resources in the Planning area include Dry Creek, a smaller stream parallel to and approximately 8,000 feet northwest of Mountain House Creek, and a number of small drainage ditches, lakes, and ponds north of Byron Road. Notable surface water resources located just outside of the Planning Area include the Westside Irrigation District Canal (also known as Wicklund Cut), an irrigation channel connecting to Old River that forms the northeastern boundary of the Planning Area; the Delta Mendota Canal and California Aqueduct, located west-southwest of the Planning Area; and the Clifton Court Forebay, a man-made reservoir located approximately one mile northwest of the Planning Area.

STORMWATER QUALITY

Surface water quality is affected by point source and nonpoint source pollutants. Point source pollutants are discharged at a specific point, such as pipes or permitted outfalls, while nonpoint source pollutants are typically generated by surface runoff from diffuse sources, such as streets, parking areas, landscaped areas, agricultural lands, and construction sites. Point source pollutants are controlled with pollutant discharge regulations or Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs). Non-point source pollutants are more difficult to monitor and control, although they are important contributors to surface water quality in urban areas.

Stormwater runoff pollutants vary based on land use, topography, the amount of impervious surface, and the amount and frequency of rainfall and irrigation practices. Runoff in developed areas typically contains oil, grease, and metals accumulated in streets, driveways, parking lots, and rooftops, as well as pesticides, herbicides, particulate matter, nutrients, animal waste, and other oxygen-demanding substances from landscaped areas. The highest pollutant concentrations usually occur during the first substantial storm events of the wet season, commonly referred to as the "first flush." In the Planning Area, stormwater is generally conveyed through local storm drain facilities, detention/treatment facilities, and drainage corridors before ultimately discharging to Mountain House Creek and Old River.

Construction activities, grading, vegetation removal, and other ground-disturbing activities can increase erosion and sedimentation if not properly managed. Sediment can increase turbidity, reduce water clarity, transport attached pollutants, affect aquatic habitat, and reduce the capacity or function of drainage facilities. Operational runoff from developed areas can also contribute pollutants to downstream receiving waters if stormwater treatment, source control, and best management practices are not properly implemented. Applicable federal, State, regional, and local stormwater requirements, including NPDES permit requirements, the Construction General Permit, the City's Storm Water Management Program (SWMP), and the Municipal Code, are discussed in Section 3.9.2, Regulatory Setting.

[4] Jacobs Carter Burgess. Mountain House Storm Water Management Program. August 2008. Available at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/swmp/mhcsd_swmp.pdf. Accessed September May 2026.

Section 303(d) Impaired Water Bodies

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to identify and list water bodies that do not meet, or are not expected to meet, water quality standards (i.e., "impaired" water bodies). The State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB's) Integrated Report includes the 303(d) listings for various water bodies within the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) region and throughout the State. The 303(d) category lists the potential impairments associated with the constituents of concern (pollutants) for a particular water body. A Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) is an estimate of the daily load of pollutants that a water body may receive from point sources, non-point sources, and natural background conditions (including an appropriate margin of safety), without exceeding its water quality standard. Those facilities and activities that are discharging into the water body, collectively, must not exceed the 303(d)-listed impairment and TMDL. In general terms, municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) and other dischargers within each watershed are collectively responsible for meeting the required reductions and other TMDL requirements by the assigned deadline.

According to the SWRCB's 2024 Integrated Report, Mountain House Creek (in Delta Waterways, southern portion) is listed as an impaired water body for chloride and salinity. Mountain House Creek discharges to Old River. The Old River segment extending from the San Joaquin River to the Delta-Mendota Canal, in Delta Waterways, southern portion, is also identified in the 2024 Integrated Report as impaired for several constituents, including chlorpyrifos, electrical conductivity, low dissolved oxygen, oxygen dissolved, and total dissolved solids.[5]

GROUNDWATER

Groundwater resources in the San Joaquin River Hydrologic Region are supplied by both alluvial and fractured rock aquifers. Alluvial aquifers are composed of sand and gravel or finer grained sediments, with groundwater stored within the voids, or pore space, between the alluvial sediments. Fractured-rock aquifers consist of impermeable granitic, metamorphic, volcanic, and hard sedimentary rocks, with groundwater being stored within cracks, fractures, or other void spaces. The distribution and extent of alluvial and fractured-rock aquifers and water wells vary within the region.[6]

The Planning Area overlies a portion of the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin, Tracy Subbasin (Tracy Subbasin). The Tracy Subbasin is designated by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) as a medium-priority basin under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and is therefore required to be managed under a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The Tracy Subbasin is not adjudicated.

The Tracy Subbasin encompasses approximately 238,429 acres, or 370 square miles, in San Joaquin and Alameda counties. The Subbasin is bounded generally by Old River and the San Joaquin River to the north and east, the San Joaquin-Stanislaus county line to the south, and the Coastal Ranges to the west. The

[5] State Water Resources Board, 2024, California Integrated Report Map. Available at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2024-integrated-report.html. Accessed May 4, 2026.

[6] California Department of Water Resources. April 2015. California's Groundwater Update 2013. A Compilation of Enhanced Content for California Water Plan Update 2013.

Subbasin includes Delta islands and waterways, as well as urban and agricultural communities, including the community of Mountain House. Surface water is available to most areas of the Subbasin and is supplemented with groundwater in certain areas. Approximately 2,400 wells are present in the Subbasin and provide about 12,000 acre-feet annually for drinking water and irrigation, which represents approximately 3 percent of total Subbasin water supplies, with the remaining 97 percent supplied by surface water.[7]

FLOODPLAIN MAPPING

FEMA Flood Zones

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mapping provides important guidance for cities and counties planning for flooding events and regulating development within identified flood hazard areas. FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is intended to encourage State and local governments to adopt responsible floodplain management programs and flood measures. Floodplain zones are determined by FEMA and used to create Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) designating these areas. These tools assist cities in mitigating flooding hazards through land use planning and building permit requirements.

Figure 3.9-3 shows mapped flood hazard areas in and around the Planning Area. As shown, while the majority of the Planning Area lies outside of a FEMA-designated floodplain (i.e., area of minimal flood hazard), the northern portion of the Planning Area is within a FEMA-designated 100-year floodplain. Revisions to these mapped floodplain boundaries may occur through FEMA's Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) process following the completion of qualifying physical improvements, including site grading, fill placement, or levee upgrades.

SB 5 Flood Zones

Senate Bill 5 (SB 5) calls for 200-year flood protection to be the minimum level of protection for urban and urbanizing areas in the Central Valley. Specifically, SB 5 requires all urban and urbanizing areas in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys to achieve 200-year urban level of flood protection (or a finding of adequate progress toward 200-year flood protection) in order to approve development. As shown in Figure 3.9-3, the northern portion of the Planning Area (north of Byron Road) is identified as a 200-year floodplain. Future development within these areas would be required to provide certification of adequate flood protection prior to approval.

Dam Inundation

Protection from flood hazards created by dam failures is critical to the safety and wellbeing of Mountain House residents. While dam failures can result from a number of natural or manmade causes, such as earthquakes, erosion, improper siting, improper maintenance, rapidly rising flood waters and structural/design flaws, earthquakes centered close to a dam are typically the most likely cause of failure. According to the San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, there is no history of dam failure

[7] GEI Consultants. November 2021. Tracy Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

affecting the County, but there have been recurring issues with flooding due to high flows released below dams in the area.[8]

Figure 3.9-4 shows dam failure inundation hazards in and around the Planning Area. As shown, there are mapped inundation areas in the northern portion of the Planning Area associated with Shaver Lake, Don Pedro Dam, New Exchequer, Mammoth Pool, Bethany Forebay, Huntington Lake 1, Vermilion Valley Dam, and Los Vaqueros.

3.9.2 REGULATORY SETTING

There are a number of regulatory agencies whose responsibility includes the oversight of the water resources of the state and nation including FEMA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the SWRCB, and RWQCBs. The following is an overview of the federal, State, and local statutes and regulations pertaining to water quality and hydrology that are applicable to the proposed Project.

FEDERAL

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA), initially passed in 1972, regulates the discharge of pollutants into watersheds throughout the nation. CWA Section 402(p) establishes a framework for regulating municipal and industrial stormwater discharges under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program. CWA Section 402(p) requires that stormwater associated with industrial activity that discharges either directly to surface waters or indirectly through municipal separate storm sewers must be regulated by an NPDES permit.

The CWA establishes the basic structure for regulating the increases of pollutants into the waters of the United States and gives the U.S. EPA the authority to implement pollution control programs. The CWA's goal is to regulate all discharges into the nation's waters and to restore, maintain, and preserve the integrity of those waters. The CWA sets water quality standards for all contaminants in surface waters and mandates permits for wastewater and stormwater discharges.

The CWA also requires states to establish site-specific water quality standards for navigable bodies of water and regulates other activities that affect water quality, such as dredging and the filling of wetlands. The following CWA sections assist in ensuring water quality for waters of the United States:

- CWA Section 208 requires the use of BMPs to control the discharge of pollutants in stormwater during construction;
- CWA Section 303(d) requires the creation of a list of impaired water bodies by states, territories, and authorized tribes; evaluation of lawful activities that may impact impaired water bodies; and preparation of plans to improve the quality of these water bodies. CWA Section 303(d) also establishes TMDLs, which are the maximum amount of pollutants that a water body can receive and still safely meet water quality standard; and

[8] San Joaquin County. San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. January 2023.

- CWA Section 404 authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to require permits for the discharge of dredge or fill materials into waters in the United States, including wetlands.

In California, the EPA has designated the SWRCB and its nine RWQCBs with the authority to identify beneficial uses and adopt applicable water quality objectives.

The SWRCB is responsible for implementing the CWA and does so through issuing NPDES permits to cities and counties through RWQCBs. The Planning Area is in a watershed administered by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Federal Emergency Management Agency

FEMA's primary mission is to reduce the loss of life and property and protect from all hazards, including flooding, among others. FEMA advises on building codes and flood plain management; teaches people how to get through a disaster; helps equip local and State emergency preparedness; coordinates the federal response to a disaster; makes disaster assistance available to states, communities, businesses and individuals; trains emergency managers; supports the nation's fire service; and administers the national flood and crime insurance programs.

Flood is a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of two or more acres of normally dry land area or of two or more properties. The term "100-year flood" is defined by FEMA as the flood elevation that has a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded each year. A "500-year flood" is one which has a 0.2 percent chance of occurring each year. A 500-year flood event would be slightly deeper and cover a greater area than a 100-year flood event.

Flood zones are geographic areas that FEMA defines, based on studies of flood risk. The zone boundaries are shown on flood hazard maps, also called Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). High Risk Zones or Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA or Zone A) are high-risk flood areas where special flood, mudflow, or flood-related erosion hazards exist, and flood insurance is mandatory. SFHAs are those areas subject to inundation by a 100-year flood. Low-to-Moderate Risk Zones or Non-Special Flood Hazard Areas (Zones B, C, X) are areas that are not in any immediate danger from flooding caused by overflowing rivers or hard rains. Insurance purchase is not required in these zones.

FEMA is responsible for administering the NFIP, which enables property owners in participating communities to purchase insurance as protection against flood losses in exchange for State and community floodplain management regulations that reduce future flood damages. In communities that participate in the NFIP, mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements apply to all Zones A, which are communities subject to a 100-year flood event. In addition to providing flood insurance and reducing flood damages through floodplain management regulations, the NFIP identifies and maps the nation's floodplains on FIRMs.

FEMA is mandated by the Flood Insurance Act of 1968 and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 to evaluate flood hazards and provide FIRMs for local and regional planners to further promote safe floodplain development. Flood risk data presented on FIRMs are based on historic, hydrologic, hydraulic, and meteorological data, as well as flood control works, open-space conditions, and development. To prepare a FIRM that illustrates the extent of flood hazards in flood-prone communities, FEMA conducts

an engineering study referred to as Flood Insurance Study. Using information collected in these studies, FEMA engineers and cartographers delineate SFHAs on FIRMs.

FEMA provides administrative procedures to officially update or revise effective FIRMs. A Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) is a formal modification to a FIRM that reflects changes to SFHA boundaries, base flood elevations, or floodway delineations following the completion of qualifying physical improvements, including site grading, fill placement, or levee upgrades.

Flood Control Act

The Flood Control Act (1917) established survey and cost estimate requirements for flood hazards in the Sacramento Valley. All levees and structures constructed per the Act were to be maintained locally but controlled federally. All rights of way necessary for the construction of flood control infrastructure were to be provided to the Federal government at no cost.

Federal involvement in the construction of flood control infrastructure, primarily dams and levees, became more pronounced upon passage of the Flood Control Act of 1936, which established flood control as a national priority and committing the federal government to protecting people and property.

Flood Disaster Protection Act (FDPA)

The Flood Disaster Protection Act (FDPA) of 1973 was a response to the shortcomings of FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program, which were experienced during the flood season of 1972. The FDPA prohibited federal assistance, including acquisition, construction, and financial assistance, within delineated floodplains in non-participating NFIP communities. Furthermore, all Federal agencies and/or federally insured and federally regulated lenders must require flood insurance for all acquisitions or developments in designated SFHAs in communities that participate in the NFIP.

Improvements, construction, and developments within SFHAs are generally subject to the following standards:

- All new construction and substantial improvements of residential buildings must have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated to or above the base flood elevation (BFE).
- All new construction and substantial improvements of non-residential buildings must either have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated to or above the BFE or dry-floodproofed to the BFE.
- Buildings can be elevated to or above the BFE using fill, or they can be elevated on extended foundation walls or other enclosure walls, on piles, or on columns.
- Extended foundation or other enclosure walls must be designed and constructed to withstand hydrostatic pressure and be constructed with flood-resistant materials and contain openings that will permit the automatic entry and exit of floodwaters. Any enclosed area below the BFE can only be used for the parking of vehicles, building access, or storage.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

Per the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, the NFIP has three fundamental purposes: better indemnify individuals for flood losses through insurance; reduce future flood damages through State and community

floodplain management regulations; and reduce federal expenditures for disaster assistance and flood control.

While the National Flood Insurance Act provided for subsidized flood insurance for existing structures, the provision of flood insurance by FEMA became contingent on the adoption of floodplain regulations at the local level.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

NPDES permits are required for discharges to navigable waters of the United States, which includes any discharge to surface waters, including lakes, rivers, streams, bays, oceans, dry stream beds, wetlands, and storm sewers that are tributary to any surface water body. NPDES permits are issued under the CWA, Title IV, Permits and Licenses, Section 402 (33 USC 466 et seq.)

The RWQCB issues these permits in lieu of direct issuance by the Environmental Protection Agency, subject to review and approval by the EPA Regional Administrator (EPA Region 9). The terms of these NPDES permits implement pertinent provisions of the CWA and implementing regulations, including pre-treatment, sludge management, effluent limitations for specific industries, and anti-degradation. In general, the discharge of pollutants is to be eliminated or reduced as much as practicable so as to achieve the CWA's goal of "fishable and swimmable" navigable (surface) waters. Technically, all NPDES permits issued by the RWQCB are also Waste Discharge Requirements issued under the authority of the CWA.

These NPDES permits regulate discharges from publicly owned treatment works, industrial discharges, stormwater runoff, dewatering operations, and groundwater cleanup discharges. NPDES permits are issued for five years or less, and are therefore to be updated regularly. Individual projects in the City that disturb more than one acre would be required to obtain NPDES coverage under the California General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit). The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) describing BMPs the discharger would use to prevent and retain storm water runoff. The SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program; a chemical monitoring program for "non-visible" pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs; and a sediment monitoring plan if the site discharges directly to a waterbody listed on the 303(d) list for sediment.

A Phase II Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer (MS4) General Permit was adopted by the SWRCB on February 5, 2013 (Water Quality Order No. 2013-0001-DWQ, NPDES NO. CAS000004, as amended).

STATE

California Fish and Game Code

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) protects streams, water bodies, and riparian corridors through the streambed alteration agreement process under Section 1600 to 1616 of the California Fish and Game Code. The California Fish and Game Code establishes that "an entity may not substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream or lake, or deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked,

or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake" (Fish and Game Code Section 1602(a)) without notifying the CDFW, incorporating necessary mitigation and obtaining a streambed alteration agreement. The CDFW's jurisdiction extends to the top of banks and often includes the outer edge of riparian vegetation canopy cover

California Code of Regulations

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 22, Chapter 15, Article 20 requires all public water systems to prepare a Consumer Confidence Report for distribution to their customers and to the Department of Health Services. The Consumer Confidence Report provides information regarding the quality of potable water provided by the water system. It includes information on the sources of the water, any detected contaminants in the water, the maximum contaminants levels set by regulation, violations and actions taken to correct them, and opportunities for public participation in decisions that may affect the quality of the water provided.

California Government Code

Relevant sections of the California Government Code are identified below.

SECTION 65302

Revised safety elements must include maps of any 200-year flood plains and levee protection zones within the planning area.

SECTION 65584.04

Any land having inadequate flood protection, as determined by FEMA or DWR, must be excluded from land identified as suitable for urban development within the planning area.

SECTION 8589.4

California Government Code Section 8589.4, commonly referred to as the Potential Flooding-Dam Inundation Act, requires owners of dams to prepare maps showing potential inundation areas in the event of dam failure. A dam failure inundation zone is different from a flood hazard zone under the NFIP. NFIP flood zones are areas along streams or coasts where storm flooding is possible from a "100-year flood." In contrast, a dam failure inundation zone is the area downstream from a dam that could be flooded in the event of dam failure due to an earthquake or other catastrophe. Dam failure inundation maps are reviewed and approved by the California Office of Emergency Services (OES). Sellers of real estate within inundation zones are required to disclose this information to prospective buyers.

California Water Code

DIVISION 3, DAMS AND RESERVOIRS

Parts 1 and 2 of Division 3 of the California Water Code governs dam safety, permitting, inspections, and related responsibilities in California. It establishes the State's authority and procedures for ensuring dam and reservoir safety through regulation, inspection, and enforcement led by the Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD).

PORTER-COLOGNE WATER ACT

California's primary statute governing water quality and water pollution issues with respect to both surface waters and groundwater is the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1970 (Division 7 of the California Water Code) (Porter-Cologne Act). The Porter-Cologne Act grants the SWRCB and each of the RWQCBs power to protect water quality and is the primary vehicle for implementation of California's responsibilities under the Federal CWA. The Porter-Cologne Act grants the SWRCB and the RWQCBs authority and responsibility to adopt plans and policies, to regulate discharges to surface and groundwater, to regulate waste disposal sites, and to require cleanup of discharges of hazardous materials and other pollutants. The Porter-Cologne Act also establishes reporting requirements for unintended discharges of any hazardous substance, sewage, or oil or petroleum product.

Each RWQCB must formulate and adopt a Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for its region. The regional plans are to conform to the policies set forth in the Porter-Cologne Act and established by the SWRCB in its State water policy. The Porter-Cologne Act also provides that a RWQCB may include within its regional plan water discharge prohibitions applicable to particular conditions, areas, or types of waste.

Senate Bill 610 and Assembly Bill 901

The State Legislature passed SB 610 and AB 901 in 2001. Both measures modified the Urban Water Management Planning Act.

SB 610 requires additional information in an urban water management plan if groundwater is identified as a source of water available to an urban water supplier. It also requires that the plan include a description of all water supply projects and programs that may be undertaken to meet total projected water use. SB 610 requires a city or county that determines a project is subject to CEQA to identify any public water system that may supply water to the project and to request identified public water systems to prepare a specified water supply assessment. The assessment must include, among other information, an identification of existing water supply entitlements, water rights, or water service contracts relevant to the identified water supply for the proposed project, and water received in prior years pursuant to these entitlements, rights, and contracts.

AB 901 requires an urban water management plan to include information, to the extent practicable, relating to the quality of existing sources of water available to an urban water supplier over given time periods. AB 901 also requires information on the manner in which water quality affects water management strategies and supply reliability. The bill requires a plan to describe plans to supplement a water source that may not be available at a consistent level of use, to the extent practicable. Additional findings and declarations relating to water quality are required.

Senate Bill 221

SB 221 adds Government Code Section 66455.3, requiring that the local water agency be sent a copy of any proposed residential subdivision of more than 500 dwelling units within five days of the subdivision application being accepted as complete for processing by the city or county. It also adds Government Code Section 66473.7, establishing detailed requirements for establishing whether a "sufficient water supply" exists to support any proposed residential subdivisions of more than 500 dwellings, including any such subdivision involving a development agreement. When approving a qualifying subdivision tentative map,

the city or county must include a condition requiring availability of a sufficient water supply. The applicable public water system must provide proof of availability. If there is no public water system, the city or county must undertake the analysis described in Government Code Section 66473.7. The analysis must include consideration of effects on other users of water and groundwater.

Senate Bill 5

SB 5 requires an urban level of flood protection providing 200-year flood protection for urban and urbanizing areas within the Central Valley. Per SB 5, applicable cities and counties in the Central Valley are required to incorporate the data and analysis of the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP) into their General Plans and Zoning Ordinances. Under SB 5, approvals for new development within a 200-year floodplain are prohibited unless the local agency can prove the area already has 200-year protection, is making adequate progress toward it, or if the potential flood depth during a 200-year event is less than three feet.

State Updated Model Landscape Ordinance

Under AB 1881, the updated Model Landscape Ordinance requires cities and counties to adopt landscape water conservation ordinances by January 31, 2010 or to adopt a different ordinance that is at least as effective in conserving water as the updated Model Ordinance.

State Water Resources Control Board Storm Water Strategy

The Storm Water Strategy is founded on the results of the Storm Water Strategic Initiative, which served to direct the State Water Board's role in storm water resources management and evolve the Storm Water Program by a) developing guiding principles to serve as the foundation of the storm water program, b) identifying issues that support or inhibit the program from aligning with the guiding principles, and c) proposing and prioritizing projects that the Water Boards could implement to address those issues.

The State Water Board staff created a strategy-based document called the Strategy to Optimize Management of Storm Water (STORMS). STORMS includes a program vision, missions, goals, objectives, projects, timelines, and consideration of the most effective integration of project outcomes into the Water Board's Storm Water Program.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) established a framework for sustainable, local groundwater management. SGMA requires groundwater-dependent regions to halt overdraft and bring basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge. With passage of the SGMA, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) launched the Sustainable Groundwater Management Program to implement the law and provide ongoing support to local agencies around the State. The SGMA:

- Establishes a definition of "sustainable groundwater management;
- Requires that a Groundwater Sustainability Plan be adopted for the most important groundwater basins in California;
- Establishes a timetable for adoption of Groundwater Sustainability Plans;

- Empowers local agencies to manage basins sustainably;
- Establishes basic requirements for Groundwater Sustainability Plans; and
- Provides for a limited State role.

In the basins designated by DWR as medium and high priority, local public agencies and Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) are required to develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) or alternatives to GSPs (Alternative GSP). An Alternative GSP, per Water Code Section 10733.6(b), may be any of the following: an existing groundwater management plan or other law authorizing groundwater management; groundwater management pursuant to an adjudication; or an analysis of basin conditions that demonstrates that the basin has operated within its sustainable yield over a period of at least 10 years. Alternative GSPs are reviewed by DWR staff to confirm they will achieve the same outcome as a GSP, which is sustainable groundwater management for the basin.

Delta Reform Act

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009 (Delta Reform Act) established the Delta Stewardship Council to create a comprehensive, long-term, legally enforceable plan to guide how multiple federal, State, and local agencies manage the Delta's water and environmental resources. The 2009 legislation directed the Delta Stewardship Council to oversee the implementation of this plan through coordination and oversight of State and local agencies proposing to fund, carry out, and approve Delta-related activities. It also granted the Delta Stewardship Council regulatory and appellate authority over certain actions that take place in whole or in part in the Delta and Suisun Marsh, referred to as covered actions.

LOCAL

Delta Plan

The Delta Plan, adopted by the Delta Stewardship Council in 2013 and periodically amended, is a comprehensive, long-term management plan designed to guide State and local actions within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Enacted to implement the coequal goals of the Delta Reform Act, the plan focuses on ensuring a reliable water supply while simultaneously protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The plan contains a series of legally enforceable regulatory policies (23 CCR §§ 5001-5016). Plans, programs, and/or projects that meet the definition of a covered action must be consistent with the Delta Plan. The Delta Plan covers the Legal Delta and Suisun Marsh. The majority of the Planning Area is located within the Secondary Zone of the Legal Delta, with the exception of the southwestern corner, which is outside of the Legal Delta.

San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) was last updated in January 2023 in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000. It is a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan that covers the County's geographical area and was developed with input from various San Joaquin

County departments, four cities within the County, and other agencies. The LHMP is intended to guide hazard mitigation planning to reduce the effects of hazard events, including flooding.

Tracy Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan

The Tracy Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) is a State-approved plan to protect and manage groundwater resources over a 20-year timeline. The GSP was developed to comply with SGMA requirements and establishes measurable milestones to preserve water quality, monitor well levels, and avoid future environmental issues such as land subsidence.

City of Mountain House 2025 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP)

The purpose of the Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) is to provide a planning tool for Mountain House to develop, manage, and deliver municipal water supplies to its water service area. UWMPs help water suppliers assess the availability of their water supplies with current and projected water use to help ensure reliable water service under different conditions. The Urban Water Management Planning Act requires larger water suppliers that provide water to urban users to develop UWMPs every five years. The 2025 UWMP assesses the availability of supplies to meet forecast water uses during various hydrologic conditions (i.e., normal year, single dry year, and five consecutive dry years) through 2045.

As part of the 2025 UWMP, the City also prepared a Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) pursuant to California Water Code Section 10632. The WSCP establishes a comprehensive, actionable framework for evaluating water supply reliability and implementing response actions during varying levels of water shortage. While the WSCP is submitted as part of the 2025 UWMP, it is structured as a stand-alone document that may be updated or amended independently, as needed, without requiring amendment of the UWMP itself.

Mountain House Stormwater Management Program

Mountain House has implemented a local Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) to comply with NPDES Phase II requirements for small municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). The SWMP was developed in August 2008. The goal of the SWMP is to reduce the discharge of stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, protect water quality, and satisfy the requirements of the Clean Water Act. The SWMP includes implementation of best management practices (BMPs), an implementation schedule, and measurable goals to help ensure that stormwater discharges are managed in accordance with applicable water quality requirements.

City of Mountain House Municipal Code

Mountain House Municipal Code Title 5, Division 9, *Stormwater Management Requirements and Discharge Control*, contains the City's Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance, which establishes minimum stormwater management requirements and controls consistent with the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Act. It is intended to comply with federal and State stormwater and urban runoff pollution control laws, prohibit illicit discharges into the storm drain system, reduce non-stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable, minimize increases in stormwater runoff from development, reduce flooding, siltation, and streambank erosion, and minimize nonpoint source pollution and surface water runoff from development.

Title 9, Division 14, *Grading and Excavation Provisions*, contains standards for grading and excavations of development projects. In accordance with Municipal Code Section 9-14-202, *Grading or Excavation Permit Required*, grading and excavation activities require approval of a grading permit obtained from the Building Inspection Division, with the exception of exempt activities enumerated in Section 9-14-203. Section 9-14-206, *Water Obstruction*, addresses grading activities to ensure they do not alter natural drainage or cause flooding or accelerated erosion. Section 9-14-209, *Grading Adjacent to Watercourses*, addresses grading activities along watercourses that include Old River, Mountain House Creek, and marshes and wetlands.

Title 9, Division 16, Chapter 2, *Flood Hazards*, contains the City's floodplain management regulations, which are intended to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, and to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions. The floodplain management regulations apply to all areas of special flood hazard within Mountain House and contain provisions related to special permit requirements, prohibited uses, and building construction standards to reduce flood hazard impacts.

3.9.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project will have a significant impact on the environment associated with hydrology and water quality if it will:

- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality;
- Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin;
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
    - Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;
    - Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;
    - Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
    - Impede or redirect flood flows.
- In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; and/or
- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.9-1: General Plan implementation could violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan (Less than Significant)

CONSTRUCTION-RELATED WATER QUALITY IMPACTS

Grading, excavation, removal of vegetation cover, and loading activities associated with future construction activities could temporarily increase runoff, erosion, and sedimentation. Construction activities also could result in soil compaction and wind erosion impacts that could adversely affect soils and reduce the revegetation potential at construction sites and staging areas. The main pollutant of concern during construction is typically sediment and soil particles that discharge offsite due to wind, rain, and construction patterns.

The proposed Project is a planning-level document and does not include any site-specific development proposals. Future development projects consistent with the General Plan would be subject to City development review, project-level environmental review, and applicable regulatory requirements. In compliance with NPDES Permit regulations, the State of California requires that any construction activity disturbing one acre or more of soil comply with the Construction General Permit. The Construction General Permit requires development and implementation of a SWPPP and monitoring plan, which must include erosion- and sediment-control BMPs that would meet or exceed measures required by the Construction General Permit to control stormwater quality degradation due to potential construction-related pollutants. In addition, Mountain House Municipal Code Title 5, Division 9, *Stormwater Management Requirements and Discharge Control*, contains the City's Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance, which establishes minimum stormwater management requirements and controls consistent with the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Act. Grading and excavation activities require approval of a grading permit pursuant to Title 9, Division 14, *Grading and Excavation Provisions*.

The General Plan sets policies and actions for buildout of the City, but it does not envision or authorize any specific development project. As such, the site-specific details of potential future development projects are currently unknown, and analysis of potential impacts of such projects is not feasible as it would be speculative. However, each future project must include detailed project specific drainage plans that control storm water runoff and erosion, both during and after construction. The Central Valley RWQCB would require a project-specific SWPPP to be prepared for each future project that disturbs an area one acre or larger. The SWPPP would include project-specific BMPs designed to control drainage and erosion. For projects disturbing less than one acre, compliance with the City's Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance and grading permit requirements would reduce potential construction-related impacts. Further, the General Plan proposes goals, policies, and actions aimed at reducing water quality impacts. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-3.3 directs the City to protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and BMPs. Action RM-3a requires new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater BMPs consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the NPDES program to reduce

pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. Proposed Public Services and Facilities Element Action PSF-5c requires all new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate on-site stormwater detention, retention, or conveyance in compliance with the City's Stormwater Management Program and NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, and to analyze their drainage impacts to ensure local infrastructure can handle increased flows or implement necessary mitigation improvements. Therefore, the proposed Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, nor would it otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan. Therefore, construction-related water quality impacts would be ***less than significant***.

OPERATION-RELATED WATER QUALITY IMPACTS

Future development projects consistent with the General Plan may result in long-term operational impacts to the quality of stormwater and urban runoff, subsequently impacting downstream water quality. While the development contemplated under the General Plan would be within areas currently designated for urban uses, many of these areas are currently undeveloped. New development and infrastructure projects would increase the amount of impervious surfaces throughout the Planning Area, resulting in increased stormwater flow volumes and velocities, as well as urban runoff containing pollutants and other first flush contaminants. These contaminants include sediments, petroleum hydrocarbons, pesticides, fertilizers, nutrients, and heavy metals such as lead, zinc, and copper. Without proper management, these constituents could degrade water quality in onsite and offsite drainage flows to area waterways.

As described above, the local water quality control plan (Basin Plan) is maintained by the Central Valley RWQCB. The Basin Plan specifies the State's water quality standards (i.e., beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and antidegradation policy) and serves as the basis for the RWQCB's regulatory programs. When permittees and projects comply with the provisions of applicable NPDES permits and water quality permitting, they are consistent with the Basin Plan.

Waters that are listed under Section 303(d) of the CWA are known as "impaired." Mountain House Creek (in Delta Waterways, southern portion) and Old River are listed as impaired waterbodies. The MS4 and other dischargers within the Planning Area would be required to comply with applicable regulatory requirements to ensure discharges do not exceed the 303(d)-listed impairment and TMDL.

In general, State and regional water quality requirements and existing local stormwater management plans and ordinances, which implement CWA requirements, would prevent stormwater impacts from rising to a level of significance. The NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, Mountain House Stormwater Management Program, and Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance regulate stormwater discharges within the City and require development projects to implement stormwater management plans that identify BMPs and other control measures to reduce peak flows and the discharge of pollutants to receiving water bodies. Future development projects consistent with the General Plan would be reviewed during the development review process to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

In addition to the established regulatory framework, the General Plan proposes goals, policies, and actions that aim to enhance stormwater quality and infiltration, as well as ensuring the review of development

projects to identify potential stormwater and drainage impacts and requiring development to include measures to ensure that off-site runoff is not increased beyond pre-development levels during rain and flood event. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-3.3 directs the City to protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and BMPs. Policy RM-3.4 requires LID site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable NPDES permit requirements. Action RM-3a requires new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater BMPs consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the NPDES program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. Proposed Public Services and Facilities Element Policy PSF-5.5 requires all future development projects to analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows, or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts. Action PSF-5c requires all new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate on-site stormwater detention, retention, or conveyance in compliance with the City's Stormwater Management Program and NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, and to analyze their drainage impacts to ensure local infrastructure can handle increased flows or implement necessary mitigation improvements.

The Planning Area is served by a stormwater collection system operated and controlled by the City. As future development occurs, stormwater facilities would be in place or constructed as needed to reduce runoff rates and peak flows. Future development projects would also be required to comply with applicable regulatory requirements intended to ensure that stormwater does not cause flooding and water quality does not degrade to levels that would violate water quality standards. Through implementation of the General Plan policies and actions, implementation of the Mountain House Stormwater Management Program and Municipal Code requirements identified above, and compliance with mandatory federal and State regulations, future development projects associated with implementation of the General Plan would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality, or conflict or obstruct a water quality control plan. Therefore, operation-related water quality impacts would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-3.2: Integrated Water Management. Support integrated planning and management of all water resources, including but not limited to potable water, wastewater, recycled water, groundwater, and stormwater resources.

Policy RM-3.3: Stormwater Quality. Protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and best management practices.

Policy RM-3.4: Low Impact Development. The City shall require low impact development (LID) site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. LID measures shall include on-site stormwater retention, infiltration where appropriate, bioretention, permeable paving, and other techniques that reduce runoff and protect downstream waterways.

Policy RM-3.5: Waterway Buffering and Erosion Control. Maintain and enhance buffers along waterways and drainage corridors to protect water quality, support habitat, reduce erosion, and provide compatible trail and open space connections.

Policy RM-3.6: Groundwater and Soil Protection. Protect groundwater and soils from contamination through appropriate land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies.

Policy RM-3.9: Wastewater Systems. Manage the placement and operation of wastewater systems to prevent contamination of surface water and groundwater.

Action RM-3a: Require new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. During project review, ensure that development proposals incorporate stormwater treatment, runoff control measures, and low impact development (LID) techniques. Coordinate with responsible agencies, including the Regional Water Quality Control Board and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

Action RM-3b: Coordinate with the Byron Bethany Irrigation District and other regional water agencies during development review and long-range planning efforts to ensure adequate water supply, infrastructure capacity, and compliance with applicable Urban Water Management Plans and regional water planning requirements.

Public Services and Facilities Element

Goal PSF-5: Stormwater Management. Protect people, property, and natural resources through reliable stormwater infrastructure that reduces flooding and improves water quality.

Policy PSF-5.1: Facility Maintenance. Maintain the City's storm drainage facilities to ensure effective runoff conveyance and reduce localized flooding.

Policy PSF-5.2: Multi-Purpose Stormwater Facilities. Promote natural and multi-purpose stormwater facilities that integrate flood control with community amenities, such as ecological preserves and groundwater replenishment sites.

Policy PSF-5.3: Minimize Sediment Discharge. Minimize the discharge of pollutants and sediment into creeks, drainage channels, and other waterways to protect water quality and reduce erosion.

Policy PSF-5.4: Best Management Practices. Applicable projects shall incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Low Impact Development measures (LID) to treat stormwater before discharge from the site. The facilities shall be sized to meet regulatory requirements.

Policy PSF-5.5: Future Development. Require all future development projects to analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows, or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts.

Action PSF-5a: Regularly review and update the City's Storm Water Master Plan.

Action PSF-5c: As part of the development review process, continue to require all new development and significant redevelopment projects to:

1. Demonstrate how storm water runoff will be detained or retained on-site and/or conveyed to the nearest drainage facility as required by the City's Stormwater Management Program and Phase II Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit; and
2. Analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.9-2: General Plan implementation could result in the depletion of groundwater supplies, interfere substantially with groundwater recharge or conflict with a groundwater management plan (Less than Significant)

The Planning Area overlies a portion of the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin, Tracy Subbasin. The Tracy Subbasin is designated by the DWR as a medium-priority basin under SGMA and is managed under the Tracy Subbasin GSP, which was submitted to the DWR in 2022 and approved in 2024.

Future development consistent with the General Plan could yield a net growth above existing conditions, resulting in an overall increase in demand for water supply. Water service in the Planning Area is provided by the Byron Bethany Irrigation District (BBID). As discussed in Section 3.15, Utilities and Service Systems, of this EIR, the BBID's water supply sources include surface water, but do not include groundwater. Thus, the projected increase in water demand associated with the Project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies that would impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.

While the development contemplated under the General Plan would be within areas currently designated for urban uses, many of these areas are currently undeveloped. When compared to existing conditions, development consistent with General Plan buildout would allow currently undeveloped areas to develop with additional impervious surfaces, resulting in reduced rainwater infiltration and groundwater recharge to the Tracy Subbasin. The amount of new pavement and impervious surfaces, and the extent to which they affect infiltration, depends on the site-specific features and soil types of a given project site. In general, sandy soils have higher infiltration rates and can contribute to significant amounts of ground water recharge; clay soils tend to have lower percolation potentials; and impervious surfaces such as pavement significantly reduce infiltration capacity and increase surface water runoff.

As future development is proposed, each project would be reviewed for consistency with applicable stormwater regulations, including the NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, Mountain House Stormwater Management Program, and Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance. Qualifying projects would be required to implement site-specific postconstruction BMPs, which may include low impact development (LID) BMPs designed to limit impervious surfaces and improve infiltration. Future discretionary development projects would also be analyzed for potential environmental impacts, consistent with the requirements of CEQA. Further, the General Plan includes policies and actions to support groundwater recharge and water conservation. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-3.1 directs the City to coordinate with the BBID and other regional agencies to support a reliable long-term water supply through water conservation measures, education, innovation, and incentives that target all aspects of water supply and consumption. Policy RM-3.2 directs the City to support integrated planning and management of all water resources. Policy RM-3.4 requires LID site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable NPDES permit requirements. Policy RM-3.6 directs the City to protect groundwater and soils from contamination through appropriate land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies. Action RM-3a requires new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater BMPs consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the NPDES program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. Action RM-3b directs the City to coordinate with the BBID and other regional water agencies during development review and long-range planning efforts to ensure adequate water supply, infrastructure capacity, and compliance with applicable UWMPs and regional water planning requirements. Action RM-3c directs the City to evaluate opportunities to improve water supply reliability, storage capacity, and system redundancy, including by augmenting the City's water supply portfolio through the use of additional sources. Proposed Public Services and Facilities Element PSF-4.6 directs the City to reduce water and wastewater system demand by encouraging water conserving designs and equipment, encouraging water-conserving devices, and designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration. Action PSF-4a directs the City to review and update the UWMP and Potable Water System

Master Plan in order to meet regulatory requirements and to ensure the documents address existing and projected demand.

Implementation of General Plan policies, combined with continued management of the Tracy Subbasin, would ensure that future development anticipated by the General Plan would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies, interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, or conflict with a groundwater management plan. Therefore, impacts would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-3: A community that conserves and protects water resources to support long-term sustainability.

Policy RM-3.1: Water Supply. Coordinate with the Byron Bethany Irrigation District and other regional agencies to support a reliable long-term water supply through water conservation measures, education, innovation, and incentives that target all aspects of water supply and consumption.

Policy RM-3.2: Integrated Water Management. Support integrated planning and management of all water resources, including but not limited to potable water, wastewater, recycled water, groundwater, and stormwater resources.

Policy RM-3.4: Low Impact Development. The City shall require low impact development (LID) site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. LID measures shall include on-site stormwater retention, infiltration where appropriate, bioretention, permeable paving, and other techniques that reduce runoff and protect downstream waterways.

Policy RM-3.6: Groundwater and Soil Protection. Protect groundwater and soils from contamination through appropriate land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies.

Policy RM-3.7: Water Efficient Landscaping. The City shall require water-efficient landscape design and high-efficiency irrigation for parks, public landscaping, and new development projects

consistent with the State's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) and California's water conservation requirements.

Policy RM-3.8: Drought Resilience. Support water conservation and demand reduction strategies during drought conditions in coordination with local water agencies and applicable State requirements.

Action RM-3a: Require new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. During project review, ensure that development proposals incorporate stormwater treatment, runoff control measures, and low impact development (LID) techniques. Coordinate with responsible agencies, including the Regional Water Quality Control Board and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

Action RM-3b: Coordinate with the Byron Bethany Irrigation District and other regional water agencies during development review and long-range planning efforts to ensure adequate water supply, infrastructure capacity, and compliance with applicable Urban Water Management Plans and regional water planning requirements.

Action RM-3c: Evaluate opportunities to improve water supply reliability, storage capacity, and system redundancy by augmenting the City's water supply portfolio through the use of additional sources (such as riparian water from Old River, groundwater, stormwater reuse, and recycled water), implementing local storage solutions (such as an Aquifer Storage and Recovery Well System), and establishing additional interties.

Public Services and Facilities Element

Policy PSF-4.6: Reduced Demand. Reduce water and wastewater system demand by encouraging water conserving designs and equipment, encouraging water-conserving devices, and designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration.

Policy PSF-4.7: Recycled Water. Explore opportunities to expand the use of recycled water for irrigation, landscaping, and other appropriate uses.

Action PSF-4a: Periodically review and update the City's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), Potable Water System Master Plan, and Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (SSMP) in order to meet regulatory requirements and to ensure the documents address existing and projected demand.

Action PSF-4c: Regularly review and update the City's water conservation measures to be consistent with State law and current best management practices for water conservation.

Action PSF-4d: Promote reduced water and wastewater system demand through efficient water use by:

1. Requiring water conserving design and equipment in new construction;

2. Encouraging retrofitting with water conserving devices;
3. Designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration to the extent economically feasible; and
4. Maintaining a Citywide map of all water distribution and wastewater collection system components by monitoring the condition of the systems on a regular basis.

Policy PSF-5.2: Multi-Purpose Stormwater Facilities. Promote natural and multi-purpose stormwater facilities that integrate flood control with community amenities, such as ecological preserves and groundwater replenishment sites.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.9-3: General Plan implementation could alter the existing drainage pattern in a manner which would result in substantial erosion, siltation, flooding, impeded flows, or polluted runoff (Less than Significant)

EROSION AND SILTATION

Buildout consistent with the General Plan would result in new development projects, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and roadway projects, which may increase the area of impervious surfaces and/or result in alteration of existing drainage patterns. Substantial erosion or siltation is known to result during construction and/or during the post-construction phase if erosion control measures are not used. Erosion or siltation can also occur in the post-construction phase if runoff is not captured and conveyed appropriately.

As stated above, future development under the General Plan would be subject to NPDES permit requirements that address the control of erosion and siltation. This includes the Construction General Permit, which requires a SWPPP and the effective implementation of erosion control measures for any construction activity disturbing one acre or more of soil. Development under the General Plan would also be subject to construction and postconstruction requirements of the NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, Mountain House Stormwater Management Program, and Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance, which regulate stormwater discharges within the City and require development projects to implement stormwater management plans that identify BMPs and other control measures to reduce peak flows and the discharge of pollutants to receiving water bodies.

Further, the General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions that address erosion and siltation from the addition of impervious surfaces and alteration of existing drainage patterns. For example, proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-3.3 directs the City to protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and BMPs. Policy RM-3.4 requires LID site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable NPDES permit requirements. Action RM-3a

requires new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater BMPs consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the NPDES program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. Proposed Public Services and Facilities Element Policy PSF-5.5 requires all future development projects to analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows, or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts. Action PSF-5c requires all new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate on-site stormwater detention, retention, or conveyance in compliance with the City's Stormwater Management Program and NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, and to analyze their drainage impacts to ensure local infrastructure can handle increased flows or implement necessary mitigation improvements. Through implementation of the General Plan policies and existing regulations, erosion/siltation impacts from changes to the existing drainage patterns and increasing impervious surfaces would be ***less than significant*** and no mitigation is required.

SURFACE RUNOFF

Future development under the General Plan has the potential to result in changes to the existing drainage patterns and could exceed the capacity of stormwater drainage systems and/or cause flooding on- or off-site of a project. Flooding can occur from an increase in impervious surfaces, which increases the volume and speed of runoff. When the volume and speed of runoff are increased, drainage facilities may be unable to handle the flows and capacity could be exceeded.

As previously discussed, the Planning Area is served by a stormwater collection system operated and controlled by the City. As future development occurs, stormwater facilities would be in place or constructed as needed to reduce runoff rates and peak flows. Future development projects would also be required to comply with applicable regulatory requirements intended to ensure that stormwater does not cause flooding and water quality does not degrade to levels that would violate water quality standards.

Further, the General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions to provide adequate stormwater infrastructure for flood control and to reduce run-off quantity. For example, proposed Land Use Element Policy LU-2.2 requires that, as a condition of development approval, adequate drainage facilities are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-3.3 directs the City to protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and BMPs. Policy RM-3.4 requires LID site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable NPDES permit requirements. Action RM-3a requires new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater BMPs consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the NPDES program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. Proposed Public Services and Facilities Element Policy PSF-5.1 directs the City to maintain its storm drainage facilities to ensure effective runoff conveyance and reduce localized flooding. Policy PSF-5.5 requires all future development projects to analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows, or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts. Action PSF-5a directs the City to regularly review and update the City's Storm Water Master Plan. Action PSF-5b directs the City to identify stormwater drainage

facilities in need of improvement or repairs and address these needs through the City's Capital Improvement Program. Action PSF-5c requires all new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate on-site stormwater detention, retention, or conveyance in compliance with the City's Stormwater Management Program and NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, and to analyze their drainage impacts to ensure local infrastructure can handle increased flows or implement necessary mitigation improvements.

Through implementation of the General Plan policies and actions and compliance with the existing regulatory environment, runoff would not exceed the capacity of drainage systems, provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff, or cause flooding impacts from changes to the existing drainage patterns and increased impervious surfaces. Therefore, impacts would be ***less than significant*** and no mitigation is required.

FLOOD FLOWS

As described above and shown in Figure 3.9-3, the northern Planning Area contains mapped portions of a 200-year floodplain and/or FEMA-designated 100-year floodplain. In addition, as shown in Figure 3.9-4, there are mapped inundation areas in the northern portion of the Planning Area associated with Shaver Lake, Don Pedro Dam, New Exchequer, Mammoth Pool, Bethany Forebay, Huntington Lake 1, Vermilion Valley Dam, and Los Vaqueros.

Future development consistent with the General Plan would be required to comply with the City's floodplain management regulations contained in Title 9, Division 16, Chapter 2, *Flood Hazards*. The floodplain management regulations apply to all areas of special flood hazard within Mountain House as depicted on the recent floodplain maps and contain provisions related to special permit requirements, prohibited uses, and building construction standards to reduce flood hazard impacts. Future projects would be reviewed by the City to determine if they are located within special flood hazard areas and thus subject to additional provisions set forth in Title 9, Division 16, Chapter 2. Additionally, construction of storm drainage improvements would occur as part of an overall development or infrastructure project and would be considered in the environmental review associated with the specific development being proposed.

Further, the General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions to provide adequate stormwater infrastructure for flood control and to reduce run-off quantity. For example, proposed Land Use Element Policy-2.2 requires that, as a condition of development approval, adequate drainage facilities are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-3.3 directs the City to protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and BMPs. Policy RM-3.4 requires LID site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable NPDES permit requirements. Action RM-3a requires new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater BMPs consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the NPDES program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. Proposed Public Services and Facilities Element Policy PSF-5.1 directs the City to maintain its storm drainage facilities to ensure effective runoff conveyance and reduce localized flooding. Policy PSF-5.5 requires all future development projects to analyze their drainage

and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows, or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts. Action PSF-5a directs the City to regularly review and update the City's Storm Water Master Plan. Action PSF-5b directs the City to identify stormwater drainage facilities in need of improvement or repairs and address these needs through the City's Capital Improvement Program. Action PSF-5c requires all new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate on-site stormwater detention, retention, or conveyance in compliance with the City's Stormwater Management Program and NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, and to analyze their drainage impacts to ensure local infrastructure can handle increased flows or implement necessary mitigation improvements. Proposed Safety Element Policy SAF-2.5 directs the City to reduce flood hazards in developed areas susceptible to flooding and require new development in these areas to incorporate measures designed to mitigate flood hazards. Policy SAF-2.6 directs the City to maintain and regularly assess the status of local storm drainage infrastructure to ensure that the system is functioning properly. Policy SAF-2.9 directs the City to ensure that adequate drainage and erosion control measures are provided during construction of all new development; and to require new development and redevelopment projects to demonstrate that stormwater runoff and flood control measures will not increase flood risks or exceed capacity of downstream drainage infrastructure and receiving waterbodies.

With implementation of General Plan policies and actions and compliance with existing regulations, the General Plan would not impede or redirect flood flows; impacts would be ***less than significant*** and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-3.2: Integrated Water Management. Support integrated planning and management of all water resources, including but not limited to potable water, wastewater, recycled water, groundwater, and stormwater resources.

Policy RM-3.3: Stormwater Quality. Protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and best management practices.

Policy RM-3.4: Low Impact Development. The City shall require low impact development (LID) site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable National Pollutant Discharge

Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. LID measures shall include on-site stormwater retention, infiltration where appropriate, bioretention, permeable paving, and other techniques that reduce runoff and protect downstream waterways.

Policy RM-3.5: Waterway Buffering and Erosion Control. Maintain and enhance buffers along waterways and drainage corridors to protect water quality, support habitat, reduce erosion, and provide compatible trail and open space connections.

Policy RM-3.6: Groundwater and Soil Protection. Protect groundwater and soils from contamination through appropriate land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies.

Policy RM-3.9: Wastewater Systems. Manage the placement and operation of wastewater systems to prevent contamination of surface water and groundwater.

Action RM-3a: Require new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. During project review, ensure that development proposals incorporate stormwater treatment, runoff control measures, and low impact development (LID) techniques. Coordinate with responsible agencies, including the Regional Water Quality Control Board and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

Action RM-3b: Coordinate with the Byron Bethany Irrigation District and other regional water agencies during development review and long-range planning efforts to ensure adequate water supply, infrastructure capacity, and compliance with applicable Urban Water Management Plans and regional water planning requirements.

Public Services and Facilities Element

Goal PSF-5: Stormwater Management. Protect people, property, and natural resources through reliable stormwater infrastructure that reduces flooding and improves water quality.

Policy PSF-5.1: Facility Maintenance. Maintain the City's storm drainage facilities to ensure effective runoff conveyance and reduce localized flooding.

Policy PSF-5.2: Multi-Purpose Stormwater Facilities. Promote natural and multi-purpose stormwater facilities that integrate flood control with community amenities, such as ecological preserves and groundwater replenishment sites.

Policy PSF-5.3: Minimize Sediment Discharge. Minimize the discharge of pollutants and sediment into creeks, drainage channels, and other waterways to protect water quality and reduce erosion.

Policy PSF-5.4: Best Management Practices. Applicable projects shall incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Low Impact Development measures (LID) to treat stormwater

before discharge from the site. The facilities shall be sized to meet regulatory requirements.

Policy PSF-5.5: Future Development. Require all future development projects to analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows, or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts.

Action PSF-5a: Regularly review and update the City's Storm Water Master Plan.

Action PSF-5b: Identify stormwater drainage facilities in need of improvement or repairs and address these needs through the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Action PSF-5c: As part of the development review process, continue to require all new development and significant redevelopment projects to:

1. Demonstrate how storm water runoff will be detained or retained on-site and/or conveyed to the nearest drainage facility as required by the City's Stormwater Management Program and Phase II Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit; and
2. Analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts.

Safety Element

Goal SAF-2: Flooding. Flood hazard and inundation risk reduction to safeguard residents, property, and the natural environment.

Policy SAF-2.1: 100-Year Floodplain Management. The City shall maintain floodplain management regulations that comply with the minimum standards of the National Flood Insurance Program (44 CFR Part 60) for 100-year flood hazards. The City shall ensure that all development within Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) is subject to review for National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) compliance as a condition of approval.

Policy SAF-2.5: Areas Susceptible to Flooding. Reduce flood hazards in developed areas susceptible to flooding (i.e. Special Flood Hazard Zones and areas known to the City to flood during intense or prolonged rainfall events) and require new development in these areas to incorporate measures designed to mitigate flood hazards.

Policy SAF-2.6: Adequate Stormwater Infrastructure. Maintain and regularly assess the status of local storm drainage infrastructure to ensure that the system is functioning properly.

Policy SAF-2.9: New Development. Ensure that adequate drainage and erosion control measures are provided during construction of all new development. Require new development and redevelopment projects to demonstrate that stormwater runoff and flood control

measures will not increase flood risks or exceed capacity of downstream drainage infrastructure and receiving waterbodies.

Policy SAF-2.10: Existing Flood Structures. Ensure that construction activities will not result in adverse impacts to existing flood control and drainage structures.

Policy SAF-2.12: Urban Level Flood Protection. Require evaluation of potential flood hazards prior to approval of development projects to determine whether the proposed development is reasonably safe from flooding and consistent with California Department of Water Resources Urban Level of Flood Protection Criteria. The City shall not approve the execution of a development agreement, a tentative map, or a parcel map for which a tentative map is not required, or a discretionary permit or other discretionary entitlement that would result in the construction of a new building, or construction that would result in an increase in allowed occupancy for an existing building, or issuance of a ministerial permit that would result in the construction of a new residence for property that is located within a 200-year flood hazard zone, unless the adequacy of 200-year flood protection is demonstrated per State law (Government Code §65865.5, 65962, or 66474.5).

Policy SAF-2.13: 200-Year Flood Protection. Require that all new development within the 200-year floodplain, or within areas that would be inundated in the event of levee failure, demonstrate protection from a 200-year flood event prior to project approval. New residential and critical facilities development shall be protected from the 200-year flood event in accordance with Urban Level of Flood Protection Criteria and the City's adopted Standards and Specifications.

Action SAF-2a: Monitor changes in federal and State laws and regulations related to local flood protection, including the National Flood Insurance Program, and incorporate necessary changes into the Municipal Code, the City's Municipal Emergency Management Plan, and building codes as required and ensure that the City's regulations continue to require that new development within flood hazard zones is consistent with this Safety Element and is required to meet the flood protection requirements of State law.

Action SAF-2b: Provide information on flooding, flood control on private property, floodplains, and flood preparedness to the public.

Action SAF-2c: Review projects for project-related flood control and stormwater management impacts to ensure that all proposed development comply with the City's Stormwater Management Program and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System regulations.

Action SAF-2f: Require applications for development in areas subject to 200-year flooding to indicate the depth of predicted 200-year flooding on the basis of official maps approved by the City of Mountain House or Floodplain Administrator.

Action SAF-2g: The City shall implement the following measures for all development within the 200-year floodplain:

1. Pad Elevation Standard. Tentative maps and development plans for parcels within or adjacent to the 200-year floodplain shall demonstrate that finished pad elevations will be raised to a minimum of one foot above the 200-year base floodwater surface elevation, consistent with the grading and fill approach established in the City's adopted Standards and Specifications. Areas not intended for development, including open space, the Old River Regional Park, and storm conveyance corridors, may be graded below this elevation to preserve drainage function.
2. Pre-Approval Certification. Prior to approval of any final map or issuance of grading permits for land within the 200-year floodplain, the applicant shall submit a flood elevation certification prepared by a licensed civil engineer demonstrating conformance with the pad elevation standard described above.
3. FEMA Map Maintenance. The City shall pursue Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) applications to FEMA following completion of qualifying flood control improvements, including levee upgrades and grading activities, to reflect reduced flood risk and remove improved areas from SFHA designation where warranted.

SAF-2h: Update the City's Standards and Specifications to establish specific design criteria, building pad elevation standards, and finished floor elevation requirements for development within the 200-year floodplain and Urban Level of Flood Protection evaluation areas.

SAF-2i: Require project applicants for new development and redevelopment to submit comprehensive drainage and/or hydrologic studies during project review to verify that proposed stormwater management systems prevent downstream flooding and offsite impacts.

SAF-2j: Complete the City's enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Program and maintain continuous participation thereafter.

SAF-2k: Submit the draft Safety Element to the Central Valley Flood Protection Board and the California Department of Water Resources for statutory review prior to adoption, as required by State law.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.9-4: General Plan implementation would not release pollutants due to project inundation by flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche (Less than Significant)

A tsunami is a catastrophic ocean wave, usually caused by a submarine earthquake, an underwater or coastal landslide, or a volcanic eruption. The Planning Area is approximately 40 miles east of the San

Francisco Bay and is not located within a mapped Tsunami Hazard Area.[9] As such, impacts associated with the risk of pollutants from tsunamis is less than significant.

Seiches can occur in bodies of water both near and far from an earthquake epicenter. Seiches as a result of ground shaking could occur in the region that may adversely impact property owners down-gradient from bodies of water in or near the Planning Area, including dams and reservoirs.

As described above and shown in Figure 3.9-3, the northern Planning Area contains mapped portions of a 200-year floodplain and/or FEMA-designated 100-year floodplain. In addition, as shown in Figure 3.9-4, there are mapped inundation areas in the northern portion of the Planning Area associated with Shaver Lake, Don Pedro Dam, New Exchequer, Mammoth Pool, Bethany Forebay, Huntington Lake 1, Vermilion Valley Dam, and Los Vaqueros.

Jurisdictional sized dams (dams that are higher than six feet that impound 50 acre-feet or more of water, or dams 25 feet or higher that impound more than 15 acre-feet of water) are overseen and regulated by the DSOD. All eight of the dams associated with inundation areas mapped within the Planning Area are jurisdictional sized dams overseen by the DSOD, which regularly monitors and inspects the dams to ensure the facilities do not present unreasonable risks to the public, property, or the environment. Regulations provided in Division 3 of the California Water Code and ongoing oversight performed by the DSOD minimize the potential for dam failure. As such, failure of these dams is considered to have a low probability of occurring and is not considered to be a likely reasonably foreseeable event.

Should structures proposed under the General Plan become inundated during a future flood event, there is a risk of pollutants being released inadvertently into the environment. As described above, each future development project or improvement project that disturbs one acre or more of soil would be required to obtain NPDES coverage under the Construction General Permit, which would require an approved SWPPP that includes BMPs for grading and preservation of topsoil. SWPPPs are designed to control storm water quality degradation to the extent practicable using BMPs during and after construction. The City also regulates storm water discharge in accordance with the NPDES permit through its Stormwater Management Program and Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance. Additionally, the City's floodplain management regulations (Title 9, Division 16, Chapter 2, *Flood Hazards*) apply to all areas of special flood hazard within Mountain House and contain provisions related to special permit requirements, prohibited uses, and building construction standards to reduce flood hazard impacts.

Further, the General Plan includes policies and actions to reduce the risk of flooding and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. For example, proposed Land Use Element Policy-2.2 requires that, as a condition of development approval, adequate drainage facilities are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Proposed Resource Management Element Policy RM-3.3 directs the City to protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and BMPs. Policy RM-3.4 requires LID site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's

[9] California Department of Conservation, Tsunami Hazard Area Map. Available at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/ts_evacuation/. Accessed June 2026.

Stormwater Management Program and applicable NPDES permit requirements. Action RM-3a requires new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater BMPs consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the NPDES program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. Proposed Public Services and Facilities Element Policy PSF-5.1 directs the City to maintain its storm drainage facilities to ensure effective runoff conveyance and reduce localized flooding. Policy PSF-5.5 requires all future development projects to analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows, or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts. Action PSF-5a directs the City to regularly review and update the City's Storm Water Master Plan. Action PSF-5b directs the City to identify stormwater drainage facilities in need of improvement or repairs and address these needs through the City's Capital Improvement Program. Action PSF-5c requires all new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate on-site stormwater detention, retention, or conveyance in compliance with the City's Stormwater Management Program and NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, and to analyze their drainage impacts to ensure local infrastructure can handle increased flows or implement necessary mitigation improvements. Proposed Safety Element Policy SAF-2.5 directs the City to reduce flood hazards in developed areas susceptible to flooding and require new development in these areas to incorporate measures designed to mitigate flood hazards. Policy SAF-2.6 directs the City to maintain and regularly assess the status of local storm drainage infrastructure to ensure that the system is functioning properly. Policy SAF-2.9 directs the City to ensure that adequate drainage and erosion control measures are provided during construction of all new development; and to require new development and redevelopment projects to demonstrate that stormwater runoff and flood control measures will not increase flood risks or exceed capacity of downstream drainage infrastructure and receiving waterbodies. Action SAF-2i directs the City to require project applicants for new development and redevelopment to submit comprehensive drainage and/or hydrologic studies during project review to verify that proposed stormwater management systems prevent downstream flooding and offsite impacts. Action SAF-2i directs the City to require project applicants for new development and redevelopment to submit comprehensive drainage and/or hydrologic studies during project review to verify that proposed stormwater management systems prevent downstream flooding and offsite impacts.

Implementation of General Plan policies and compliance with applicable water quality requirements would reduce potential impacts. Therefore, impacts associated with the potential of pollutants being released due to project inundation associated with the General Plan would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-3.2: Integrated Water Management. Support integrated planning and management of all water resources, including but not limited to potable water, wastewater, recycled water, groundwater, and stormwater resources.

Policy RM-3.3: Stormwater Quality. Protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and best management practices.

Policy RM-3.4: Low Impact Development. The City shall require low impact development (LID) site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. LID measures shall include on-site stormwater retention, infiltration where appropriate, bioretention, permeable paving, and other techniques that reduce runoff and protect downstream waterways.

Policy RM-3.5: Waterway Buffering and Erosion Control. Maintain and enhance buffers along waterways and drainage corridors to protect water quality, support habitat, reduce erosion, and provide compatible trail and open space connections.

Policy RM-3.6: Groundwater and Soil Protection. Protect groundwater and soils from contamination through appropriate land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies.

Policy RM-3.9: Wastewater Systems. Manage the placement and operation of wastewater systems to prevent contamination of surface water and groundwater.

Action RM-3a: Require new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. During project review, ensure that development proposals incorporate stormwater treatment, runoff control measures, and low impact development (LID) techniques. Coordinate with responsible agencies, including the Regional Water Quality Control Board and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

Action RM-3b: Coordinate with the Byron Bethany Irrigation District and other regional water agencies during development review and long-range planning efforts to ensure adequate water supply, infrastructure capacity, and compliance with applicable Urban Water Management Plans and regional water planning requirements.

Public Services and Facilities Element

Goal PSF-5: Stormwater Management. Protect people, property, and natural resources through reliable stormwater infrastructure that reduces flooding and improves water quality.

Policy PSF-5.1: Facility Maintenance. Maintain the City's storm drainage facilities to ensure effective runoff conveyance and reduce localized flooding.

Policy PSF-5.2: Multi-Purpose Stormwater Facilities. Promote natural and multi-purpose stormwater facilities that integrate flood control with community amenities, such as ecological preserves and groundwater replenishment sites.

Policy PSF-5.3: Minimize Sediment Discharge. Minimize the discharge of pollutants and sediment into creeks, drainage channels, and other waterways to protect water quality and reduce erosion.

Policy PSF-5.4: Best Management Practices. Applicable projects shall incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Low Impact Development measures (LID) to treat stormwater before discharge from the site. The facilities shall be sized to meet regulatory requirements.

Policy PSF-5.5: Future Development. Require all future development projects to analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows, or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts.

Action PSF-5a: Regularly review and update the City's Storm Water Master Plan.

Action PSF-5b: Identify stormwater drainage facilities in need of improvement or repairs and address these needs through the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Action PSF-5c: As part of the development review process, continue to require all new development and significant redevelopment projects to:

1. Demonstrate how storm water runoff will be detained or retained on-site and/or conveyed to the nearest drainage facility as required by the City's Stormwater Management Program and Phase II Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit; and
2. Analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts.

Safety Element

Goal SAF-2: Flooding. Flood hazard and inundation risk reduction to safeguard residents, property, and the natural environment.

Policy SAF-2.1: 100-Year Floodplain Management. The City shall maintain floodplain management regulations that comply with the minimum standards of the National Flood Insurance Program (44 CFR Part 60) for 100-year flood hazards. The City shall ensure that all

development within Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) is subject to review for National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) compliance as a condition of approval.

Policy SAF-2.5: Areas Susceptible to Flooding. Reduce flood hazards in developed areas susceptible to flooding (i.e. Special Flood Hazard Zones and areas known to the City to flood during intense or prolonged rainfall events) and require new development in these areas to incorporate measures designed to mitigate flood hazards.

Policy SAF-2.6: Adequate Stormwater Infrastructure. Maintain and regularly assess the status of local storm drainage infrastructure to ensure that the system is functioning properly.

Policy SAF-2.9: New Development. Ensure that adequate drainage and erosion control measures are provided during construction of all new development. Require new development and redevelopment projects to demonstrate that stormwater runoff and flood control measures will not increase flood risks or exceed capacity of downstream drainage infrastructure and receiving waterbodies.

Policy SAF-2.10: Existing Flood Structures. Ensure that construction activities will not result in adverse impacts to existing flood control and drainage structures.

Policy SAF-2.12: Urban Level Flood Protection. Require evaluation of potential flood hazards prior to approval of development projects to determine whether the proposed development is reasonably safe from flooding and consistent with California Department of Water Resources Urban Level of Flood Protection Criteria. The City shall not approve the execution of a development agreement, a tentative map, or a parcel map for which a tentative map is not required, or a discretionary permit or other discretionary entitlement that would result in the construction of a new building, or construction that would result in an increase in allowed occupancy for an existing building, or issuance of a ministerial permit that would result in the construction of a new residence for property that is located within a 200-year flood hazard zone, unless the adequacy of 200-year flood protection is demonstrated per State law (Government Code §65865.5, 65962, or 66474.5).

Policy SAF-2.13: 200-Year Flood Protection. Require that all new development within the 200-year floodplain, or within areas that would be inundated in the event of levee failure, demonstrate protection from a 200-year flood event prior to project approval. New residential and critical facilities development shall be protected from the 200-year flood event in accordance with Urban Level of Flood Protection Criteria and the City's adopted Standards and Specifications.

Action SAF-2a: Monitor changes in federal and State laws and regulations related to local flood protection, including the National Flood Insurance Program, and incorporate necessary changes into the Municipal Code, the City’s Municipal Emergency Management Plan, and building codes as required and ensure that the City’s regulations continue to require that

new development within flood hazard zones is consistent with this Safety Element and is required to meet the flood protection requirements of State law.

Action SAF-2b: Provide information on flooding, flood control on private property, floodplains, and flood preparedness to the public.

Action SAF-2c: Review projects for project-related flood control and stormwater management impacts to ensure that all proposed development comply with the City's Stormwater Management Program and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System regulations.

Action SAF-2f: Require applications for development in areas subject to 200-year flooding to indicate the depth of predicted 200-year flooding on the basis of official maps approved by the City of Mountain House or Floodplain Administrator.

Action SAF-2g: The City shall implement the following measures for all development within the 200-year floodplain:

1. Pad Elevation Standard. Tentative maps and development plans for parcels within or adjacent to the 200-year floodplain shall demonstrate that finished pad elevations will be raised to a minimum of one foot above the 200-year base floodwater surface elevation, consistent with the grading and fill approach established in the City's adopted Standards and Specifications. Areas not intended for development, including open space, the Old River Regional Park, and storm conveyance corridors, may be graded below this elevation to preserve drainage function.
2. Pre-Approval Certification. Prior to approval of any final map or issuance of grading permits for land within the 200-year floodplain, the applicant shall submit a flood elevation certification prepared by a licensed civil engineer demonstrating conformance with the pad elevation standard described above.
3. FEMA Map Maintenance. The City shall pursue Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) applications to FEMA following completion of qualifying flood control improvements, including levee upgrades and grading activities, to reflect reduced flood risk and remove improved areas from SFHA designation where warranted.

SAF-2h: Update the City's Standards and Specifications to establish specific design criteria, building pad elevation standards, and finished floor elevation requirements for development within the 200-year floodplain and Urban Level of Flood Protection evaluation areas.

SAF-2i: Require project applicants for new development and redevelopment to submit comprehensive drainage and/or hydrologic studies during project review to verify that proposed stormwater management systems prevent downstream flooding and offsite impacts.

SAF-2j: Complete the City's enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Program and maintain continuous participation thereafter.

SAF-2k: Submit the draft Safety Element to the Central Valley Flood Protection Board and the California Department of Water Resources for statutory review prior to adoption, as required by State law.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

3.9.4 REFERENCES

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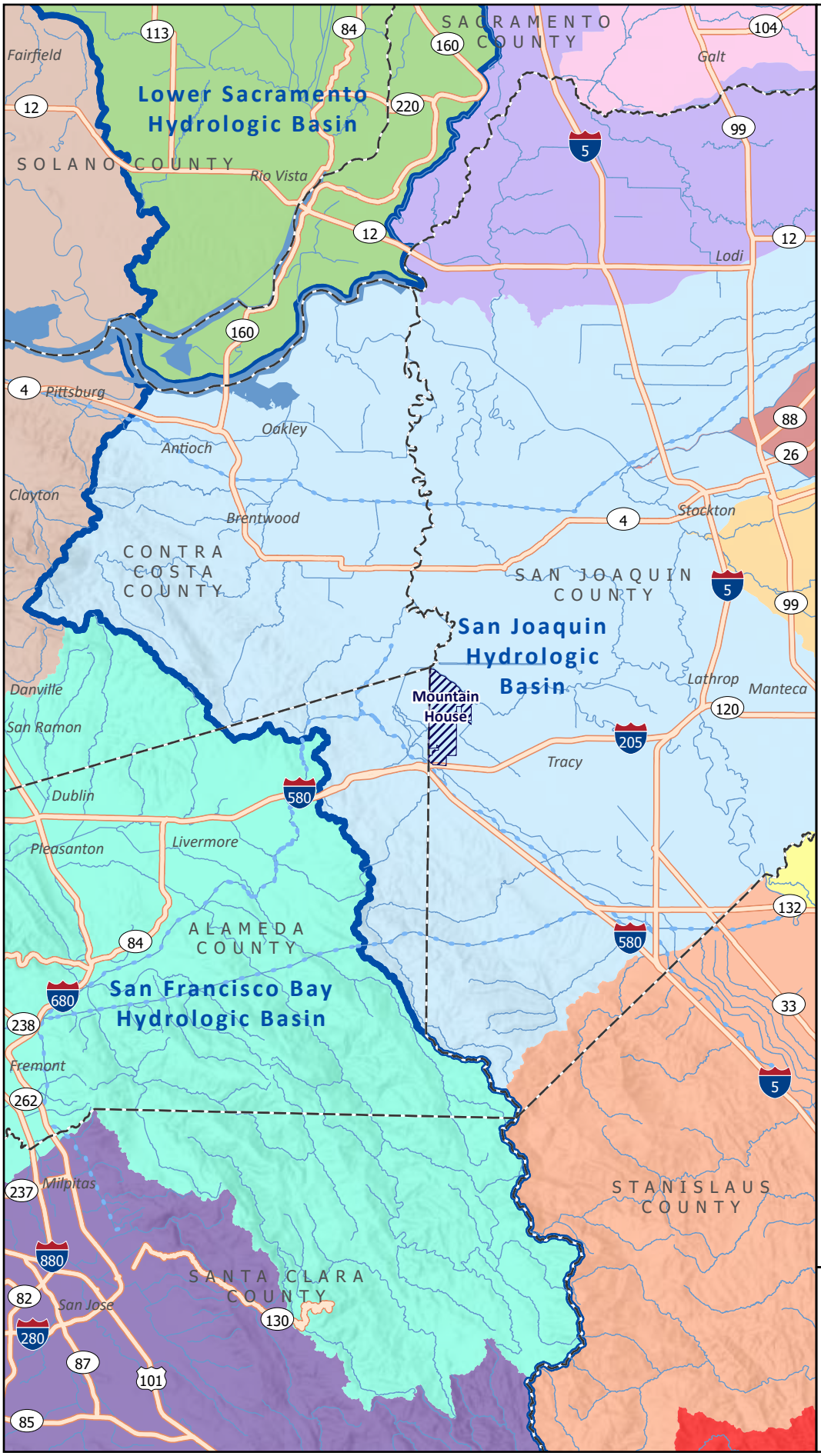
FIGURE 3.9-1.

REGIONAL WATERSHEDS



- Mountain House City Limits
- County Boundary
- Major River or Creek
- Aqueduct
- Hydrologic Basin Boundary

Hydrologic Sub-basin

- Coyote
- Lower Sacramento
- Lower San Joaquin River
- Middle San Joaquin-Lower Chowchilla
- Rock Creek-French Camp Slough
- San Francisco Bay
- San Joaquin Delta
- Suisun Bay
- Upper Calaveras California
- Upper Cosumnes
- Upper Mokelumne
- Upper Stanislaus

0 2½ 5
Miles

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
August 1, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: USGS Watershed Boundary Dataset; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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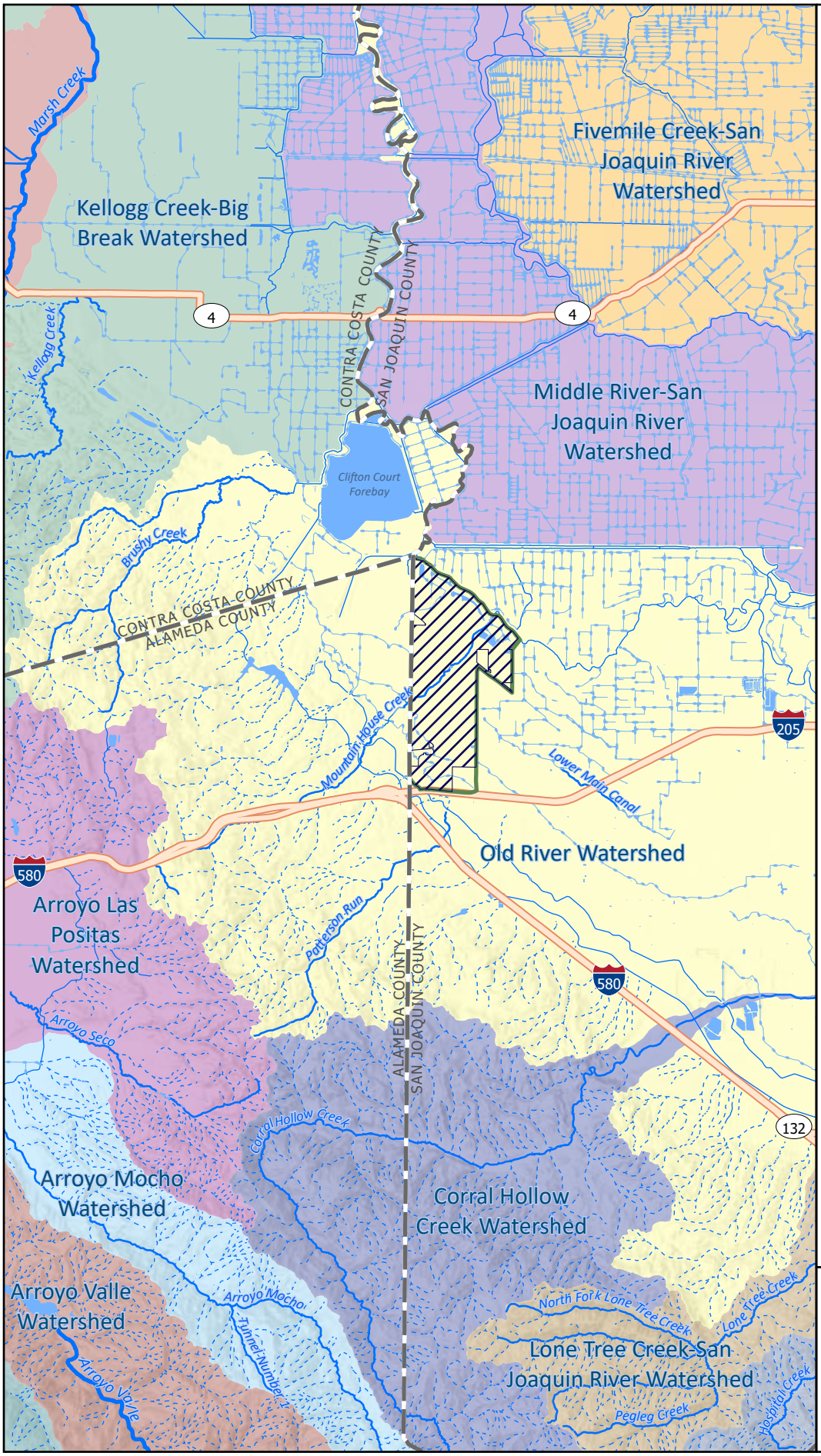
FIGURE 3.9-2.

WATERSHEDS AND SURFACE WATERS



Mountain House City Limits
Sphere of Influence (SOI)
County Boundary

Surface Water

Perennial Stream
Intermittent Stream
Artificial Path, Pipeline, or Connector
Ephemeral Stream
Canal or Ditch
Lake, Pond, or Reservoir

Watershed

Alameda Creek
Arroyo Las Positas
Arroyo Mocho
Arroyo Valle
Corral Hollow Creek
Fivemile Creek-San Joaquin River
Ingram Creek-San Joaquin River
Kellogg Creek-Big Break
Lone Tree Creek-San Joaquin River
Marsh Creek
Middle River-San Joaquin River
Old River

0 1½ 3
Miles

City of Mountain House

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group August 1, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: USGS Watershed Boundary Dataset; USGS National Hydrography Dataset; San Joaquin County GIS

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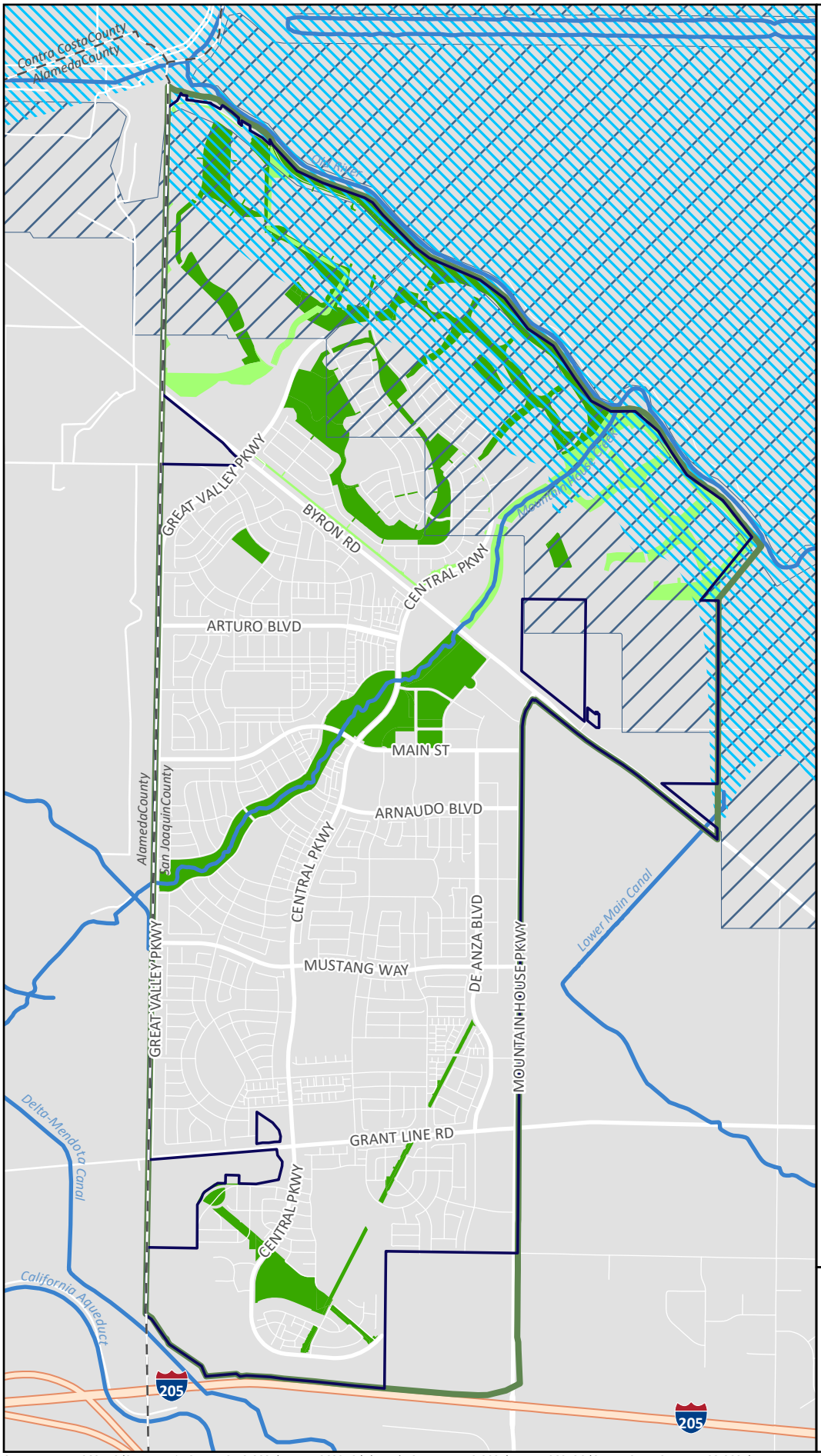

FIGURE 3.9-3.

FLOOD HAZARDS

Mountain House City Limits

Sphere of Influence (SOI)

County Boundary

FEMA Flood Zone Designation

100-Year Floodplain

unshaded Area of Minimal Flood Hazard

USACE Comprehensive Study

200-Year Floodplain

General Plan Open Space Land Use Designations

OS/PR - Resource Conservation

OS/RC - Parks and Recreation

0 1,500 3,000

Feet

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group July 30, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group

A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: FEMA 06077C (San Joaquin County 3-12-2025); FEMA 06001C (Alameda County 11-19-2024); FEMA 06013C (Contra Costa County 7-23-2024); California DWR 200-Year USACE Comprehensive Study (2002); City of Mountain House General Plan; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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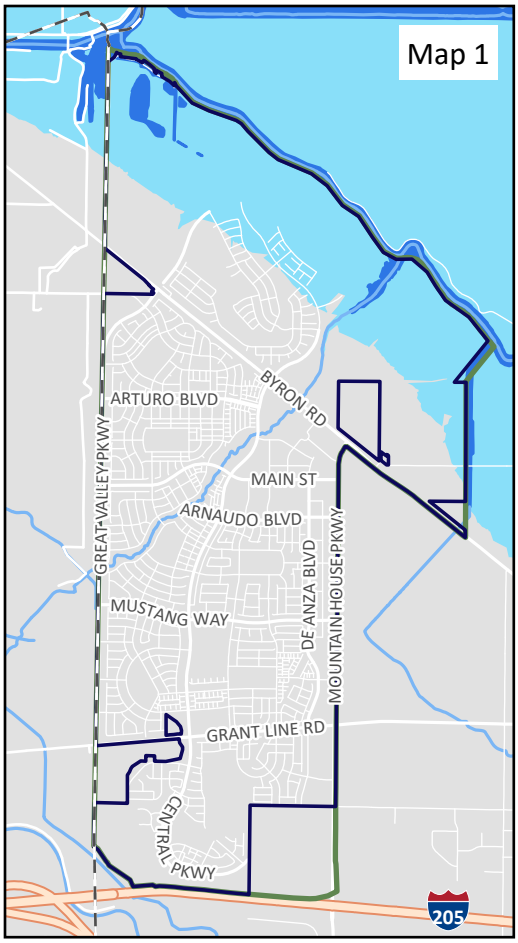

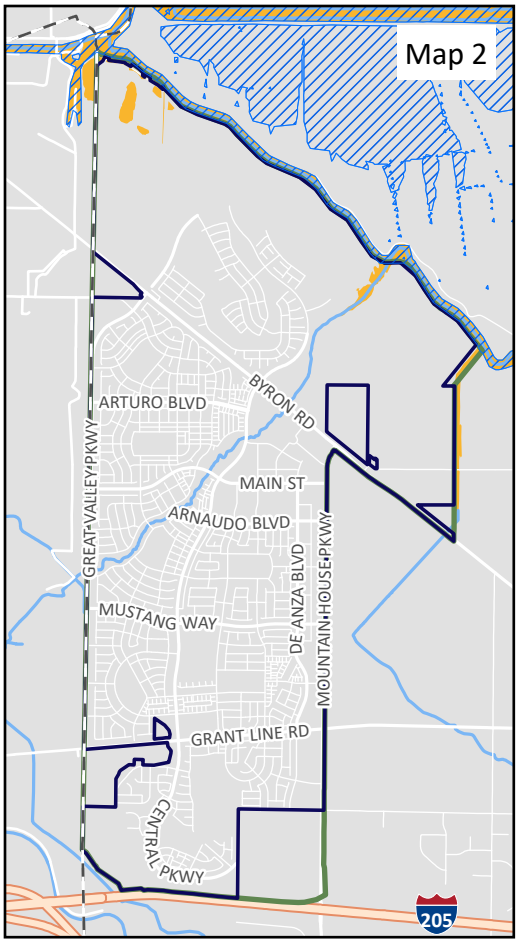

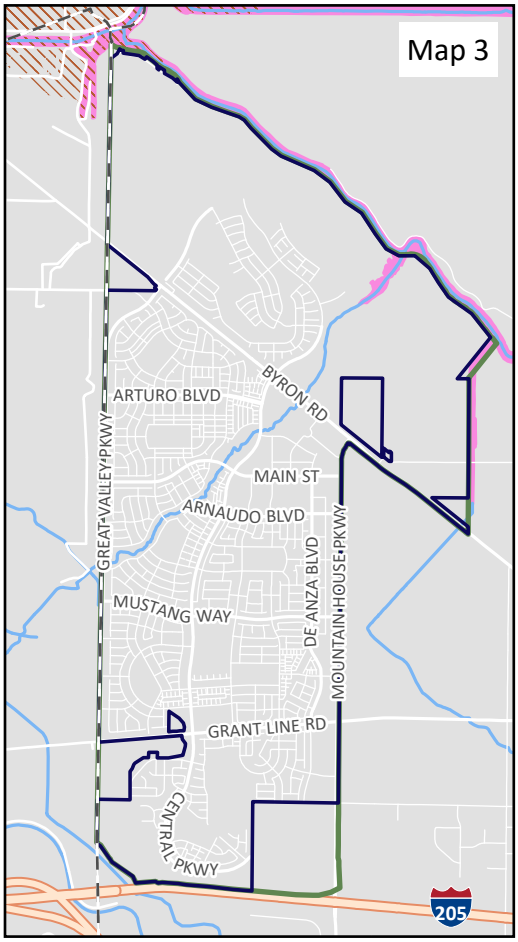

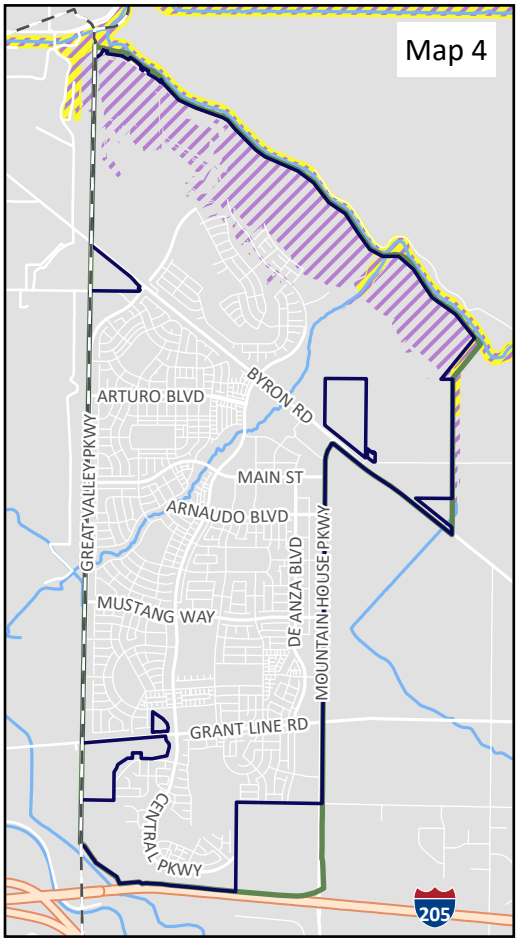

FIGURE 3.9-4.

DAM FAILURE INUNDATION HAZARDS

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary

Map 1
- Shaver Lake
- Don Pedro Dam

Map 2
- New Exchequer
- Mammoth Pool

Map 3
- Bethany Forebay
- Huntington Lake 1

Map 4
- Vermilion Valley Dam
- Los Vaqueros

0 ½ 1
Miles

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
August 1, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: California Department of Water Resources, Dam Inundation Mapping Program; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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This section identifies the existing land use conditions, discusses population and housing trends and projections, analyzes the Project's consistency with relevant planning documents and policies adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, and recommends mitigation measures to avoid or minimize the significance of potential environmental impacts.

One comment was received during the NOP comment period regarding this environmental topic; refer to Appendix A. A comment letter received from Jeff Henderson of the Delta Stewardship Council, dated June 3, 2026, recommends that the EIR address consistency with applicable Delta Plan regulatory policies.

3.10.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

KEY TERMS

City Limits: The corporate boundary within which the City exercises municipal land use authority and provides public services.

Sphere of Influence (SOI): The probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency, as adopted by a Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). The SOI defines the ultimate geographic area over which a city or special district is expected to expand and assume primary responsibility for public facilities and services.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

For purposes of the General Plan, the Planning Area is the geographic area for which the Plan provides a framework for long-term plans for growth, resource conservation, and the provision of public services. State law requires the Plan to include all territory within Mountain House's incorporated area as well as "any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning" (California Government Code Section 65300). The General Plan Planning Area includes all incorporated lands within the Mountain House City Limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI). The Planning Area encompasses approximately 4,792 acres, comprising 4,419 acres in the city limits and 373 acres in the SOI. Figure 2.0-2 shows the General Plan Planning Area.

Land Use Patterns

When discussing land use, it is important to distinguish between planned land uses and existing land uses. The City's planned land uses are currently governed by the Mountain House Master Plan, as well as any applicable Specific Plan, which must be consistent with the Master Plan. The land use designations described in the Master Plan identify the long-term planned use of land but do not necessarily present a complete picture of existing land uses. The San Joaquin County Assessor's office maintains a database of existing "on-the-ground" land uses on individual parcels, including the number of dwelling units and related improvements such as building square footage. This information is used as the basis for property tax assessments and is depicted on Figure 3.10-1. It should be noted that because County Assessor data is updated semi-annually, it may not precisely reflect current on-the-ground baseline conditions.

Existing land uses refer to the existing built environment, which may be different from the land use or zoning designations applied to land for planning purposes. Existing land uses are based on data provided by the County Assessor and ParcelQuest. The majority of assessed land acreage (69.7 percent) within the Mountain House City Limits consists of residential uses. Other major land uses within the City Limits include public facilities (16.1 percent) and commercial uses (6.1 percent). Within the Mountain House SOI, 50.3 percent of the land consists of residential uses, and 40.2 percent are industrial uses.

Development Trends

Mountain House was primarily used for agriculture from the 1940s to 1990s.[1] In the 1990s, the developer Trimark Communities purchased land and proposed the development that would eventually become Mountain House. The Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plan I were adopted by the San Joaquin County's Board of Supervisors in 1994, and the Mountain House Community Services District (MHCSD) was formed in 1996. Specific Plan II was adopted on February 8, 2005, and Specific Plan III was adopted on November 22, 2005. The Master Plan envisioned Mountain House as a new self-sufficient community offering employment, goods, services, and recreation. Land use and circulation was designed to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use in a highly landscaped, visually attractive community. Development in Mountain House is divided into 12 neighborhoods (A through L), each organized around a Neighborhood Center. Figure 2.0-3 shows the existing Master Plan Land Use Map. Under existing conditions, the City is primarily urbanized in the area south of Byron Road and north of Grant Line Road, with the exception of some remaining vacant parcels and the Mountain House Creek corridor. The areas north of Byron Road and south of Grant Line Road are generally still under development and contain a mixture of urban uses and vacant land planned for urban uses.

According to the California Department of Finance, Mountain House has an estimated population of 28,795 residents and 8,440 dwelling units.[2]

[1] Mountain House Community Services District, 2013, Mountain House… Where Villages Create a Community. Available at: http://yamata-mhcsdorg-primary.hgsitebuilder.com/about.

[2] California Department of Finance. E-4 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2021-2025 with 2020 Census Benchmark. May 2025.

Population, Household, and Housing Unit Growth

Table 3.10-1 summarizes the population and household data for Mountain House and San Joaquin County from 2010 through 2023. It should be noted that prior to incorporation, the U.S. Census Bureau classified and tabulated data for Mountain House as a census designated place (CDP). CDPs are statistical geographic entities representing closely settled, unincorporated communities that are locally recognized and identified by name. The Mountain House CDP boundaries do not precisely correspond to the current City of Mountain House boundaries.

TABLE 3.10-1: POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD GROWTH

	2010	2020	2023	Change 2010-2020	Change 2020-2023
Population					
Mountain House CDP	7,496	21,387	25,108	185.3%	17.4%
San Joaquin County	673,613	751,615	787,416	11.6%	4.8%
Households					
Mountain House CDP	2,047	5,303	6,601	159.1%	24.5%
San Joaquin County	212,905	231,092	241,373	8.5%	4.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) Five-Year Estimates, 2010, 2020, and 2023, Tables DP02 and DP05.

As shown in Table 3.10-1, the population in Mountain House increased from 7,496 residents in 2010 to 25,108 in 2023, representing a total increase of 234.9 percent. From 2020 to 2023 alone, the population grew by 17.4 percent. During the same timeframe, the number of households in Mountain House increased from 2,047 to 6,601, reflecting a 159.1 percent increase between 2010 and 2020, followed by an additional 24.5 percent growth between 2020 and 2023. By comparison, San Joaquin County experienced more moderate growth. The County's population increased by 11.6 percent between 2010 and 2020, and by 4.8 percent between 2020 and 2023. Household growth in the county followed a similar pattern, increasing by 8.5 percent between 2010 and 2020, and by 4.4 percent in the three years following.

As shown in Table 3.10-2, according to the US Census Bureau's five-year ACS estimates, the number of housing units in Mountain House has increased at much higher rates than the County and has seen significant increases since 2010.

TABLE 3.10-2: HOUSING UNITS

	2010	2020	2023	2010-2020 %Change	2020-2023 %Change
Mountain House CDP	2,469	5,525	6,958	124%	26%
San Joaquin County	231,114	245,192	256,826	6%	5%

Source: U.S. Census, ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table B25001.

3.10.2 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

California General Plan Law

Government Code Section 65300 requires that each county and city adopt a General Plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning." The general plan shall address each of the elements specified in Government Code Section 65302 to the extent that the subject of the element exists in the planning area. The State General Plan Guidelines, established by the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation to assist local agencies in the preparation of their general plans, further describe the requirements for mandated elements to assist communities in meeting statutory requirements.

Regional Housing Needs Plan

California General Plan law requires each city and county to have land zoned to accommodate a fair share of the regional housing need. The share is known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and is based on a Regional Housing Needs Plan developed by councils of government. The San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) is the lead agency for developing the RHNA for incorporated cities and the unincorporated San Joaquin County area.

Since Mountain House became an incorporated City in July 2024, after the start of the 6th cycle (2023-2031) RHNA for San Joaquin County, Mountain House was included as part of the San Joaquin County Housing Element, which addresses the County's unincorporated areas. As part of the San Joaquin County Housing Element, the County identified the RHNA for Mountain House. Subsequently, the City and County agreed to a RHNA reallocation, wherein a portion of the County's RHNA would be transferred to the City pursuant to Government Code Section 65584.07(c). The City Council approved the RHNA reallocation on December 10, 2025. Mountain House's fair share of the adopted RHNA for 2023-2031 is summarized in Table 3.10-3.

TABLE 3.10-3: REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION (2023-2031 RHNA)

	Low Income	Moderate Income	Above Moderate Income	Total
Mountain House	2,129	887	2,098	5,114

SOURCE: SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY, REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION (RHNA) TRANSFER REQUEST, NOVEMBER 12, 2025; CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE, REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION TRANSFER, DECEMBER 10, 2025.

Cities and counties are not required to ensure that adequate development to accommodate the RHNA occurs; however, the jurisdiction must facilitate housing production by ensuring that land is available and that unnecessary development constraints have been removed.

Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

The 2022 San Joaquin County Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) was adopted by the SJCOG in August 2022. The RTP/SCS continues to provide a sustainability vision through the year 2046 that recognizes the significant impact the transportation network has on the region's public health, mobility and economic vitality. Its foundation comprises

recent household and job growth forecasts, market demand and economic studies, and transportation studies, including SJCOG's Transportation Innovation Planning Study, Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Study, and Public Health Impact Analysis. The RTP/SCS can be considered the San Joaquin region's "statement of priorities" for the future transportation system from 2022 through 2046. The policies, supportive strategies and performance indicators for the plan are all designed to convey: (1) what the region wants the future transportation system to look like; (2) what types of decisions will help the region attain its vision; and (3) the performance measures or indicators by which the region can assess its progress. Establishing clear links between the broad, value-laden goals and the more specific performance indicators helps to provide a tangible path toward feasible implementation.

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was developed to protect the quality of the environment and the health and safety of persons from adverse environmental effects. Discretionary projects are required to be reviewed consistent with the requirements of CEQA to determine if there is potential for the project to cause a significant adverse effect on the environment. Depending on the type of project and its potential effects, technical traffic, noise, air quality, biological resources, and geotechnical reports may be needed. If potential adverse effects can be mitigated to less than significant levels, a mitigated negative declaration may be adopted. If potentially adverse effects cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels, an environmental impact report is required. These documents have mandated content requirements and public review times. Preparation of CEQA documents can be costly and time-consuming, potentially extending the processing time of a project by a year or longer.

Subdivision Code

A subdivision is any division of land for the purpose of sale, lease or finance. The State of California Subdivision Map Act (Government Code § 66410) regulates subdivisions throughout the State. The goals of the Subdivision Map Act are as follows:

- To encourage orderly community development by providing for the regulation and control of the design and improvement of a subdivision with proper consideration of its relationship to adjoining areas.
- To ensure that areas within the subdivision that are dedicated for public purposes will be properly improved by the subdivider so that they will not become an undue burden on the community.
- To protect the public and individual transferees from fraud and exploitation.

The Map Act allows cities some flexibility in the processing of subdivisions. Mountain House controls this process through the subdivision regulations in the Municipal Code (Title 9, Division 9, Subdivision Regulations). These regulations ensure that minimum requirements are adopted for the protection of the public health, safety and welfare; and that the subdivision includes adequate community improvements, municipal services and other public facilities.

Delta Protection Act of 1992

The Delta Protection Act declared that the Delta is a natural resource of statewide, national, and international significance, containing irreplaceable resources, and that it is the policy of the State to recognize, preserve, and protect those resources of the Delta for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations. The Act includes mandates for the designation of primary and secondary zones within the legal Delta, creation of a Delta Protection Commission, and completion of a Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta. The majority of the Planning Area is located within the Secondary Zone of the Legal Delta, with the exception of the southwestern corner, which is outside of the Legal Delta.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 29731, the Secondary Zone encompasses all Delta land and water areas outside the Primary Zone, as delineated on the official "Delta Protection Zones" map filed with the State Lands Commission. However, land use authority granted to the Delta Protection Commission is limited to the Primary Zone, and shall not preempt local government general plans for lands within the Secondary Zone (Public Resources Code Section 29764).

The Delta Reform Act

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009 (Delta Reform Act) established the Delta Stewardship Council to create a comprehensive, long-term, legally enforceable plan to guide how multiple federal, State, and local agencies manage the Delta's water and environmental resources. The 2009 legislation directed the Delta Stewardship Council to oversee the implementation of this plan through coordination and oversight of State and local agencies proposing to fund, carry out, and approve Delta-related activities. It also granted the Delta Stewardship Council regulatory and appellate authority over certain actions that take place in whole or in part in the Delta and Suisun Marsh, referred to as covered actions.

LOCAL

Delta Plan

The Delta Plan, adopted by the Delta Stewardship Council in 2013 and periodically amended, is a comprehensive, long-term management plan designed to guide State and local actions within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Enacted to implement the coequal goals of the Delta Reform Act, the plan focuses on ensuring a reliable water supply while simultaneously protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The plan contains a series of legally enforceable regulatory policies (23 CCR §§ 5001-5016). Plans, programs, and/or projects that meet the definition of a covered action must be consistent with the Delta Plan.

Local Agency Formation Commission of San Joaquin County

In 1963, the State Legislature created a LAFCO for each county, with the authority to regulate local agency boundary changes. Subsequently, the State has expanded the authority of a LAFCO. The goals of a LAFCO include preserving agricultural and open space land resources and providing for efficient delivery of services. The San Joaquin LAFCO has authority over land use decisions in San Joaquin County affecting local agency boundaries. Its authority extends to the incorporated cities, including

annexation of County lands into a city, and special districts within the County. LAFCO has the authority to review and approve or disapprove the following:

- Annexations to or detachments from cities or districts;
- Formation or dissolution of districts;
- Incorporation or disincorporation of cities;
- Consolidation or reorganization of cities or districts;
- Extensions of service beyond an agency's jurisdictional boundaries;
- Development of, and amendments to, Spheres of Influence (SOI). The SOI is the probable physical boundary and service area of each local government agency. This may extend beyond the current service area of the agency; and
- Provision of new or different services by districts.

In addition, LAFCO conducts Municipal Service Reviews (MSRs) for services within its jurisdiction. A MSR typically includes a review of existing municipal services provided by a local agency and its infrastructure needs and deficiencies. It also evaluates financing constraints and opportunities, management efficiencies, opportunities for rate restructuring and shared facilities, local accountability and governance, and other issues.

Legislation, including Assembly Bill 1555 and Senate Bill 244, has been enacted to encourage the identification and annexation of islands, which are unincorporated areas substantially surrounded by a city or cities.

San Joaquin County General Plan

San Joaquin County adopted its General Plan in December 2016. The County's General Plan provides a comprehensive set of goals, policies, and implementing actions to guide the County's growth through the year 2035. The County's General Plan includes the following Elements:

- Community Development Element
    - Land Use
    - Communities
    - Housing
    - Economic Development
- Public Facilities and Services Element
    - Transportation and Mobility
    - Infrastructure and Services
- Public Health and Safety Element
    - Public Health and Safety
- Natural and Cultural Resources Element
    - Natural and Cultural Resources
    - The Delta

The County's General Plan establishes allowed land uses for lands within the City's SOI and Area of Influence (AOI). While the proposed Mountain House General Plan land use map identifies planned land uses within the City's SOI, San Joaquin County has ultimate land use planning and project approval authority within the SOI unless the lands are annexed to the City.

City of Mountain House Master Plan

The Mountain House Master Plan is a community-wide Specific Plan adopted by San Joaquin County on November 10, 1994. The Master Plan implemented the San Joaquin County General Plan amendment which added the new community of Mountain House to the San Joaquin County 2010 General Plan, as approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 25, 1993. The Master Plan presents objectives, policies, implementation measures, and standards for development for the Mountain House community. The plan and its appendices contain comprehensive plans for land use, infrastructure, environmental resources, public service provisions, and implementation. Also included is information on phasing, maintenance, and costs for infrastructure and services. The Master Plan was intended to serve as the overall community-wide policy document guiding subsequent Specific Plans, Tentative Maps, development projects, Development Agreements, and other approvals.

The Master Plan envisioned Mountain House as a new self-sufficient community offering employment, goods, services, and recreation. Land use and circulation was designed to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use in a highly landscaped, visually attractive community. Development in Mountain House is divided into 12 neighborhoods (A through L), each organized around a Neighborhood Center. Figure 2.0-3 shows the existing Master Plan Land Use Map.

Mountain House Specific Plans

The City has three approved Specific Plans (i.e., Specific Plan I, II, and III). Each of these plans contains development and design elements applicable to projects proposed in the Specific Plan area.

The Mountain House Specific Plan I was adopted on November 10, 1994. Specific Plan I covers the first stage of development of Mountain House, encompassing approximately 1,348 acres and three neighborhoods (E, F, and G).

The Mountain House Specific Plan II was adopted on February 8, 2005. Specific Plan II covers the second phase of development, encompassing approximately 2,300 acres, seven neighborhoods (C, H, I, J, K, L, and part of neighborhood D), and the Town Center. The Mountain House Specific Plan III was adopted on November 22, 2005.

Plan III covers the third and final phase of development for Mountain House and encompasses approximately 816 acres in the southern part of the community and covers neighborhoods A and B and part of neighborhood D.

City of Mountain House Development Code

The City's Development Title (also known as the Development Code or Zoning Ordinance) is codified in Title 9, *Development Title*, of the Mountain House Municipal Code. The Development Code is intended to serve as the basis for land use regulations adopted by the City and achieve the following objectives: to encourage the most appropriate use of land and the harmonious relationship among land uses; to promote a safe and efficient traffic circulation system; to provide open spaces for light and air; to prevent overcrowding of land and the undue concentration of population; to secure safety from fire and other dangers; to facilitate the provision of needed community facilities; to conserve and stabilize the value of property; and to conserve the City's natural beauty, to improve its appearance, and to enhance its physical character.

3.10.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project will have a significant impact on land use, population, and housing if it will:

- Physically divide an established community;
- Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect;
- Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure); and/or
- Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.10-1: General Plan implementation would not physically divide an established community (Less than Significant)

The proposed General Plan is a long-range policy document that establishes the City's vision for future growth and development. Proposed Goal LU-1 of the General Plan aims to accommodate a mix and distribution of uses that meet the needs of the community. The land uses allowed under the proposed General Plan (Figure 2.0-4) provide opportunities for cohesive new growth adjacent to existing urbanized areas and within infill locations, and would not create physical division within the community. In addition, Goals LU-2 and LU-3 aim to ensure that new development is compatible with and well-integrated with existing development. New development and redevelopment projects would be designed to be complementary to the existing community and provide connectivity between existing development and new development. Overall, the proposed Project would provide new development opportunities to support the vision for development consistent with the General Plan. The proposed General Plan Land Use Map designates sites for a range of urban and developed uses, as well as parks and open space.

The proposed General Plan would not modify any existing roadways or allow for any specific circulation system projects or improvements, including the addition of new roadways, with the potential to divide an established community. While the proposed General Plan does not include site-specific development, including the construction of new roadways or significantly expanded infrastructure, the proposed Land Use Element and Land Use Map would allow for future development and associated roadways and infrastructure within areas north of Byron Road and south of Grant Line Road. These areas contain a mixture of urban uses and vacant land planned for urban uses. Future development pursuant to the General Plan would be subject to the City's development standards, site plan and/or design review process to ensure that site-specific development would not contain features that physically divide an established community. Specifically, the Development Code and Specific Plans, as applicable, would regulate development within the City to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compatibility with surrounding uses.

The proposed General Plan policies and actions listed below would further ensure that future development is compatible with and well-integrated with adjacent communities and land uses. Additional information including policies and actions related to mobility and roadway connectivity can be found in Section 3.14 (Transportation and Circulation) of this Draft EIR. As such, the proposed General Plan would have a ***less than significant*** impact associated with the physical division of an established community.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-1: Comprehensive Land Use Planning. A balanced land use pattern that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options, offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities, and promoting a robust local economy.

Policy LU-1.1: Holistic Land Use Planning. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.2: Complete Neighborhoods. Promote the development of compact, complete neighborhoods that locate parks, services, and amenities within walking and biking distance of neighborhood residents, allowing people to meet their daily needs close to their homes.

Policy LU-1.3: Comprehensive Land Use Analysis. Land use decisions should include evaluation of both fiscal impacts (costs and revenues to the City) and qualitative community benefits, including public health, environmental quality, housing affordability, and equitable access to services, to ensure long-term community sustainability.

Action LU-1a: Update the Development Title (Title 9 of the Mountain House Municipal Code), Zoning Map, and Specific Plans as appropriate to ensure consistency with this Land Use Element and designations shown on the Land Use Map (Figure LU-1).

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.1: Specific Plans. Continue to maintain Specific Plans to further refine the concepts of the General Plan and provide orderly, well-planned growth within their boundaries.

Policy LU-2.4: Targeted Infill Development. Allow and encourage infill development at densities consistent with applicable land use designations. Design review for infill projects shall focus on compatibility of building materials, landscaping, and architectural

quality, and shall not be used as a basis for reducing density or intensity below what is allowed by the applicable land use designation.

Action LU-2a: Analyze land use compatibility through the development review process to require adequate buffers and/or architectural enhancements that protect sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, schools, day care centers, hospitals, nursing homes) from intrusion of development activities that may cause unwanted nuisances and health risks.

Action LU-2d: Implement the policies and actions of this General Plan as program-level mitigation measures, where applicable. In approving development projects consistent with this General Plan, the City shall identify which General Plan policies and actions address potential environmental impacts and shall rely on those policies and actions to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, or to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with the findings of the General Plan EIR. All applicable development projects shall be reviewed and processed per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Action LU-2e: Review subdivision maps and site plans for compliance with density ranges and calculations of the corresponding Specific Plan prior to project approval.

Goal LU-3: Community Design and Placemaking. A visually attractive community with a distinctive and authentic sense of place.

Policy LU-3.1: Site Planning and Design. The City shall maintain comprehensive design standards and guidelines that emphasize high-quality architecture, landscaping, visual cohesion, and well-planned functional spaces that respond to site conditions and complement the surrounding built and natural environment. All new development shall demonstrate compliance with applicable design standards as a condition of approval.

Policy LU-3.2: Pedestrian-Friendly Environments. Prioritize pedestrian-oriented design and connectivity in new developments by incorporating tree-lined sidewalks, active street fronts, and human-scale building frontages to create visually appealing, safe environments with seamless access to the surrounding street network.

Policy LU-3.3: Neighborhood Design. Each residential neighborhood shall achieve a distinct sense of identity and character through coordinated design of street landscaping, neighborhood entries, walls and fences, signage, and other elements as an integrated design system. Development within each neighborhood shall be consistent with an adopted neighborhood design framework.

Circulation Element

Goal CIR-1: Safe and Complete Streets. A safe and efficient roadway system that accommodates all users and provides connections between neighborhoods, employment areas, and regional transportation corridors.

Policy CIR-1.2: Complete Streets. The City shall plan, design, construct, and maintain transportation facilities as Complete Streets that provide safe, accessible, and convenient travel for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets features shall be incorporated into all new roadway construction and significant reconstruction projects.

Policy CIR-1.6: Connectivity. Maintain strong connectivity within the roadway network to distribute traffic and reduce congestion.

Impact 3.10-2: General Plan implementation would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect (Less than Significant)

STATE PLANS

The proposed General Plan was prepared in conformance with State laws and regulations associated with the preparation of general plans, including requirements for environmental protection. Discussion of the proposed General Plan's consistency with State regulations, plans, and policies associated with specific environmental issues (e.g., air quality, traffic, water quality, etc.) is provided in the relevant chapters of this Draft EIR. The State would continue to have authority over any State-owned lands in the vicinity of the City and the proposed General Plan would not conflict with continued application of State land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted to avoid or mitigate environmental effects.

The Delta Plan contains a set of regulatory policies with which State and local agencies are required to comply with. The Delta Reform Act specifically established a certification process for compliance with the Delta Plan. This means that State and local agencies that propose to carry out, approve, or fund a qualifying action in whole or in part in the Delta, called a "covered action," must certify that this action is consistent with the Delta Plan and must file a certificate of consistency with the Delta Stewardship Council that includes detailed findings. Areas Subject to the Delta Plan are included within the Delta's primary and secondary zones. No areas in the City or Planning Area are within the Primary Zone of the Delta. However, the majority of the Planning Area is located within the Secondary Zone of the Legal Delta, with the exception of the southwestern corner, which is outside of the Legal Delta.

The following discussion includes a consistency analysis with regulatory policies in the Delta Plan that are applicable to the proposed General Plan, as identified in the NOP comment letter received from the Delta Stewardship Council (refer to Appendix A):

- Delta Plan Policy DP P1: Locate New Urban Development Wisely (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 23, § 5010). Policy DP P1 requires that new residential, commercial, and industrial development within the Delta be limited to specific areas. As it applies to the proposed General Plan, this includes areas within the Mountain House General Plan Community Boundary (CCR Title 23, § 5010(a)(3)), as depicted in Figure 7-11 of regulation Appendix 7. The proposed General Plan Land Use Map does not expand the City Limits or SOI beyond the existing boundaries, nor does it contemplate new land uses within the Legal Delta that are beyond the Mountain House General Plan Community Boundary. As such, the proposed Project is consistent with this policy.
- Delta Plan Policy DP P2: Respect Local Land Use when Siting Water or Flood Facilities or Restoring Habitats (CCR 23, § 5011). Policy DP P2 relates to the siting of water management facilities, ecosystem restoration, and flood management infrastructure to avoid or reduce conflicts with existing uses or those uses described or depicted in city or county general plans when feasible. The proposed Project does not involve site-specific development and is consistent with this policy.
- Delta Plan Policy G P1: Detailed Findings to Establish Consistency with the Delta Plan (CCR Title 23, § 5002). Policy G P1 specifies what is required to be addressed in a certification of consistency. The Project itself does not include a certification of consistency. As such, the proposed Project is consistent with this policy.

The City has prepared the General Plan Land Use Map and policy direction to ensure construction and maintenance activities associated with future development projects under the proposed General Plan do not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, including the Delta Plan. Overall, consistency with the General Plan policies and actions would ensure future development projects under the proposed General Plan would not conflict with such plans, policies, or regulations.

REGIONAL PLANS

SJCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS provides a framework for regional land use and transportation policy within the SJCOG region through the year 2046. Its foundation comprises recent household and job growth forecasts, market demand and economic studies, and transportation studies, including SJCOG's Transportation Innovation Planning Study, Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Study, and Public Health Impact Analysis. An analysis of the proposed Project's consistency with the relevant SJCOG 2022 RTP/SCS goals and policy direction adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect is provided in Section 3.7 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy) of this Draft EIR. As demonstrated in Section 3.7, the Project would be consistent with SJCOG's regional planning efforts and a less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

CITY PLANS

As set forth by State law, the General Plan serves as the primary planning document for the City and subordinate documents and plans would be updated to be consistent with the General Plan. Similar to the existing Mountain House Master Plan, the proposed General Plan focuses on a comprehensive land use pattern, creating a community where new development blends with existing neighborhoods, and promoting the City as a desirable place to live and work. The proposed General

Plan carries forward and enhances policies and measures from the Master Plan that were intended for environmental protection and would not remove or conflict with City plans, policies, or regulations adopted for environmental protection. Action LU-1a of the proposed General Plan directs the City to update the City's Development Code to provide consistency between the General Plan and zoning; however, these future updates would not remove or adversely alter portions of the Development Code that were adopted to mitigate an environmental effect.

SUMMARY

Subsequent development and infrastructure projects would be required to be consistent with all applicable policies, standards, and regulations, including those land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted to mitigate environmental effects by the City, as well as those adopted by agencies with jurisdiction over components of future development projects. The policies listed below would further ensure that the General Plan does not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Potential environmental impact associated with conflicts with land use requirements would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-1: Comprehensive Land Use Planning. A balanced land use pattern that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options, offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities, and promoting a robust local economy.

Action LU-1a: Update the Development Title (Title 9 of the Mountain House Municipal Code), Zoning Map, and Specific Plans as appropriate to ensure consistency with this Land Use Element and designations shown on the Land Use Map (Figure LU-1).

Action LU-1d: Initiate a coordinated process to regularly review and adjust population assumptions and forecasts in conjunction with the California Department of Finance, San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), Lammersville Unified School District (LUSD), and San Joaquin County in order to adequately plan for growth, including jobs-housing balance projections.

Action LU-1e: The City shall work with San Joaquin County and SJCOG to address agricultural mitigation obligations associated with conversion of prime agricultural soils within the Planning Area. This includes requiring development projects to participate in the agricultural mitigation fee program established by the County and the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space plan (SJMSCP), when applicable.

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.1: Specific Plans. Continue to maintain Specific Plans to further refine the concepts of the General Plan and provide orderly, well-planned growth within their boundaries.

Policy LU-2.7: Buildout Projections. The City shall maintain and report buildout capacity and development activity consistent with the requirements of Gov. Code §65400 (Annual Progress Report). All residential units, including below-market-rate, deed-restricted, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), shall be counted toward the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) in accordance with state law. For purposes of fiscal planning and infrastructure analysis, the City may prepare supplemental analyses that separately account for different unit types.

Action LU-2a: Analyze land use compatibility through the development review process to require adequate buffers and/or architectural enhancements that protect sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, schools, day care centers, hospitals, nursing homes) from intrusion of development activities that may cause unwanted nuisances and health risks.

Action LU-2b: Pursue a cooperative collaborative relationship with local and regional agencies, including San Joaquin County, the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), Lammersville Unified School District (LUSD), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), and the City of Tracy during development of long-range plans and review of development proposals that may impact the City. Coordinate with these agencies to achieve mutually agreeable outcomes and ensure that local and regional planning and development decisions do not result in adverse impacts to Mountain House.

Action LU-2d: Implement the policies and actions of this General Plan as program-level mitigation measures, where applicable. In approving development projects consistent with this General Plan, the City shall identify which General Plan policies and actions address potential environmental impacts and shall rely on those policies and actions to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, or to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with the findings of the General Plan EIR. All applicable development projects shall be reviewed and processed per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Action LU-2e: Review subdivision maps and site plans for compliance with density ranges and calculations of the corresponding Specific Plan prior to project approval.

Action LU-3a: Conduct design review of all applicable projects and ensure consistency with the City's design standards and guidelines; balance design considerations with surrounding development, public spaces, and natural and historical resources.

Action LU-3b: Review and revise, as necessary, the City's design review standards and guidelines for single-family, multi-family, and non-residential uses consistent with community preferences and state law.

Impact 3.10-3: General Plan implementation would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure) (Less than Significant)

The proposed General Plan is a long-range planning document that establishes the City's vision for future growth and development, including new and expanded residential and business uses. Based on the anticipated growth, as described in Section 2.0 of this EIR, buildout of the proposed General Plan land use map could yield up to 18,163 dwelling units, 54,258 persons, 7,869,878 square feet of non-residential development, and 8,199 jobs within Mountain House. This represents net development over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs. Compared to buildout of the existing Master Plan, buildout of the proposed General Plan represents a net increase of 1,566 dwelling units and 11,230 persons, and a net decrease of 96,186 square feet of non-residential development and 1,615 jobs. It is important to note that growth projections should not be considered a prediction for growth, as the actual amount of development that will occur throughout the planning horizon of the General Plan is based on many factors outside of the City's control. Actual future development would depend on future real estate and labor market conditions, property owner preferences and decisions, site-specific constraints, and other factors. As such, it is not realistic to assume that all parcels would develop to their maximum potential under the implementation time frame projected for the General Plan.

Given the historical and current population, housing, and employment trends, growth in Mountain House and throughout California is inevitable. The primary factors that account for population growth are natural increase and net migration. Other factors that affect growth include the cost of housing, the location of jobs, the economy, the climate, and transportation. Residential growth within the Planning Area would continue to occur based primarily on the demand of the housing market. Existing roads, transit, infrastructure, and public services serve existing development within the Planning Area. The areas north of Byron Road and south of Grant Line Road are generally still under development and contain a mixture of urban uses and vacant land planned for urban uses. There are also a number of vacant parcels planned for urban uses within the Town Center area (generally located south of Byron Road, west of Mountain House Parkway, north of Arnaudo Boulevard, and east of Central Parkway) and along the western boundary of Mountain House Parkway. Projected growth is expected to result in a need to extend infrastructure and services to accommodate future growth, particularly within the areas north of Byron Road and south of Grant Line Road which contain a mixture of urban uses and vacant land planned for urban uses.

Potential growth inducing impacts are also assessed based on a project's consistency with adopted plans that have addressed growth management from a local and regional standpoint. As discussed above, SJCOG is the responsible agency for developing and adopted regional housing, population, and employment growth forecasts for the unincorporated San Joaquin County area and

incorporated cities within the County. SJCOG provides household, population, and employment projection estimates in five-year increments through 2045.

Table 3.10-4 compares the General Plan's growth projections with SJCOG's 2045 dwelling units, population, and employment growth forecasts for the City.[3]

TABLE 3.10-4: GENERAL PLAN FORECASTS COMPARED TO SJCOG

Forecast	2045 General Plan	SJCOG 2045 Growth Forecast[1]	GPU Difference	Percent Change
Population	54,258	44,707	9,551	21.4%
Households	17,346[2]	12,990	4,356	33.5%
Dwelling Units	18,163	13,602[2]	4,561	33.5%
Employment	8,199	2,286	5,913	258.7%

Source: De Novo Planning Group, 2026; San Joaquin Council of Governments, 2022 San Joaquin County Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Appendix Q, September 2020.
Notes:
1. Forecasts in the SJCOG RTP/SCS are for the Mountain House CDP.
2. Based on a vacancy rate of 4.5% (California Department of Finance, 2025).

As indicated in Table 3.10-4, SJCOG projects that Mountain House's population will reach 44,707 persons by 2045. The General Plan is projected to result in a population of approximately 54,258 persons (2045), which is approximately 21 percent greater than SJCOG's forecast. Similarly, Mountain House's projected housing stock would be approximately 34 percent greater than SJCOG forecasts, while Mountain House's projected employment would be approximately 259 percent greater than SJCOG forecasts. The SJCOG projections, which are compiled using a number of sources including Census data, adopted plans, and feedback from city officials and stakeholders, tend to be more accurate on a regional level than on a local or city level. It is likely that through a combination of market changes, catalytic projects, updated land use direction in the General Plan, and other factors, Mountain House could capture either more or less of expected regional growth than forecasted by SJCOG. It should also be noted that SJCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS growth forecasts do not consider the regional housing need for the 2023-2031 period, as jurisdictional allocations were not known at the time of the SJCOG Population, Household and Employment Projections. The regional housing needs would be included as part of SJCOG's future growth forecasts. In addition, while General Plan growth projections exceed SJCOG's 2045 population, housing, and employment projections for Mountain House, growth anticipated under the General Plan would be considered in SJCOG's updated growth forecasts for the City.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that minimize environmental impacts associated with growth, such as air quality, noise, transportation, and water supply. Chapters 3.1 through 3.16 and 4.0 of this Draft EIR provide a discussion of environmental effects associated with development allowed under the proposed General Plan. Each of these EIR chapters include relevant policies and action items that would minimize potential environmental impacts associated with growth, to the greatest extent feasible. Further, the General Plan Update accounts for the proposed

[3] Forecasts in SJCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS are for the Mountain House CDP. The Mountain House CDP boundaries do not precisely correspond to the current City of Mountain House boundaries.

Project's anticipated population growth and establishes goals, policies, and actions to accommodate such growth. For example, Land Use Element Goal LU-1 and related policies are related to comprehensive land use planning that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options and offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities. Goal LU-2 and related policies are related to effective growth management to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to the existing community. Policy LU-2.3 requires new development to pay their fair share of costs for providing public services. Action LU-1d directs the City to initiate a coordinated process to regularly review and adjust population assumptions and forecasts in conjunction with the California Department of Finance, SJCOG, Lammersville Unified School District (LUSD), and San Joaquin County in order to adequately plan for growth.

With implementation of General Plan policies and actions intended to guide growth to appropriate areas and provide services necessary to accommodate growth, the land uses allowed under the proposed General Plan, the infrastructure anticipated to accommodate proposed land uses, and the goal and policy framework would not induce growth that would exceed adopted thresholds, beyond those disclosed and analyzed throughout this EIR. Therefore, population and housing growth associated with the proposed General Plan would result in a ***less than significant*** impact.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-1: Comprehensive Land Use Planning. A balanced land use pattern that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options, offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities, and promoting a robust local economy.

Policy LU-1.1: Holistic Land Use Planning. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.2: Complete Neighborhoods. Promote the development of compact, complete neighborhoods that locate parks, services, and amenities within walking and biking distance of neighborhood residents, allowing people to meet their daily needs close to their homes.

Policy LU-1.3: Comprehensive Land Use Analysis. Land use decisions should include evaluation of both fiscal impacts (costs and revenues to the City) and qualitative community benefits, including public health, environmental quality, housing affordability, and equitable access to services, to ensure long-term community sustainability.

Action LU-1a: Update the Development Title (Title 9 of the Mountain House Municipal Code), Zoning Map, and Specific Plans as appropriate to ensure consistency with this Land Use Element and designations shown on the Land Use Map (Figure LU-1).

Action LU-1b: Develop a quantitative methodology to establish desired land use mix targets to meet City priorities, such as meeting housing needs (i.e., the RHNA), achieving a healthy job-housing balance, and maintaining fiscal sustainability. Implementation and monitoring may utilize a suite of data-driven tools, including geospatial analysis, scenario planning software, digital dashboards, market and feasibility studies, community surveys, infrastructure capacity assessments, and permit tracking. Monitor progress as part of the City's annual progress report (APR) and devise strategies as necessary to align ongoing growth with the City's land use vision.

Action LU-1d: Initiate a coordinated process to regularly review and adjust population assumptions and forecasts in conjunction with the California Department of Finance, San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), Lammersville Unified School District (LUSD), and San Joaquin County in order to adequately plan for growth, including jobs-housing balance projections.

Action LU-1e: The City shall work with San Joaquin County and SJCOG to address agricultural mitigation obligations associated with conversion of prime agricultural soils within the Planning Area. This includes requiring development projects to participate in the agricultural mitigation fee program established by the County and the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space plan (SJMSCP), when applicable.

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.1: Specific Plans. Continue to maintain Specific Plans to further refine the concepts of the General Plan and provide orderly, well-planned growth within their boundaries.

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Policy LU-2.3: Fair Share. Require new development to pay their fair share of costs for providing public services.

Policy LU-2.4: Targeted Infill Development. Allow and encourage infill development at densities consistent with applicable land use designations. Design review for infill projects

shall focus on compatibility of building materials, landscaping, and architectural quality, and shall not be used as a basis for reducing density or intensity below what is allowed by the applicable land use designation.

Policy LU-2.7: Buildout Projections. The City shall maintain and report buildout capacity and development activity consistent with the requirements of Gov. Code §65400 (Annual Progress Report). All residential units, including below-market-rate, deed-restricted, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), shall be counted toward the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) in accordance with state law. For purposes of fiscal planning and infrastructure analysis, the City may prepare supplemental analyses that separately account for different unit types.

Action LU-2a: Analyze land use compatibility through the development review process to require adequate buffers and/or architectural enhancements that protect sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, schools, day care centers, hospitals, nursing homes) from intrusion of development activities that may cause unwanted nuisances and health risks.

Action LU-2b: Pursue a cooperative collaborative relationship with local and regional agencies, including San Joaquin County, the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), Lammersville Unified School District (LUSD), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), and the City of Tracy during development of long-range plans and review of development proposals that may impact the City. Coordinate with these agencies to achieve mutually agreeable outcomes and ensure that local and regional planning and development decisions do not result in adverse impacts to Mountain House.

Action LU-2d: Implement the policies and actions of this General Plan as program-level mitigation measures, where applicable. In approving development projects consistent with this General Plan, the City shall identify which General Plan policies and actions address potential environmental impacts and shall rely on those policies and actions to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, or to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with the findings of the General Plan EIR. All applicable development projects shall be reviewed and processed per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Action LU-2e: Review subdivision maps and site plans for compliance with density ranges and calculations of the corresponding Specific Plan prior to project approval.

Public Services Element

Policy PSF-1.2: Public Facilities Plans. Maintain and implement public facility master plans, in collaboration with appropriate service providers, to maintain optimal service levels and operational efficiency.

Policy PSF-1.3: Fair Share. Require that new development and major redevelopment projects provide for and fund their fair share of the costs for the expansion of public infrastructure and services, recreational amenities and facilities, and other public facilities.

Policy PSF-1.4: Orderly Extension of Infrastructure. Prioritize the placement of new infrastructure in areas targeted for near-term development through the orderly extension of infrastructure.

Action PSF-1a: Regularly conduct public facilities and critical infrastructure assessments that consider multiple criteria such as structural condition, reliability, capacity and performance, cost-effectiveness, and community satisfaction, and use this information to inform the Capital Improvement Program process.

Action PSF-1b: As part of the development review process, determine the potential impacts of development projects on public infrastructure and services, and ensure that new development contributes its fair share toward necessary improvements. Require new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate that the City's public services and facilities can accommodate the increased demand associated with the project prior to approval.

Action PSF-1c: Through development review, ensure that infrastructure is adequately sized to accommodate the proposed development and, if applicable, allow for extensions to future developments.

Action PSF-1d: Periodically review the City's fee schedules and development impact fees for the provision of utilities, facilities, and services and revise fees as necessary to maintain acceptable service levels.

Impact 3.10-4: General Plan implementation would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere (Less than Significant)

While no specific development projects are proposed as part of the Project, the General Plan will accommodate future growth in Mountain House. Overall, the proposed Project would provide new development opportunities to support the vision for development consistent with the General Plan. The land uses allowed under the proposed General Plan (Figure 2.0-4) provide opportunities for cohesive new growth adjacent to existing urbanized areas and within infill locations. The Project does not propose the removal or displacement of existing housing or residents. Developed land in the Planning Area that is comprised of existing residential uses is not anticipated to undergo significant land use changes under the proposed Project. Instead, the Project builds upon existing policies and land use designations to support additional housing opportunities. Additional development allowed under the proposed General Plan allows for the diversification of the City's housing supply to meet the needs of the community at various socioeconomic levels. Although the General Plan does not propose demolition of any existing housing units, future private redevelopment projects could result in the removal of residential units. In such cases, compliance

with Government Code Section 66300(d)(2) would be required to ensure a no-net-loss in housing, including affordable housing, when applicable. In addition, the General Plan establishes goals, policies, and actions to ensure the compatibility of new and existing development, including housing. For example, Land Use Element Goal LU-1 and related policies are related to comprehensive land use planning that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options and offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities. Goals LU-2 and LU-3 aim to ensure that new development is compatible with and well-integrated with existing development. Therefore, impacts of the proposed General Plan on the displacement of people or housing are considered ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-1: Comprehensive Land Use Planning. A balanced land use pattern that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options, offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities, and promoting a robust local economy.

Policy LU-1.1: Holistic Land Use Planning. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.3: Comprehensive Land Use Analysis. Land use decisions should include evaluation of both fiscal impacts (costs and revenues to the City) and qualitative community benefits, including public health, environmental quality, housing affordability, and equitable access to services, to ensure long-term community sustainability.

Action LU-1a: Update the Development Title (Title 9 of the Mountain House Municipal Code), Zoning Map, and Specific Plans as appropriate to ensure consistency with this Land Use Element and designations shown on the Land Use Map (Figure LU-1).

Policy LU-2.1: Specific Plans. Continue to maintain Specific Plans to further refine the concepts of the General Plan and provide orderly, well-planned growth within their boundaries.

Policy LU-2.4: Targeted Infill Development. Allow and encourage infill development at densities consistent with applicable land use designations. Design review for infill projects shall focus on compatibility of building materials, landscaping, and architectural quality, and shall not be used as a basis for reducing density or intensity below what is allowed by the applicable land use designation.

Policy LU-2.7: Buildout Projections. The City shall maintain and report buildout capacity and development activity consistent with the requirements of Gov. Code §65400 (Annual Progress Report). All residential units, including below-market-rate, deed-restricted, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), shall be counted toward the City's

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) in accordance with state law. For purposes of fiscal planning and infrastructure analysis, the City may prepare supplemental analyses that separately account for different unit types.

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-4.2: Equal Housing. The City shall affirmatively further fair housing by supporting fair housing practices and enforcement of applicable laws, and by working to expand housing choice and access for all residents regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, sex, age, marital status, disability, or household composition, consistent with the City's obligations under Gov. Code §8899.50 and the Housing Element.

Action EJ-4a: Annually review housing maintenance complaints, code enforcement cases, and reported overcrowding issues, and use the results to identify recurring housing health and safety concerns and inform enforcement and outreach priorities.

Action EJ-4b: Maintain and annually update City public information on fair housing rights, tenant and landlord responsibilities, code enforcement contacts, and available resources for reporting unsafe, unsanitary, or discriminatory housing conditions.

Action EJ-4c: Annually coordinate with San Joaquin County, housing agencies, utility providers, and nonprofit organizations to identify available rehabilitation, home improvement, energy efficiency, and housing assistance programs that could serve Mountain House residents.

Action EJ-4d: Periodically review development standards, permit procedures, and housing programs to identify opportunities to support affordable housing, housing choice, and housing options for lower-income households, special needs households, and households with incomes below 30 percent of area median income.

3.10.4 REFERENCES

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San Joaquin County, Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Transfer Request, November 12, 2025.

San Joaquin Council of Governments, 2022 San Joaquin County Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Appendix Q, September 2020.

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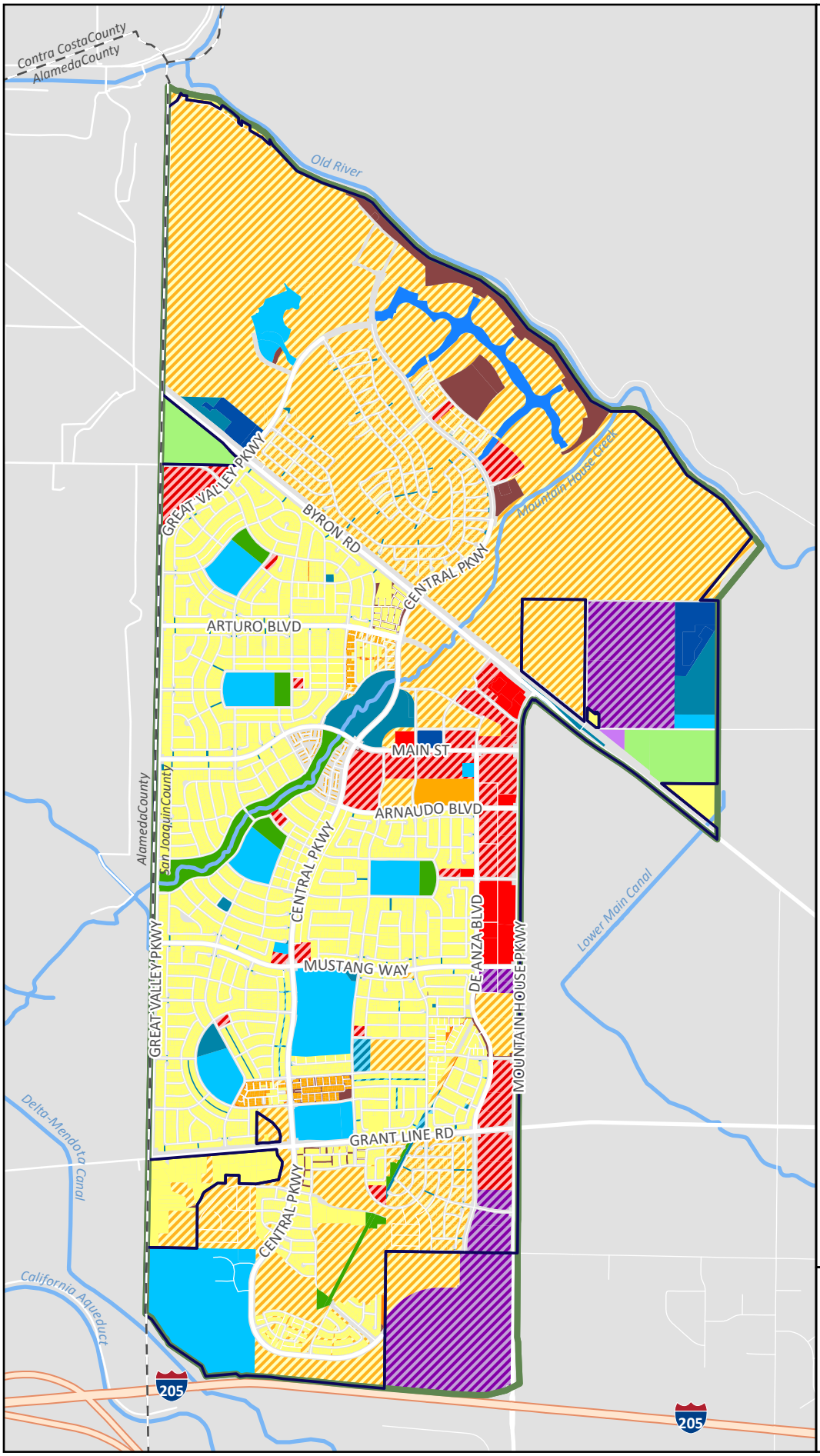

FIGURE 3.10-1.

EXISTING LAND USES

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary

Agricultural
- Agriculture

Residential
- Residential - Single Family
- Residential - Multi-Family
- Residential - Common Areas
- Residential - Vacant

Commercial
- Commercial
- Commercial - Vacant

Industrial
- Industrial
- Industrial - Vacant

Public Facilities
- School
- Park
- Utilities
- Miscellaneous City/ County/District Uses
- City Lands - Vacant
- Roads and Streets

Other
- Unbuildable
- Water

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
September 10, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: San Joaquin County GIS; San Joaquin County Assessor; ParcelQuest; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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This section provides a background discussion and analysis of mineral resources in Mountain House. This section is organized with an environmental setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis.

There were no comments received during the NOP comment period related to this environmental topic.

3.11.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

MINERAL RESOURCES

Mineral resources include commercially viable oil and gas deposits, and nonfuel mineral resource deposits. Nonfuel mineral resources include metals such as gold, silver, iron, and copper; industrial metals such as boron compounds, rare-earth elements, clays, limestone, gypsum, salt, and dimension stone; and construction aggregate, including sand, gravel, and crushed stone. California is the largest producer of sand and gravel in the nation.

Pursuant to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA), the California State Mining and Geology Board oversees the Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) classification system. The MRZ system characterizes both the location and known/presumed economic value of underlying mineral resources. The mineral resource classification system uses four main MRZs based on the degree of available geologic information, the likelihood of significant mineral resource occurrence, and the known or inferred quantity of significant mineral resources:

- MRZ-1: Areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence.
- MRZ-2: Areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence.
- MRZ-3: Areas containing mineral deposits the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data.
- MRZ-4: Areas where available information is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ classification.

Mineral lands within Mountain House have not been classified and designated by the State Division of Mines and Geology.[1] Additionally, there are no active mining operations within Mountain House.[2]

OIL WELLS

Four plugged and abandoned wells exist in Mountain House, in the northern part of the City.[3] The California Department of Conservation's Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) oversees

[1] California Department of Conservation, Mineral Land Classification. Available at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/minerals/?page=Mineral-Land-Classification. Accessed April 2026.
[2] California Department of Conservation, 2016. Mines Online. Available at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/mol/index.html. Accessed April 2026.
[3] California Department of Conservation, 2025. Well Finder. Available at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/doggr/wellfinder/. Accessed April 2026.

the plugging and abandonment of oil wells. CalGEM is responsible for implementing Section 3208.1 of the Public Resources Code (PRC), which authorizes CalGEM to order the reabandonment of a previously abandoned well when construction of any structure over or in proximity to a well could result in a hazard. CalGEM's Construction Site Well Review Program assists local permitting agencies in identifying and reviewing the status of oil or gas wells located near or beneath proposed structures. Before issuing building or grading permits, local permitting agencies review and implement CalGEM's preconstruction well requirements.

3.11.2 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975

The California Department of Conservation Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (§ 2710), also known as SMARA, provides a comprehensive surface mining and reclamation policy that permits the continued mining of minerals, as well as the protection and subsequent beneficial use of the mined and reclaimed land. The purpose of SMARA is to ensure that adverse environmental effects are prevented or minimized and that mined lands are reclaimed to a usable condition and are readily adaptable for alternative land uses. The production and conservation of minerals are encouraged, while also giving consideration to values relating to recreation, wildlife, range, and forage, as well as aesthetic enjoyment. Residual hazards to public health and safety are eliminated. These goals are achieved through land use planning by allowing a jurisdiction to balance the economic benefits of resource reclamation with the need to provide other land uses.

If a use is proposed that might threaten the potential recovery of minerals from an area that has been classified MRZ-2, SMARA would require the jurisdiction to prepare a statement specifying its reasons for permitting the proposed use, provide public notice of these reasons, and forward a copy of the statement to the State Geologist and the State Mining and Geology Board (Cal. Pub. Res. Code Section 2762). Lands classified MRZ-2 are areas that contain identified mineral resources.

LOCAL

Mountain House Specific Plans

Several parcels within Specific Plan II and Specific Plan III have mineral rights with rights to surface access by third party mineral rights owners. Such rights enable the owners to explore and extract mineral resources that may exist below the subject properties. Specific Plans II and III identify conceptual surface entry locations to preserve the mineral right holders' ability to search for and extract if found, mineral resources below the identified parcels while: preserving the landowners' rights to develop the property consistent with the terms of the Master Plan and Specific Plan; and minimizing the impacts to ultimate adjacent uses and occupants. The Specific Plans allow for the identified sites to be relocated as necessary and include implementation measures to provide surface entry rights to access minerals in accordance with applicable law.

Mountain House Municipal Code

Mountain House Municipal Code Title 9, Division 15, Chapter 4, *Mineral Resources Protection*, provides regulations to protect mineral resources from urban development or encroachment and to manage the production of such mineral resources in an environmentally sound manner.

3.11.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project may have a significant impact on the environment associated with mineral resources if it would:

- Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state; and/or
- Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.11-1: General Plan implementation would result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State or of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan (No Impact)

Implementation of the Project would establish the City of Mountain House General Plan as the long-term policy framework for future land use and development within the Planning Area. Over the life of the plan, the General Plan would guide future residential, mixed use, commercial, industrial, park, public facility, open space, and infrastructure development. However, it does not itself approve any specific mining operation or mineral extraction activity.

As discussed above, no known mineral resource of regional or statewide value has been identified within the Planning Area. Mineral lands in Mountain House have not been classified or designated under the Mineral Resource Zone classification system, and there are no active mining operations in the City. Although four plugged and abandoned oil wells are located in the northern part of the City, those wells are subject to oversight by the California Department of Conservation's Geologic Energy Management Division for construction safety purposes and do not indicate the presence of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State.

Accordingly, because no known mineral resource of regional or statewide value has been identified within the Planning Area, implementation of the General Plan would not result in the loss of availability of such a resource. Regulations related to mineral resources, including but not limited to Mountain House Municipal Code Title 9, Division 15, Chapter 4, *Mineral Resources Protection*, and the mineral rights provisions specified in Specific Plan II and III, would continue to be implemented. Further, as the Project does not propose changes to the Municipal Code or to the mineral rights

provisions specified in Mountain House Specific Plan II and III, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site as delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan. Therefore, ***no impact*** would occur.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

There are no General Plan goals, policies, or actions specific to mineral resources.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

No Impact.

3.11.4 REFERENCES

California Department of Conservation, Mineral Land Classification. Available at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/minerals/?page=Mineral-Land-Classification. Accessed April 2026.

California Department of Conservation, 2016. Mines Online. Available at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/mol/index.html. Accessed April 2026.

California Department of Conservation, 2025. Well Finder. Available at: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/doggr/wellfinder/. Accessed April 2026.

This section provides a general description of existing noise sources in the City of Mountain House, the regulatory setting, and an analysis of potential impacts associated with implementation of the General Plan.

One comment was received during the NOP comment period regarding this environmental topic; refer to Appendix A. The comment letter received from Igor Kiselev, dated May 28, 2026, recommends that the EIR address noise impacts to residences surrounding the high school from vehicles.

3.12.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

KEY TERMS

Ambient Noise The distinctive acoustical characteristics of a given area consisting of all noise sources audible at that location. In many cases, the term ambient is used to describe an existing or pre-project condition such as the setting in an environmental noise study.

Attenuation The reduction of noise.

A-Weighting A frequency-response adjustment of a sound level meter that conditions the output signal to approximate human response. A-weighted sound levels are expressed as dBA.

Decibel or dB Fundamental unit of sound, defined as ten times the logarithm of the ratio of the sound pressure squared over the reference pressure squared. All dB levels used in this report are A-weighted values, unless otherwise stated.

CNEL Community Noise Equivalent Level. Defined as the 24-hour average noise level with noise occurring during evening hours (7 - 10 p.m.) weighted by + 5 dB and nighttime hours weighted by +10 dB. Typically, 1 dB higher than Ldn for transportation noise sources.

Frequency The measure of the rapidity of alterations of a periodic acoustic signal, expressed in cycles per second or Hertz.

Impulsive Sound of short duration, usually less than one second, with an abrupt onset and rapid decay.

L_{dn} Day/Night Average Sound Level. Similar to CNEL but with no evening weighting.

L_{eq} Equivalent or energy-averaged sound level.

L_{max} The highest root-mean-square (RMS) sound level measured over a given period of time.

L(n) The sound level exceeded a described percentile over a measurement period. For instance, an hourly L50 is the sound level exceeded 50 percent of the time during the one hour period.

Loudness A subjective term for the sensation of the magnitude of sound.

Noise Unwanted sound.

FUNDAMENTALS OF ACOUSTICS

Acoustics is the science of sound. Sound may be thought of as mechanical energy of a vibrating object transmitted by pressure waves through a medium to human (or animal) ears. If the pressure variations occur frequently enough (at least 20 times per second), then they can be heard and are called sound. The number of pressure variations per second is called the frequency of sound and is expressed as cycles per second or Hertz (Hz).

Noise is a subjective reaction to different types of sounds. Noise is typically defined as (airborne) sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected or undesired, and may therefore be classified as a more specific group of sounds. Perceptions of sound and noise are highly subjective from person to person.

Measuring sound directly in terms of pressure would require a very large and awkward range of numbers. To avoid this, the decibel scale was devised. The decibel scale uses the hearing threshold (20 micropascals), as a point of reference, defined as 0 dB. Other sound pressures are then compared to this reference pressure, and the logarithm is taken to keep the numbers in a practical range. The decibel scale allows a million-fold increase in pressure to be expressed as 120 dB, and changes in levels (dB) correspond closely to human perception of relative loudness.

The perceived loudness of sounds is dependent upon many factors, including sound pressure level and frequency content. However, within the usual range of environmental noise levels, perception of loudness is relatively predictable, and can be approximated by A-weighted sound levels. There is a strong correlation between A-weighted sound levels (expressed as dBA) and the way the human ear perceives sound. For this reason, the A-weighted sound level has become the standard tool of environmental noise assessment. All noise levels reported in this section are in terms of A-weighted levels, but are expressed as dB, unless otherwise noted.

The decibel scale is logarithmic, not linear. In other words, two sound levels 10 dB apart differ in acoustic energy by a factor of 10. When the standard logarithmic decibel is A-weighted, an increase of 10 dBA is generally perceived as a doubling in loudness. For example, a 70 dBA sound is half as loud as an 80 dBA sound, and twice as loud as a 60 dBA sound.

Community noise is commonly described in terms of the ambient noise level, which is defined as the all-encompassing noise level associated with a given environment. A common statistical tool to measure the ambient noise level is the average, or equivalent, sound level (Leq), which corresponds to a steady-state A weighted sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given time period (usually one hour). The Leq is the foundation of the composite noise descriptor, Ldn, and shows very good correlation with community response to noise.

The day/night average level (Ldn) is based upon the average noise level over a 24-hour day, with a +10 decibel weighing applied to noise occurring during nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) hours. The nighttime penalty is based upon the assumption that people react to nighttime noise exposures as though they were twice as loud as daytime exposures. Because Ldn represents a 24-hour average,

it tends to disguise short-term variations in the noise environment. CNEL is similar to Ldn but includes a +3 dB penalty for evening noise. Table 3.12-1 lists several examples of the noise levels associated with common situations.

TABLE 3.12-1: TYPICAL NOISE LEVELS

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dBA)	Common Indoor Activities
	--110--	Rock Band
Jet Fly-over at 300 m (1,000 ft)	--100--	
Gas Lawn Mower at 1 m (3 ft)	--90--	
Diesel Truck at 15 m (50 ft), at 80 km/hr (50 mph)	--80--	Food Blender at 1 m (3 ft) Garbage Disposal at 1 m (3 ft)
Noisy Urban Area, Daytime Gas Lawn Mower, 30 m (100 ft)	--70--	Vacuum Cleaner at 3 m (10 ft)
Commercial Area Heavy Traffic at 90 m (300 ft)	--60--	Normal Speech at 1 m (3 ft)
Quiet Urban Daytime	--50--	Large Business Office Dishwasher in Next Room
Quiet Urban Nighttime	--40--	Theater, Large Conference Room (Background)
Quiet Suburban Nighttime	--30--	Library
Quiet Rural Nighttime	--20--	Bedroom at Night, Concert Hall (Background)
	--10--	Broadcast/Recording Studio
Lowest Threshold of Human Hearing	--0--	Lowest Threshold of Human Hearing

Source: Caltrans, Technical Noise Supplement, Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol. September 2013.

EFFECTS OF NOISE ON PEOPLE

The effects of noise on people can be placed in three categories:

- Subjective effects of annoyance, nuisance, and dissatisfaction;
- Interference with activities such as speech, sleep, and learning; and
- Physiological effects such as hearing loss or sudden startling.

Environmental noise typically produces effects in the first two categories. Workers in industrial plants can experience noise in the last category. There is no completely satisfactory way to measure the subjective effects of noise or the corresponding reactions of annoyance and dissatisfaction. A wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance exists and different tolerances to noise tend to develop based on an individual's past experiences with noise.

Thus, an important way of predicting a human reaction to a new noise environment is the way it compares to the existing environment to which one has adapted. This is known as the ambient noise level. In general, the more a new noise exceeds the previously existing ambient noise level, the less acceptable the new noise will be judged by those hearing it.

With regard to increases in A-weighted noise level, the following relationships occur:

- Except in carefully controlled laboratory experiments, a change of 1 dBA cannot be perceived;
- Outside of the laboratory, a 3 dBA change is considered a just-perceivable difference;
- A change in level of at least 5 dBA is required before any noticeable change in human response would be expected; and
- A 10 dBA change is subjectively heard as approximately a doubling in loudness, and can cause an adverse response.

Stationary point sources of noise – including stationary mobile sources such as idling vehicles – attenuate (lessen) at a rate of approximately 6 dB per doubling of distance from the source, depending on environmental conditions (i.e. atmospheric conditions and either vegetative or manufactured noise barriers, etc.). Widely distributed noises, such as a large industrial facility spread over many acres, or a street with moving vehicles, would typically attenuate at a lower rate.

EXISTING NOISE LEVELS

Traffic Noise Levels

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Highway Traffic Noise Prediction model (FHWA-RD 77-108) was used to develop community noise equivalent level (CNEL) noise contours for all highways and major roadways in the General Plan Planning Area. The model is based upon the CALVENO noise emission factors for automobiles, medium trucks, and heavy trucks, with consideration given to vehicle volume, speed, roadway configuration, distance to the receiver and the acoustical characteristics of the site. The FHWA model predicts hourly L_{eq} values for free-flowing traffic conditions and is generally considered to be accurate within 1.5 dB. To predict Ldn values, it is necessary to determine the day/night distribution of traffic for a typical 24-hour period.

Existing traffic volumes were obtained from the traffic modeling performed for the City and speed limits for analyzed roadway segments. Using these data sources and the FHWA traffic noise prediction methodology, traffic noise levels were calculated for existing conditions. Table 3.12-2 shows the results of this analysis.

The actual distances to noise level contours may vary from the distances predicted by the FHWA model due to roadway curvature, grade, shielding from local topography or structures, elevated roadways, or elevated receivers. The distances reported in Table 3.12-2 are generally considered to be conservative estimates of noise exposure along roadways in the City.

TABLE 3.12-2: PREDICTED EXISTING TRAFFIC NOISE LEVELS

Roadway	Segment	Average Daily Trips	Noise Level at Closest Receptors (dB, Ldn)1	Distances to Traffic Noise Contours, Ldn (feet)		
				70 dB	65 dB	60 dB
Mountain House Pkwy	I-205 to Grant Line Rd	17,788	70.1	102	323	1021
Mountain House Pkwy	Grant Line Rd to Mustang Wy	13,884	68.4	69	217	685
Mountain House Pkwy	Mustang Wy to Byron Rd	14,890	68.7	73	232	735
Byron Rd	Alameda Co Line to Great Valley Pkwy	15,151	68.0	57	180	570
Byron Rd	Mountain House Pkwy to Grant Line Rd	20,438	69.3	77	243	770
Grant Line Rd	Great Valley Pkwy to Alameda Co Line	11,543	66.4	30	96	303
Grant Line Rd	Mountain House Pkwy to Byron Rd	7,956	64.7	21	66	209
Great Valley Pkwy	Grant Line Rd to Mustang Wy	6,135	63.1	12	39	123
Great Valley Pkwy	Main St to Byron Rd	3,304	61.8	9	29	92
Central Pkwy	Grant Line Rd to Mustang Wy	4,885	64.1	16	49	156
Central Pkwy	S/O Grant Line Rd	4,857	64.4	16	52	164

Notes:
1. Traffic noise levels are predicted at the closest sensitive receptors from the centerline of the roadway.
Source: FHWA 1978; Advanced Mobility Group, 2025.

In addition to the City's roadway segments listed in Table 3.12-2, Interstate 205 (I-205), located just south of the Planning Area, is a significant source of traffic noise within the southern portion of the Planning Area. According to a long-term noise measurement taken at the southern boundary of the Planning Area, approximately 120 feet away from the centerline of I-205, hourly average noise levels typically range from 67 to 85 dBA Leq during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.) and from 66 to 85 dBA Leq during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.).[1]

[1] Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc., Specific Plan III - Mountain House Project Environmental Noise Assessment Mountain House, San Joaquin County, California, December 18, 2025 (updated March 12, 2026)

Community Noise Survey

The existing noise environment in the Planning Area is influenced by traffic noise on nearby roads. The roadways proximate the Planning Area are generally suburban in nature with low to mid-levels of traffic volumes. As part of the Project, an ambient noise survey was conducted on October 27, 2025 at locations shown in Figure 3.12-1. Noise level measurements were taken using a Larson Davis Laboratories SoundTrack LxT sound level meter (LD LxT). The LD LxT were set up at a height of approximately five feet above the ground and equipped with a windscreen. Six short-term measurements were taken within the boundaries of the Planning Area. The LD LxTs were calibrated before and after use with a Larson Davis Model CAL200 acoustical calibrator to ensure that the measurements would be accurate. The sound level meters were programmed to record noise levels in "slow" mode in A-weighted form. Meteorological conditions during all measurement periods were favorable, with clear skies. The noise level measurements were collected for approximately 20 minutes each location. As shown in Table 3.12-3, the minimum (L_{min}), average (L_{eq}), and maximum noise levels (L_{max}) are taken at each ambient noise measurement location. The complete noise monitoring results are included in Appendix B.

TABLE 3.12-3: EXISTING SHORT-TERM COMMUNITY NOISE MONITORING RESULTS

Measurement Location	Maximum (Lmax)	Average (Leq)	Minimum (Lmin)
ST1	65.0	49.6	34.4
ST2	77.3	53.9	39.3
ST3	90.8	66.1	37.6
ST4	67.3	48.1	35.0
ST5	73.0	49.1	38.1
ST6	76.1	49.2	41.8

Source: De Novo Planning Group, 2026.

Stationary (Fixed) Noise Sources

The production of noise is a result of many industrial processes, even when the best available noise control technology is applied. Noise exposures within industrial facilities are controlled by federal and State employee health and safety regulations (OSHA and Cal-OSHA), but exterior noise levels may exceed locally acceptable standards. Commercial, recreational, and public service facility activities can also produce noise which affects adjacent sensitive land uses. These noise sources can be continuous and may contain tonal components which have a potential to annoy individuals who live nearby. In addition, noise generation from fixed noise sources may vary based upon climatic conditions, time of day, and existing ambient noise levels.

Typical stationary (fixed) noise sources in Mountain House may include parking lots, construction sites, parks, schools, special events, and other commercial/retail use noise sources (HVAC, exhaust fans, loading docks, etc.).

From a land use planning perspective, fixed-source noise control issues focus on two goals:

- To prevent the introduction of new noise-producing uses in noise-sensitive areas, and
- To prevent encroachment of noise sensitive uses upon existing noise-producing facilities.

The first goal can be achieved by applying noise level performance standards to proposed new noise-producing uses. The second goal can be met by requiring that new noise-sensitive uses in near proximity to noise-producing facilities include mitigation measures that would ensure compliance with noise performance standards.

Aviation and Railway Noise Levels

Aviation noise may be experienced within the Planning Area due to aircraft flyovers from nearby airports. The nearest airport is Byron Airport which is located approximately four miles northwest of the City, while the Tracy Municipal Airport is approximately six miles to the southeast of the City. Due to this distance, these airports do not result in 65 dBA CNEL aircraft noise contours being within the City. 65 dBA CNEL or less is generally considered to be an acceptable level of noise exposure for noise sensitive uses such as residential or educational uses.

The Planning Area is bisected by Union Pacific's Mococo branch rail line, which runs from Tracy to Martinez. The rail line runs parallel to and north of Byron Road, in the northern portion of the Planning Area. According to the Mountain House Master Plan, the rail line is used only as a standby route and is currently in limited use.

Additionally, Union Pacific's Altamont segment rail line is located approximately three to four miles south/southwest of the Planning Area. The rail line connects the Central Valley to the San Francisco Bay Area via the Altamont Pass. It is currently in use by Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) commuter trains and Union Pacific freight trains.

3.12.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

The FHWA has developed noise abatement criteria that are used for federally funded roadway projects or projects that require federal review. These criteria are discussed in detail in Title 23 Part 772 of the Federal Code of Regulations (23CFR772).

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The EPA has identified the relationship between noise levels and human response. The EPA has determined that over a 24-hour period, an Leq of 70 dBA will result in some hearing loss. Interference with activity and annoyance will not occur if exterior levels are maintained at an Leq of 55 dBA and interior levels at or below 45 dBA (USEPA 1974). Although these levels are relevant for planning and design and useful for informational purposes, they are not land use planning criteria because they do not consider economic cost, technical feasibility, or the needs of the community.

The EPA has set 55 dBA Ldn as the basic goal for residential environments. However, other federal agencies, in consideration of their own program requirements and goals, as well as difficulty of actually achieving a goal of 55 dBA Ldn, have generally agreed on the 65 dBA Ldn level as being

appropriate for residential uses. At 65 dBA Ldn activity interference is kept to a minimum, and annoyance levels are still low. It is also a level that can realistically be achieved.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was established in response to the Urban Development Act of 1965 (Public Law 90-448). HUD was tasked by the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-174) "to determine feasible methods of reducing the economic loss and hardships suffered by homeowners as a result of the depreciation in the value of their properties following the construction of airports in the vicinity of their homes."

HUD first issued formal requirements related specifically to noise in 1971 (HUD Circular 1390.2). These requirements contained standards for exterior noise levels along with policies for approving HUD-supported or assisted housing projects in high noise areas. In general, these requirements established the following three zones:

- 65 dBA Ldn or less - an acceptable zone where all projects could be approved.
- Exceeding 65 dBA Ldn but not exceeding 75 dBA Ldn - a normally unacceptable zone where mitigation measures would be required, and each project would have to be individually evaluated for approval or denial. These measures must provide 5 dBA of attenuation above the attenuation provided by standard construction required in a 65 to 70 dBA Ldn area and 10 dBA of attenuation in a 70 to 75 dBA Ldn area.
- Exceeding 75 dBA Ldn - an unacceptable zone in which projects would not, as a rule, be approved.

HUD's regulations do not include interior noise standards. Rather a goal of 45 dBA Ldn is set forth and attenuation requirements are geared towards achieving that goal. HUD assumes that using standard construction techniques, any building will provide sufficient attenuation so that if the exterior level is 65 dBA Ldn or less, the interior level will be 45 dBA Ldn or less. Thus, structural attenuation is assumed at 20 dBA. However, HUD regulations were promulgated solely for residential development requiring government funding and are not related to the operation of schools or churches.

The federal government regulates occupational noise exposure common in the workplace through the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) under the EPA. Noise exposure of this type is dependent on work conditions and is addressed through a facility's or construction contractor's health and safety plan. With the exception of construction workers involved in facility construction, occupational noise is irrelevant to this study and is not addressed further in this document.

STATE

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has adopted policy and guidelines relating to traffic noise as outlined in the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol (2020). The noise abatement criteria specified in the protocol are the same as those specified by FHWA.

Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation

The Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (formerly known as the Office of Planning and Research or OPR) has developed guidelines for the preparation of general plans. The guidelines include land use compatibility guidelines for noise exposure.

California Building Standards Code (Title 24)

The California Building Code (Cal. Code Regs., Title 24, Part 2) Section 1206.4, Chapter 12 (Interior Environment), establishes an interior noise criterion of 45 dBA CNEL in any habitable room. Per the California Building Code, Chapter 2 (Definitions), a habitable space is a space in a building for living, sleeping, eating, or cooking. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces and similar areas are not considered habitable spaces. This section applies to dwelling and sleeping units.

California Green Building Standards Code (Cal. Code Regs., Title 24, Part 11), Chapter 5 (Non-residential Mandatory Measures) Section 5.507.4 (Acoustical Control), applies to all proposed buildings that people may occupy but are not residential dwelling units, with the exception of factories, stadiums, storage, enclosed parking structures, and utility buildings.

Buildings must comply with California Green Building Standards Code Section 5.507.4.1 or Section 5.507.4.2. Section 5.507.4.1 requires wall and roof-ceiling assemblies exposed to the noise source making up the building, or addition envelope or altered envelope, shall meet a composite Sound Transmission Class (STC) rating of at least 50 or a composite Outdoor to Indoor Transmission Class (OITC) rating of no less than 40, with exterior windows of a minimum STC of 40 or OITC of 30 when within the 65 CNEL noise contour of an airport, freeway, expressway, railroad, industrial source, or fixed-guideway source. If contours are not available, buildings exposed to 65 dB Leq(h) must meet a composite STC rating of at least 45 or OITC of 35 with exterior windows of at least STC 40 or OITC 30. Section 5.507.4.2 requires that the interior noise attributable to exterior sources must not exceed 50 dBA Leq(h) during any hour of operation. Section 5.507.4.3 requires that assemblies separating tenant spaces from tenant spaces or public places must have an STC of at least 40.

LOCAL

Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

Adopted by the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission, the plan serves as a tool for use by the commission in fulfilling its duty to review airport and adjacent land use development proposals. The plan is primarily concerned with the land uses near the Byron Airport and the Buchanan Field Airport. Although the authority of the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission does not extend into Alameda and San Joaquin County, policies in the Compatibility Plan address the importance of regional coordination on airport land use compatibility matters.

Mountain House Municipal Code

NOISE STANDARDS

Per Mountain House Municipal Code Section 9-10-709, *Noise*, all uses and property in the City shall be subject to the following provisions concerning noise levels:

(a) *Transportation Noise Sources.*

(1) Excluding proposed noise sensitive land uses on infill lots, proposed noise sensitive land uses that will be impacted by existing or planned transportation noise sources shall be required to mitigate the noise levels from these transportation noise sources so that the resulting noise levels on said proposed noise sensitive land uses do not exceed the standards specified in Table 9-10-5.2, Part I. Proposed noise sensitive land uses on infill lots that will be impacted by existing or planned transportation noise sources shall be required to mitigate the noise levels from these transportation noise sources so that the resulting noise levels on said proposed noise sensitive land uses on such infill lots do not exceed the standards specified in Table 9-10-5.2, Part I for interior spaces only.

(2) Private development projects that include the development of new transportation facilities or the expansion of existing transportation facilities shall be required to mitigate the noise levels from these transportation facilities so that the resulting noise levels on noise sensitive land uses within and adjacent to said development projects do not exceed the standards specified in Table 9-10-5.2, Part I.

(b) *Stationary Noise Sources.*

(1) Excluding proposed noise sensitive land uses on infill lots, proposed noise sensitive land uses that will be impacted by stationary noise sources shall be required to mitigate the noise levels from these stationary noise sources so that the resulting noise levels on said proposed noise sensitive land uses do not exceed the standards specified in Table 9-10-5.2, Part II.

(2) Proposed projects that will create new stationary noise sources or expand existing stationary noise sources shall be required to mitigate the noise levels from these stationary noise sources so as not to exceed the noise level standards specified in Table 9-10-5.2, Part II.

(c) *Standards for Commercial and Industrial Uses.* For new commercial uses, industrial uses or utilities, the exterior, non-transportation noise level performance standards specified in Table 9-10-5.2, Part III shall be applicable.

(d) *Standards for Residential Uses.*

(1) New residential development shall not be allowed where noise levels due to stationary noise sources would exceed the exterior noise level standards set forth in Table 9-10-5.2, Part III.

(2) Noise levels from mobile noise sources in primary outdoor use areas of new residential development shall not exceed an Ldn of sixty (60) dB unless the project design includes mitigation measures to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas to sixty (60) dB, or as reasonably close to sixty (60) dB as is possible. Where it is not possible to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas to an Ldn of sixty (60) dB or less, an exterior noise level of up to, but not exceeding, an Ldn of sixty-five (65) dB may be allowed by the Review Authority.

(3) Exterior noise levels shall not create an interior noise level exceeding forty-five (45) dB.

(4) Noise studies for specific residential projects proposed in areas with noise levels from mobile sources above Ldn sixty (60) dB shall address how noise levels in outdoor areas could be maintained at or below an Ldn of sixty-five (65) dB.

(e) *Standards for Other Specified Uses.*

(1) Noise-sensitive land uses other than residential uses shall not be allowed where noise levels due to stationary noise sources would exceed the exterior noise level standards set forth in Table 1025.9M.

(2) On school sites and other noise-sensitive land uses, any outdoor instructional areas or areas which require speech audibility shall be located outside the sixty (60) dB Ldn noise contour from mobile sources or shielded from mobile noise in excess of sixty (60) dB Ldn.

(3) Exterior noise levels shall not create an interior noise level exceeding forty-five (45) dB.

(4) Noise studies prepared for noise-sensitive land uses shall address how noise levels in outdoor areas from mobile sources shall be maintained at or below an Ldn of sixty (60) dB.

(f) *Exemptions.* The following shall be exempt from the provisions of this Chapter:

(1) Activities conducted in public parks, public playgrounds and public or private school grounds, including, but not limited to, school athletic and school entertainment events;

(2) Any mechanical device, apparatus or equipment used, related to, or connected with, emergency activities or emergency work;

(3) Noise sources associated with construction, provided such activities do not take place before 6:00 a.m. or after 9:00 p.m. on any day;

(4) Noise sources associated with the maintenance of residential property located in a residential zone, provided such activities shall take place between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. on any day;

(5) Noise sources emanating from any agricultural operation, including activities associated with the processing or transportation of crops when such activities are conducted on agriculturally zoned lands;

(6) Noise sources associated with residential air conditioning equipment, provided such equipment is in good repair;

(7) Noise sources associated with work performed by private or public utilities in the maintenance or modification of its facilities;

(8) Noise sources associated with the collection of waste or garbage;

(9) Any activity whose regulation has been preempted by State or Federal law.

(g) *Acoustical Study.* The Review Authority shall require the preparation of an acoustical study in instances where it has determined that a project may expose existing or proposed noise sensitive land uses to noise levels exceeding the noise standards specified in Table 9-10-5.2. This determination shall be based on the existing or future sixty-five (65) dB Ldn noise contour in the General Plan, the proximity of new noise sensitive land uses to known noise sources, or the knowledge that a potential for adverse noise impacts exists. The study shall be paid for by the applicant and shall be prepared by a person or persons selected by the

Director. The Director shall select the consultant from the City's consultant list. The acoustical study shall include the following information:

(1) A general description of the project, with appropriate maps, and the noise sources of concern;

(2) A description of the methodology that will be used to assess noise impacts, including a listing of all assumptions and data used in any computer models.

(A) Computer models that will be used for noise predictions shall be standard versions approved by the FHWA, FAA, Caltrans, or other government agencies.

(B) For traffic noise studies, the computer models, SOUND32 or other proprietary models based on the 1978 "FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD-77-108)" shall be used. The FHWA's new "Traffic Noise Model" (TNM) shall be used after its phase in date. For aircraft noise studies, the latest version of the FAA's "Integrated Noise Model" (INM) shall be used.

(C) If standard government approved models do not exist (e.g., railroad and industrial noise sources), a description shall be provided.

(3) A description of existing and future noise levels together with a comparison of these noise levels to the noise level standards specified in Table 9-10-5.2.

(4) Recommended mitigation measures to achieve compliance with the standards specified by Table 9-10-5.2 (i.e., noise barriers, site design, setbacks, equipment modification, structure sound proofing), or a detailed explanation stating why mitigation is infeasible.

(h) *Noise-Attenuation Measures.* In addition to any other noise-attenuation measures specified in the Title, the following additional measures shall be applicable:

(1) Until such time as residential, school or other noise-sensitive development is proposed within one thousand (1,000) feet of the railroad tracks in Mountain House, or until such time as rail use is initiated within the community, noise mitigation shall be limited to a sound wall along the tracks between the proposed transit station and Marina Boulevard.

(2) Residential development shall be set back from the centerline of I-205 a sufficient distance to satisfy Master Plan noise policies after the inclusion of sound mitigation improvements such as berms and soundwalls.

(i) *Measurement.* When noise level measurements are conducted, sound level meters meeting Type 1 (precision) or Type 2 (general purpose) sound level meter/microphone combinations shall be used.

(1) Sound level meters shall be properly calibrated before use and used according to the manufacturer's instructions;

(2) All measurements shall be in terms of A-weighted decibels using slow meter response, except for impulsive noise which shall be measured using fast meter response;

(3) Measurements shall include sufficient sampling periods and locations to adequately describe local conditions and significant noise sources.

(j) *Prohibited Activities.* The outdoor operation of any industrial, commercial, or residential property maintenance tool or equipment powered by an internal combustion engine or electric motor including, but not limited to, leaf blower, chainsaw, lawn mower, hedger, and vacuum cleaner is prohibited within 500 feet of a residence located in a residential zone between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

TABLE 9-10-5.2 MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE NOISE EXPOSURE

PART I. TRANSPORTATION NOISE SOURCES

Noise Sensitive Land Use (Use Types)	Outdoor Activity Areas[1]dB Ldn	Interior Spaces dB Ldn
Residential	65	45
Administrative Office	-	45
Child Care Services-Child Care Centers	-	45
Community Assembly	65	45
Cultural & Library Services	-	45
Educational Services: General	-	45
Funeral & Interment Services—Undertaking	65	45
Lodging Services	65	45
Medical Services	65	45
Professional Services	-	45
Public Services (excluding Hospitals)	-	45
Public Services (hospitals only)	65	45
Recreation—Indoor Spectator	-	45
Religious Assembly	65	45

PART II. STATIONARY NOISE SOURCES

	Outdoor Activity Areas[1] Daytime[2](7 a.m. to 10 p.m.)	Outdoor Activity Areas[1] Nighttime[2](10 p.m. to 7 a.m.)
Hourly Equivalent Sound Level (Leq), dB	50	45
Maximum Sound Level (Lmax), dB	70	65

[1] Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown or is not applicable, the noise standard shall be applied at the property line of the receiving land use. When determining the effectiveness of noise mitigation measures, the standards shall be applied on the receiving side of noise barriers or other property line noise mitigation measures.

[2] Each of the noise level standards specified shall be reduced by 5 dB for impulsive noise, single tone noise, or noise consisting primarily of speech or music.

PART III. EXTERIOR NONTRANSPORTATION NOISE LEVEL STANDARDS

Noise Level Descriptor	Daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.)	Nighttime (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.)
Hourly Leq	55 dB	50 dB
Note: Each of the above noise levels may be lowered by five (5) dB for simple tone noises or for noises consisting primarily of speech or music.		

VIBRATION STANDARDS

Mountain House Municipal Code Section 9-10-705, *Vibration*, provides the following standards related to vibration:

(a) *Perceptible Displacement.* No use shall cause any perceptible displacement at any lot line abutting any zone except an *[sic]* Zone.

(b) *Displacement Within the General Industrial Zone.* Vibration displacement along any lot line within an I-G Zone shall not exceed the levels set forth in Table 9-10-5.1. Vibration displacement shall be measured by a seismograph or other instrument capable of measuring and recording displacement and frequency, particle velocity, or acceleration. Readings shall be made at points of maximum vibration along any lot line within an I-G Zone.

(c) *Exceptions.* The limits of this Section shall not apply to operations involved in the construction or demolition of structures or infrastructure or to vibration caused by motor vehicles or trains.

TABLE 9-10-5.1 MAXIMUM DISPLACEMENT LEVELS AT ANY LOT LINE (IN INCHES)

Frequency (cycles per second)	Steady State	Impact
10 and below	.0010	.0020
10—20	.0008	.0016
20—30	.0007	.0014
30—40	.0003	.0006
40—50	.0002	.0004
50—60	.0001	.0002
60 and over	.0001	.0002

Mountain House Specific Plans

The City has three approved Specific Plans (i.e., Specific Plan I, II, and III). Each of these plans contains a description of known noise sources and potential noise impacts applicable to projects proposed in the Specific Plan area, including standards and implementation measures intended reduce potential noise impacts.

3.12.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the Project will have a significant impact related to noise if it will:

- Generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies;
- Generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels; and/or

- For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Generally, a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it will substantially increase the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas or expose people to severe noise levels. In practice, more specific professional standards have been developed. These standards state that a noise impact may be considered significant if it would generate noise that conflicts with local project criteria or ordinances, or substantially increase noise levels at noise sensitive land uses. The potential increase in traffic noise from the Project is a factor in determining significance. Research into the human perception of changes in sound level indicates the following:

- A 3-dB change is barely perceptible,
- A 5-dB change is clearly perceptible, and
- A 10-dB change is perceived as being twice or half as loud.

A limitation of using a single noise level increase value to evaluate noise impacts is that it fails to account for pre-project noise conditions.

Transportation Noise Increase Criteria

Table 3.12-4 is based upon recommendations made by the Federal Interagency Committee on Noise (FICON) to provide guidance in the assessment of changes in ambient noise levels resulting from aircraft operations. The recommendations are based upon studies that relate aircraft noise levels to the percentage of persons highly annoyed by the noise. Although the FICON recommendations were specifically developed to assess aircraft noise impacts, it has been accepted that they are applicable to all sources of noise described in terms of cumulative noise exposure metrics such as the Ldn.

TABLE 3.12-4: SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES IN NOISE EXPOSURE

Ambient Noise Level Without Project, L_{dn}	Increase Required for Significant Impact
<60 dB	+5.0 dB or more
60-65 dB	+3.0 dB or more
>65 dB	+1.5 dB or more

Source: Federal Interagency Committee on Noise (FICON)

Based on the Table 3.12-4 data, an increase in the traffic noise level of 1.5 dB or more would be significant where the pre-project noise level exceeds 65 dB Ldn. Extending this concept to higher noise levels, an increase in the traffic noise level of 1.5 dB or more may be significant where the pre-project traffic noise level exceeds 75 dB Ldn. The rationale for the Table 3.12-4 criteria is that, as ambient noise levels increase, a smaller increase in noise resulting from a project is sufficient to cause annoyance.

Non-Transportation Noise Increase Criteria

For stationary and non-transportation noise sources, a significant impact will occur if the project results in an exceedance of the noise level standards contained in Municipal Code Table 9-10-5.2 Part II for noise sensitive uses and Table 9-10-5.2 III for commercial and industrial uses.

Vibration Standards

Vibration is similar to noise in that it involves a source, a transmission path, and a receiver. While vibration is related to noise, it differs in that noise is generally considered to be pressure waves transmitted through air, whereas vibration usually consists of the excitation of a structure or surface. As with noise, vibration consists of an amplitude and frequency. A person's perception of the vibration will depend on their individual sensitivity to vibration, as well as the amplitude and frequency of the source and the response of the system which is vibrating.

Vibration can be measured in terms of acceleration, velocity, or displacement. A common practice is to monitor vibration measures in terms of peak particle velocities in inches per second. Standards pertaining to perception as well as damage to structures have been developed for vibration levels defined in terms of peak particle velocities.

The City's Municipal Code Section 9-10-705, *Vibration*, describes the City's limits on vibration generation for different uses. The City does not limit vibration levels associated with construction activities, and railroad operations are addressed as potential noise impacts associated with project implementation.

Human and structural response to different vibration levels is influenced by several factors, including ground type, distance between source and receptor, duration, and the number of perceived vibration events. Table 3.12-5 indicates that the threshold for damage to structures ranges from 0.2 to 0.6 peak particle velocity in inches per second (in/sec p.p.v).

TABLE 3.12-5: EFFECTS OF VIBRATION ON PEOPLE AND BUILDINGS

Peak Particle Velocity		Human Reaction	Effect on Buildings
mm/sec.	in./sec.		
0.15-0.30	0.006-0.019	Threshold of perception; possibility of intrusion	Vibrations unlikely to cause damage of any type
2.0	0.08	Vibrations readily perceptible	Recommended upper level of the vibration to which ruins and ancient monuments should be subjected
2.5	0.10	Level at which continuous vibrations begin to annoy people	Virtually no risk of "architectural" damage to normal buildings

Peak Particle Velocity		Human Reaction	Effect on Buildings
mm/sec.	in./sec.		
5.0	0.20	Vibrations annoying to people in buildings (this agrees with the levels established for people standing on bridges and subjected to relative short periods of vibrations)	Threshold at which there is a risk of "architectural" damage to normal dwelling - houses with plastered walls and ceilings. Special types of finish such as lining of walls, flexible ceiling treatment, etc., would minimize "architectural" damage
10-15	0.4-0.6	Vibrations considered unpleasant by people subjected to continuous vibrations and unacceptable to some people walking on bridges	Vibrations at a greater level than normally expected from traffic but would cause "architectural" damage and possibly minor structural damage.

Source: Caltrans. Transportation Related Earthborn Vibrations. TAV-02-01-R9601 February 20, 2002.

Construction activities may generate perceptible vibration when heavy equipment or impact tools (e.g., jackhammers, hoe rams, pile drivers) are used. Construction activities often include demolition of existing structures, excavation, site preparation work, foundation work, and new building framing and finishing. For structural damage, the California Department of Transportation uses a vibration limit of 0.5 inches/second, peak particle velocity (in/sec, PPV) for buildings structurally sound and designed to modern engineering standards.

Table 3.12-6 presents typical vibration levels that could be expected from construction equipment at a distance of 25-100 feet. The highest levels of vibration typically occur from pile driving operations. Pile driving vibrations are typically below 0.5 in/sec, PPV at distances of 50 feet or more.

TABLE 3.12-6: VIBRATION LEVELS FOR VARYING CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

Type of Equipment	P.P.V. @ 25 feet (inches/second)	P.P.V. @ 50 feet (inches/second)	P.P.V. @ 75 feet (inches/second)	P.P.V. @ 100 feet (inches/second)
Pile Drive (Impact)	0.644	0.226	0.124	0.080
Pile Drive (Sonic)	0.170	0.060	0.033	0.021
Large Bulldozer	0.089	0.031	0.017	0.011
Loaded Trucks	0.076	0.027	0.015	0.010
Small Bulldozer	0.003	0.001	0.000	0.000
Auger/Drill Rigs	0.089	0.031	0.017	0.011
Jackhammer	0.035	0.012	0.006	0.004
Vibratory Hammer	0.070	0.025	0.0135	0.009
Vibratory Compactor/Roller	0.210	0.074	0.040	0.026

Source: Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Guidelines, May 2006.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.12-1: General Plan implementation may result in exposure to significant traffic noise sources (Significant and Unavoidable)

The FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD 77-108) was used to develop Ldn (24-hour average) noise contours for all highways and major roadways in the General Plan study area. The model is based upon the CALVENO noise emission factors for automobiles, medium trucks, and heavy trucks, with consideration given to vehicle volume, speed, roadway configuration, distance to the receiver, and the acoustical characteristics of the site. The FHWA Model predicts hourly Leq values for free-flowing traffic conditions and is generally considered to be accurate within 1.5 dB. To predict Ldn values, it is necessary to determine the hourly distribution of traffic for a typical 24-hour period.

Existing and proposed General Plan buildout volumes and truck counts were obtained from the traffic modeling performed for the General Plan Planning Area. Using these data sources and the FHWA traffic noise prediction methodology, traffic noise levels were calculated for existing and proposed conditions.

Traffic noise levels are predicted at the sensitive receptors located at the closest typical setback distance along each Project-area roadway segment. In some locations sensitive receptors may be located at distances which vary from the assumed calculation distance and may experience shielding from intervening barriers or sound walls. However, the traffic noise analysis is representative of the majority of sensitive receptors located closest to the Project-area roadway segments analyzed in this report.

The actual distances to noise level contours may vary from the distances predicted by the FHWA model due to roadway curvature, grade, shielding from local topography or structures, elevated roadways, or elevated receivers.

Table 3.12-7 shows the future noise levels and the increase in noise levels associated with traffic on the local roadway network under the proposed General Plan, versus the existing conditions.

TABLE 3.12-7: EXISTING CONDITIONS VS. PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN

Roadway	Segment	Noise Levels (Ldn, dB) at Nearest Sensitive Receptors				
		Existing Conditions	Proposed GP	Change	Criteria[1]	Significant?
Byron Road	w/o Great Valley Parkway	71.4	71.4	0.0	+1.5 dB	No
Byron Road	e/o Mountain House Parkway	74.4	75.3	0.9	+1.5 dB	No
Great Valley Parkway	n/o Main Street	60.4	63.2	2.7	+3 dB	No
Great Valley Parkway	s/o Mustang Way	63.1	63.2	0.1	+3 dB	No
Grant Line Road	w/o Great Valley Parkway	68.3	68.3	0.0	+1.5 dB	No
Grant Line Road	e/o Mountain House Parkway	66.7	68.7	2.0	+1.5 dB	**Yes**
Central Parkway	n/o Grant Line Road	62.2	63.9	1.8	+3 dB	No
Central Parkway	s/o Grant Line Road	62.2	64.2	2.1	+3 dB	No
Mountain House Parkway	s/o Byron Road	71.3	71.7	0.4	+1.5 dB	No
Mountain House Parkway	s/o Mustang Way	70.7	71.5	0.8	+1.5 dB	No
Mountain House Parkway	s/o Grant Line Road	71.7	72.6	0.8	+1.5 dB	No

Source: FHWA-RD-77-108 with inputs from Advanced Mobility Group, Caltrans, and De Novo Planning Group 2026.
Note: 1. Where existing noise levels are less than 60 dB an increase of 5 dB would be a significant increase. Where existing noise levels exceed 60 dB but are less than 65 dB, an increase of 3 dB or more would be significant. Additionally, any increase causing noise levels to exceed the City's Normally Acceptable 60 dB Ldn noise level standard at an existing outdoor activity area of a residential use would also be significant. Where existing noise levels exceed 65 dB, an increase of 1.5 dB or more would be significant.

As indicated in Table 3.12-7, the related traffic noise level increases with a 20-year circulation system buildout of the proposed General Plan are predicted to increase between 0.0 to 2.7 dB versus the existing conditions. As shown, buildout of the General Plan may contribute to an exceedance of the City's transportation noise standards and/or result in significant increases in traffic noise levels at existing sensitive receptors at Grant Line Road e/o Mountain House Parkway.

Additionally, the General Plan Land Use Map designates residential uses within the southern portion of the Planning Area which may be impacted by existing and future traffic noise from I-205. As previously discussed, hourly average noise levels at the southern boundary of the Planning Area (approximately 120 feet away from the centerline of I-205) typically range from 67 to 85 dBA Leq during daytime hours and from 66 to 85 dBA Leq during nighttime hours. Noise levels along I-205 under future conditions are expected to increase due to a greater number of vehicles associated with projected regional population growth. While implementation of the proposed Project would not directly approve or construct any specific development or infrastructure project, buildout of the General Plan would accommodate future development in the Planning Area which may be exposed to excessive roadway noise levels.

Policy SAF-6.1, Policy SAF-6.3, Policy SAF-6.4, Policy SAF-6.5, Policy SAF-6.9, and Actions SAF-6a through SAF-6d, identified below, are intended to minimize exposure to excessive roadway noise. Specifically, Policy SAF-6.1 supports noise-compatible land use planning by requiring development and infrastructure projects to be consistent with the land use compatibility standards contained in Table SAF-1, ensuring acceptable noise exposure levels for existing and future development. Policy SAF-6.4 directs that sensitive facilities — including residential uses, schools, medical facilities, libraries, churches, and convalescent homes — be located away from areas of excessive noise unless proper noise reduction measures are in place. Policy SAF-6.5 and Actions SAF-6a and SAF-6b require acoustical studies for new discretionary developments and transportation improvements that could affect existing noise-sensitive uses, or that would introduce new noise-sensitive uses into areas where existing noise levels may exceed the thresholds identified in the Safety Element; where such studies are required, the mobile-source significance criteria set out under Policy SAF-6.5(A) apply. Action SAF-6c further authorizes additional noise studies and conditions prior to approval of Development Permits within noise-sensitive areas identified in the General Plan and/or applicable Specific Plans. Policy SAF-6.9 requires the incorporation of noise-reducing design features — including traffic calming, natural buffers, setbacks, and vegetative screening — into roadway and development design where roadway noise levels exceed or are projected to exceed the standards in Table SAF-1, along with support for nonmotorized transportation infrastructure to reduce vehicle trips and associated roadway noise.

Policy SAF-6.3 sets forth the City's approach to noise from State transportation facilities, including the I-205 freeway corridor, which forms the community's southern boundary and is a dominant source of traffic noise. This policy commits the City to working with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to ensure that adequate noise studies are prepared and that alternative noise mitigation measures are considered for State transportation projects affecting the corridor.

Noise from arterial roadways within the Planning Area is addressed primarily through Action SAF-6a, which requires review of new development projects for compliance with the noise standards established in Table SAF-1 and, where necessary, requires mitigation of excessive noise through best practices such as building location and orientation, building design features, placement or shielding of noise-generating equipment, siting of noise-tolerant features between sources and sensitive receptors, and use of noise-minimizing materials such as rubberized asphalt. Action SAF-6b requires acoustical studies for discretionary projects with the potential to generate noise impacts or to include sensitive uses exposed to noise levels exceeding the General Plan standards, with such studies to include representative noise measurements, estimates of existing and projected noise levels, and mitigation measures necessary to ensure compliance with the Safety Element. Action SAF-6d additionally requires new residential projects adjacent to major freeways and railroad lines to follow Federal Transit Administration vibration screening distance criteria, ensuring residential uses are not exposed to vibration levels exceeding 72 VdB for frequent events (more than 70 events per day), 75 VdB for occasional events (30–70 events per day), or 80 VdB for infrequent events (fewer than 30 events per day).

Implementation of these General Plan noise policies and actions will reduce noise and land use compatibility impacts from vehicular traffic noise sources and would ensure that new development consistent with the General Plan prepares noise studies and/or is designed to include noise-attenuating features as appropriate, consistent with the future traffic noise levels identified in Table 3.12-7 for important roadways at community buildout. These measures would involve appropriate noise attenuation to meet the City's exterior and interior noise standards for new development. However, as shown in Table 3.12-7, the traffic noise increases associated with the proposed General Plan exceed the applicable noise exposure criteria. Therefore, the proposed General Plan would have a ***significant and unavoidable*** impact relative to traffic noise on existing noise-sensitive uses in the City.

MITIGATION MEASURES

There is no feasible mitigation for this impact.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significant and Unavoidable.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Policy SAF-6.1: Consider existing and future noise levels when making land use planning decisions. Require development and infrastructure projects to be consistent with the land use compatibility standards contained in Tables SAF-1, SAF-2, and SAF-3 to ensure acceptable noise exposure levels for existing and future development.

Policy SAF-6.3: Work with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to ensure that adequate noise studies are prepared and alternative noise mitigation measures are considered in State transportation projects.

Policy SAF-6.4: Sensitive Uses. Locate sensitive facilities such as residential uses, schools, medical facilities, libraries, churches, and convalescent homes away from areas of excessive noise unless proper noise reduction measures are in place.

Policy SAF-6.5: Require acoustical studies for new discretionary developments and transportation improvements that have the potential to affect existing noise-sensitive uses such as schools, hospitals, libraries, care facilities, and residential areas, and for projects that would introduce new noise-sensitive uses into an area where existing noise levels may exceed the thresholds identified in this element. For projects that are required to prepare an acoustical study, the following mobile and stationary noise source criteria shall be used to determine the significance of those impacts:

A. Mobile Noise Sources:

- Where existing traffic noise levels are within or below the "normally acceptable" noise criteria at the affected land use (see Table SAF-1), a readily perceptible 5 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise will be considered significant;

- Where existing traffic noise levels falls within the "conditionally acceptable" noise criteria at the sensitive land use, a +3 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise levels will be considered significant; and
- Where existing traffic noise levels exceed the "conditionally acceptable" noise criteria at the sensitive land use, a + 1.5 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise levels will be considered significant.

B. Stationary and Non-Transportation Noise Sources

- A significant impact will occur if the project results in an exceedance of the noise level standards contained in this element, or the project will result in an increase in ambient noise levels by more than 3 dB, whichever is greater.

Policy SAF-6.9: The City shall incorporate noise-reducing design features, including traffic calming, natural buffers, setbacks, and vegetative screening, into roadway and development design where roadway noise levels exceed or are projected to exceed the standards in Table SAF-1. The City shall also support nonmotorized transportation infrastructure to reduce vehicle trips and associated roadway noise.

Action SAF-6a: Review new development projects for compliance with the noise requirements established in this General Plan, including the standards established in Tables SAF-1, SAF-2, and SAF-3. Where necessary, require new development to mitigate excessive noise through best practices, including building location and orientation, building design features, placement of noise-generating equipment away from sensitive receptors, shielding of noise-generating equipment, placement of noise-tolerant features between noise sources and sensitive receptors, and use of noise-minimizing materials such as rubberized asphalt.

Action SAF-6b: Require acoustical studies for all new discretionary projects which have the potential to generate noise impacts or include sensitive uses that would be exposed to noise levels that exceed the standards identified in this General Plan. The studies shall include representative noise measurements, estimates of existing and projected noise levels, and mitigation measures necessary to ensure compliance with this Element.

Action SAF-6c: Additional noise studies and conditions may be required prior to approval of Development Permits if within noise sensitive areas identified in this General Plan and/or Specific Plans.

Action SAF-6d: Require new residential projects located adjacent to major freeways and railroad lines to follow the Federal Transit Administration vibration screening distance criteria to ensure that residential uses are not exposed to vibrations exceeding 72 VdB for frequent events (more than 70 events per day), 75 VdB for occasional events (30-70 events per day), or 80 VdB for infrequent events (less than 30 events per day).

Impact 3.12-2: General Plan implementation may result in exposure to excessive railroad noise sources (Less than Significant)

The Union Pacific Mococo rail line that bisects the community parallel to Byron Highway is a largely dormant freight line that crosses the northern portion of the Mountain House Planning Area. While the rail line is currently in limited use as a standby route, there is the possibility that Union Pacific will resume regular rail service along the line, with the potential to result in noise impacts to surrounding uses. It should be noted that there are existing sensitive receptors within close proximity to the Mococo rail line under existing conditions, including single-family residences located approximately 200 feet to the south-southwest (south of Byron Road) and single-family residences that have been built, are currently under construction, or previously-entitled approximately 100 feet to the north-northeast of the rail line.

At the southern boundary of the Planning Area is the proposed Valley Link project, a proposed passenger rail line that would connect the existing Dublin/Pleasanton BART station in Alameda County to a new Mountain House Community Station located just north of I-205 near Mountain House Parkway. Valley Link is intended to provide all-day, bi-directional passenger service using zero-emission battery electric multiple-unit trainsets, and would include four stations along its approximately 22-mile alignment, with supporting Mountain House Operations and Maintenance facilities, including a layover facility planned easterly of Mountain House Parkway and a possible train platform and parking facility within Mountain House itself.

The Valley Link project's Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was approved by the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority Board in 2021. Subsequent to certification of the Final EIR, the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority modified the project design, including realignment of the trackway in the Altamont Pass and construction of a new Mountain House Community Station and Layover Facility north of I-205 on a site east and west of Mountain House Parkway, near the I-205/Mountain House Parkway interchange. In 2024, a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) and Environmental Assessment were prepared to reflect the revised project plans. The initial operating segment is planned between Dublin/Pleasanton and Vasco Road; the extension of service to the Mountain House Community Station and beyond to North Lathrop remains in a later planning and funding phase, with construction on that portion uncertain because of funding constraints. Because Valley Link would use battery electric rather than diesel-hauled equipment, its noise characteristics are expected to differ from conventional freight or diesel commuter rail operations, though the degree of that difference depends on final vehicle specifications, operating speeds, and horn/warning-signal requirements at grade crossings, none of which have been finalized for the Mountain House segment.

Based on the SEIR to the Valley Link project, train pass-bys, station operations, and the shift of freeway lanes closer to some residences (due to I-580 median reconfiguration to fit the rail line) would raise noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors. Future transportation noise levels at noise-sensitive land uses along the corridor are predicted to range from 52 to 79 dBA Ldn, with project-related increases over ambient noise levels ranging from 0 to 5 dBA. Receptors along the I-580 corridor would generally experience only minor increases in noise, and in some cases minor decreases where travel lanes shift farther from a given property. Because none of the predicted

increases exceed the applicable significance thresholds (a 3 dB increase for locations with elevated existing noise levels, or 5 dB for locations with lower existing noise levels), the SEIR analysis found that no receptors are predicted to experience a significant noise impact from the combined effect of project operations added to existing conditions. As a result, the SEIR concluded that construction noise impacts related to the proposed Valley Link project would be less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures proposed in the SEIR; and operational noise impacts from the proposed Valley Link project would be less than significant.

The proposed Project does not include any new railways and would not increase railway operations. While the Project does not propose site-specific development projects, implementation of the proposed General Plan would allow for future development and redevelopment projects, including new sensitive uses, that may be exposed to railroad noise sources, including from the existing Mococo line and future Valley Link line. Any future development would be required to comply with applicable standards and regulations to reduce potential exposure to noise, including California Building Standards Code (Title 24) requirements and the City's noise standards in the Municipal Code and applicable Specific Plans. In addition, the General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions to reduce potential impacts related to transportation noise, including railroad noise. Specifically, proposed Policy SAF-6.1, Policy SAF-6.4, Policy SAF-6.5, Policy SAF-6.9, and Action SAF-6d require that land uses near transportation noise sources such as the rail line be protected from noise and vibration impacts associated with rail operations — including locating sensitive facilities away from areas of excessive noise unless adequate mitigation is in place, and, for new residential projects adjacent to railroad lines, applying Federal Transit Administration (FTA) vibration screening distance criteria. Consistent with Policy SAF-6.5 and Actions SAF-6b and SAF-6c, acoustical studies are required for discretionary projects and Specific Plans with the potential to generate or be exposed to noise impacts — including projects in the vicinity of the rail line — with such studies to review potential noise impacts from trains and establish appropriate noise mitigation. Noise studies prepared under these requirements would evaluate both single-event noise levels from individual train passing as well as 24-hour weighted average noise exposure levels. The potential for speech interference and sleep disturbance would be evaluated and mitigated at the project level. Compliance with the City's noise Municipal Code, California Building Standards Code (Title 24) requirements, and implementation of the General Plan policies and actions would ensure that development allowed under the proposed General Plan is not exposed to noise levels associated with railroad operations in excess of the City's established standards. This is a ***less than significant*** impact.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Policy SAF-6.1: Consider existing and future noise levels when making land use planning decisions. Require development and infrastructure projects to be consistent with

the land use compatibility standards contained in Tables SAF-1, SAF-2, and SAF-3 to ensure acceptable noise exposure levels for existing and future development.

Policy SAF-6.4: Locate sensitive facilities such as residential uses, schools, medical facilities, libraries, churches, and convalescent homes away from areas of excessive noise unless proper noise reduction measures are in place.

Policy SAF-6.5: Require acoustical studies for new discretionary developments and transportation improvements that have the potential to affect existing noise-sensitive uses such as schools, hospitals, libraries, care facilities, and residential areas, and for projects that would introduce new noise-sensitive uses into an area where existing noise levels may exceed the thresholds identified in this element. For projects that are required to prepare an acoustical study, the following mobile and stationary noise source criteria shall be used to determine the significance of those impacts:

A. Mobile Noise Sources:

- Where existing traffic noise levels are within or below the "normally acceptable" noise criteria at the affected land use (see Table SAF-1), a readily perceptible 5 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise will be considered significant;
- Where existing traffic noise levels falls within the "conditionally acceptable" noise criteria at the sensitive land use, a +3 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise levels will be considered significant; and
- Where existing traffic noise levels exceed the "conditionally acceptable" noise criteria at the sensitive land use, a + 1.5 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise levels will be considered significant.

B. Stationary and Non-Transportation Noise Sources

- A significant impact will occur if the project results in an exceedance of the noise level standards contained in this element, or the project will result in an increase in ambient noise levels by more than 3 dB, whichever is greater.

Action SAF-6a: Review new development projects for compliance with the noise requirements established in this General Plan, including the standards established in Tables SAF-1, SAF-2, and SAF-3. Where necessary, require new development to mitigate excessive noise through best practices, including building location and orientation, building design features, placement of noise-generating equipment away from sensitive receptors, shielding of noise-generating equipment, placement of noise-tolerant features between noise sources and sensitive receptors, and use of noise-minimizing materials such as rubberized asphalt.

Action SAF-6b: Require acoustical studies for all new discretionary projects which have the potential to generate noise impacts or include sensitive uses that would be

exposed to noise levels that exceed the standards identified in this General Plan. The studies shall include representative noise measurements, estimates of existing and projected noise levels, and mitigation measures necessary to ensure compliance with this Element.

Action SAF-6c: Additional noise studies and conditions may be required prior to approval of Development Permits if within noise sensitive areas identified in this General Plan and/or Specific Plans.

Action SAF-6d: Require new residential projects located adjacent to major freeways and railroad lines to follow the Federal Transit Administration vibration screening distance criteria to ensure that residential uses are not exposed to vibrations exceeding 72 VdB for frequent events (more than 70 events per day), 75 VdB for occasional events (30-70 events per day), or 80 VdB for infrequent events (less than 30 events per day).

Impact 3.12-3: General Plan implementation would not result in exposure to excessive aircraft noise sources (Less than Significant)

There are no airports within the Planning Area. The closest airport to the Planning Area is the Byron Airport, located approximately four miles northwest of the Planning Area in Contra Costa County. Byron Airport is subject to an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) adopted by the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC), most recently updated in July 2022. The ALUCP establishes an Airport Influence Area (AIA) around Byron Airport, together with compatibility policy maps and noise and safety compatibility criteria, that govern the types and intensities of land uses permitted within defined zones based on projected aircraft noise exposure. The Planning Area is not within the Byron AIA and is outside of its safety zones and noise contours.

In addition to the Byron Airport, the Tracy Municipal Airport is located approximately 5.8 miles southeast of the Planning Area in San Joaquin County. The Planning Area is not within the Tracy Municipal AIA and is outside of its safety zones and noise contour. Further, the Planning Area is not within the AIA of any other airport.

It should be noted that the existing Mountain House Master Plan identifies the potential for aviation noise sources related to a straight-in, single-event landing approach that crosses over the southern portion of the Planning Area. The Master Plan indicates that light plane operations — the airport's intended primary use — are expected to produce minimal noise impacts on the community, as most aircraft will pass over at heights that make their presence generally unnoticeable. However, airport operators have indicated that increased traffic and larger aircraft can be expected over time. The Master Plan indicates that preliminary noise analysis indicates that, even accounting for this increased traffic, passing heights remain high enough that resulting noise levels within Mountain House stay within acceptable levels.

Further, the proposed General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions that would reduce potential transportation noise impacts, including those related to aircraft; refer to the goals, policies, and actions listed below.

Because the Planning Area is not located within the Byron AIA or the Tracy AIA, is outside applicable airport noise contours, and is not located within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Policy SAF-6.1: Consider existing and future noise levels when making land use planning decisions. Require development and infrastructure projects to be consistent with the land use compatibility standards contained in Tables SAF-1, SAF-2, and SAF-3 to ensure acceptable noise exposure levels for existing and future development.

Policy SAF-6.4: Sensitive Uses. Locate sensitive facilities such as residential uses, schools, medical facilities, libraries, churches, and convalescent homes away from areas of excessive noise unless proper noise reduction measures are in place.

Policy SAF-6.5: Require acoustical studies for new discretionary developments and transportation improvements that have the potential to affect existing noise-sensitive uses such as schools, hospitals, libraries, care facilities, and residential areas, and for projects that would introduce new noise-sensitive uses into an area where existing noise levels may exceed the thresholds identified in this element. For projects that are required to prepare an acoustical study, the following mobile and stationary noise source criteria shall be used to determine the significance of those impacts:

A. Mobile Noise Sources:

- Where existing traffic noise levels are within or below the "normally acceptable" noise criteria at the affected land use (see Table SAF-1), a readily perceptible 5 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise will be considered significant;
- Where existing traffic noise levels falls within the "conditionally acceptable" noise criteria at the sensitive land use, a +3 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise levels will be considered significant; and
- Where existing traffic noise levels exceed the "conditionally acceptable" noise criteria at the sensitive land use, a + 1.5 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise levels will be considered significant.

B. Stationary and Non-Transportation Noise Sources

- A significant impact will occur if the project results in an exceedance of the noise level standards contained in this element, or the project will result in

an increase in ambient noise levels by more than 3 dB, whichever is greater.

Action SAF-6a: Review new development projects for compliance with the noise requirements established in this General Plan, including the standards established in Tables SAF-1, SAF-2, and SAF-3. Where necessary, require new development to mitigate excessive noise through best practices, including building location and orientation, building design features, placement of noise-generating equipment away from sensitive receptors, shielding of noise-generating equipment, placement of noise-tolerant features between noise sources and sensitive receptors, and use of noise-minimizing materials such as rubberized asphalt.

Action SAF-6b: Require acoustical studies for all new discretionary projects which have the potential to generate noise impacts or include sensitive uses that would be exposed to noise levels that exceed the standards identified in this General Plan. The studies shall include representative noise measurements, estimates of existing and projected noise levels, and mitigation measures necessary to ensure compliance with this Element.

Action SAF-6c: Additional noise studies and conditions may be required prior to approval of Development Permits if within noise sensitive areas identified in this General Plan and/or Specific Plans.

Impact 3.12-4: General Plan implementation could result in the generation of excessive stationary noise sources (Less than Significant)

Stationary noise sources during project operation primarily include industrial, commercial, or utility uses that create a constant or periodic noise at a fixed location, such as loading dock activities, air handling systems, or public address systems. Unlike mobile (traffic) noise sources, stationary noise impacts are not as readily predictable at the program level, because the specific businesses, equipment, and operating characteristics that will occupy future commercial and industrial sites are not yet known. While no specific development projects are proposed under the General Plan, the proposed Land Use Plan includes non-residential and mixed-use designations that could result in new stationary noise sources located near noise-sensitive uses as the community builds out.

Mountain House Municipal Code Section 9.10-709 establishes noise limits to control stationary noise sources through use of an hourly Leq noise descriptor, applied separately for daytime and nighttime periods, to evaluate stationary source noise at receiving residential and other noise-sensitive land uses. New development of noise-sensitive uses is not permitted where noise from stationary sources would exceed the applicable standards set forth in Table 9-10-5.2 Part III (55 dB Leq daytime; 50 dB Leq nighttime), and these standards are reduced by an additional 5 dB where the noise consists of simple tones or is primarily speech or music, given the greater potential for annoyance associated with these noise characteristics.

Where future development projects implemented under the General Plan propose stationary noise sources in proximity to noise-sensitive uses, project-specific noise studies would be required to ensure noise control measures are incorporated into project design. Such measures could include

locating industrial buildings and noise-generating equipment away from sensitive uses, constructing sound walls or berms between noise sources and sensitive receptors, using intervening buildings to create additional buffer distance and acoustical shielding, or other site design measures to ensure stationary noise sources do not cause exterior noise levels to exceed the City's Municipal Code noise standards at sensitive receptors.

The General Plan Update includes policies and actions that are intended to reduce noise associated with stationary sources. Specifically, Policy SAF-6.1 requires development and infrastructure projects to be consistent with the land use compatibility standards contained in Tables SAF-1, SAF-2, and SAF-3 to ensure acceptable noise exposure levels for existing and future development. Policy SAF-6.2 directs the City to periodically review and update, as necessary, the Noise Ordinance in order to address issues such as excessive noise from commercial, industrial, and other noise generating land uses, as well as vehicle noise. Policy SAF-6.5 requires acoustical studies for new discretionary developments and transportation improvements that have the potential to affect existing noise-sensitive uses. Policy SAF-6.7 ensures that mixed-use structures and projects are designed to prevent transfer of noise and vibration from non-residential areas to residential areas.

Implementation of noise standards in the City's Municipal Code and applicable Specific Plans, as well as implementation of General Plan policies and actions would ensure that future stationary noise sources associated with new development and redevelopment are evaluated and mitigated to meet the General Plan's exterior noise standards for noise-sensitive uses. This is a ***less than significant*** impact.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Policy SAF-6.1: Consider existing and future noise levels when making land use planning decisions. Require development and infrastructure projects to be consistent with the land use compatibility standards contained in Tables SAF-1, SAF-2, and SAF-3 to ensure acceptable noise exposure levels for existing and future development.

Policy SAF-6.2: Mountain House Municipal Code. Periodically review and update, as necessary, the Noise Ordinance (Section 9-10-709, Noise, of the Mountain House Municipal Code) in order to address issues such as excessive noise from commercial, industrial, and other noise generating land uses, as well as vehicle noise.

Policy SAF-6.4: Sensitive Uses. Locate sensitive facilities such as residential uses, schools, medical facilities, libraries, churches, and convalescent homes away from areas of excessive noise unless proper noise reduction measures are in place.

Policy SAF-6.5: Require acoustical studies for new discretionary developments and transportation improvements that have the potential to affect existing noise-

sensitive uses such as schools, hospitals, libraries, care facilities, and residential areas, and for projects that would introduce new noise-sensitive uses into an area where existing noise levels may exceed the thresholds identified in this element. For projects that are required to prepare an acoustical study, the following mobile and stationary noise source criteria shall be used to determine the significance of those impacts:

A. Mobile Noise Sources:

- Where existing traffic noise levels are within or below the "normally acceptable" noise criteria at the affected land use (see Table SAF-1), a readily perceptible 5 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise will be considered significant;
- Where existing traffic noise levels falls within the "conditionally acceptable" noise criteria at the sensitive land use, a +3 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise levels will be considered significant; and
- Where existing traffic noise levels exceed the "conditionally acceptable" noise criteria at the sensitive land use, a + 1.5 dBA CNEL or greater increase in roadway noise levels will be considered significant.

B. Stationary and Non-Transportation Noise Sources

- A significant impact will occur if the project results in an exceedance of the noise level standards contained in this element, or the project will result in an increase in ambient noise levels by more than 3 dB, whichever is greater.

Policy SAF-6.7: Mixed-Use Development. Ensure that mixed-use structures and projects are designed to prevent transfer of noise and vibration from non-residential areas to residential areas

Policy SAF-6.8: Indoor Residential Noise Levels. Ensure that new development does not result in indoor noise levels exceeding 45 dBA Ldn for residential uses.

Policy SAF-6.11: Enforcement. In cases where the City's noise standards are exceeded, dedicate code enforcement resources to ensure compliance.

Action SAF-6a: Review new development projects for compliance with the noise requirements established in this General Plan, including the standards established in Tables SAF-1, SAF-2, and SAF-3. Where necessary, require new development to mitigate excessive noise through best practices, including building location and orientation, building design features, placement of noise-generating equipment away from sensitive receptors, shielding of noise-generating equipment, placement of noise-tolerant features between noise sources and sensitive receptors, and use of noise-minimizing materials such as rubberized asphalt.

Action SAF-6b: Require acoustical studies for all new discretionary projects which have the potential to generate noise impacts or include sensitive uses that would be

exposed to noise levels that exceed the standards identified in this General Plan. The studies shall include representative noise measurements, estimates of existing and projected noise levels, and mitigation measures necessary to ensure compliance with this Element.

Action SAF-6c: Additional noise studies and conditions may be required prior to approval of Development Permits if within noise sensitive areas identified in this General Plan and/or Specific Plans.

Impact 3.12-5: General Plan implementation may result in an increase in construction noise sources (Less than Significant)

New development and redevelopment, maintenance of roadways, and installation of public utilities and infrastructure generally require construction activities that include the use of heavy equipment and impact tools. Table 3.12-8 provides a list of the types of equipment which may be associated with construction activities, and their associated noise levels.

TABLE 3.12-8: CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT NOISE

Type of Equipment	Predicted Noise Levels, Lmax dB				Distances to Noise Contours (feet)	
	Noise Level at 50'	Noise Level at 100'	Noise Level at 200'	Noise Level at 400'	70 dB Lmax contour	65 dB Lmax contour
Backhoe	78	72	66	60	126	223
Compactor	83	77	71	65	223	397
Compressor (air)	78	72	66	60	126	223
Concrete Saw	90	84	78	72	500	889
Dozer	82	76	70	64	199	354
Dump Truck	76	70	64	58	100	177
Excavator	81	75	69	63	177	315
Generator	81	75	69	63	177	315
Jackhammer	89	83	77	71	446	792
Pneumatic Tools	85	79	73	67	281	500

Source: Roadway Construction Noise Model User's Guide. Federal Highway Administration. FHWA-HEP-05-054. January 2006. De Novo Planning Group, 2026.

Activities involved in construction would typically generate maximum noise levels ranging from 85 to 90 dB at a distance of 50 feet. Construction activities associated with future development under the General Plan— including grading, excavation, foundation work, building erection, paving, and architectural coating — would generate temporary increases in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of active construction sites. Construction noise is temporary and intermittent and would not result in a permanent change to the ambient noise environment. In addition, unlike operational noise sources (traffic, stationary equipment, aircraft), construction noise is inherently short-term and diminishes as each phase of work is completed and construction moves to other portions of a site or to other development areas within the community. Because General Plan buildout will occur incrementally over an extended period as individual development projects are approved,

construction activity at any one location would be limited in duration rather than continuous over the life of the General Plan. Municipal Code Section 9-10-709(f)(3) exempt noise generated by construction activities provided they do not occur before 6 a.m. or after 9 p.m. on any day. This limits these activities to the least noise sensitive portions of the day. The City regulates construction noise through durational/hours-of-operation restrictions rather than fixed decibel limits, in recognition of the fact that construction equipment noise levels cannot practically be reduced to meet standards designed for continuous stationary sources.

Noise attenuates rapidly with distance, and setbacks inherent in future development projects would reduce exposure at sensitive receptors. Construction noise, like other point-source noise, attenuates at a rate of approximately 6 dB per doubling of distance under typical hard-site conditions (more under soft-site/vegetated conditions). Given the development and design standards in the City's Municipal Code and Specific Plans — including planned setbacks, buffer areas, and phased development in which construction of later phases would occur at increasing distance from occupied residential areas established in earlier phases — noise levels at the nearest occupied sensitive receptors would be substantially attenuated relative to levels measured at the construction site itself. Construction-related noise impacts would also be reduced through standard construction-related noise control measures. Further, individual construction contractors are independently subject to Cal/OSHA construction noise standards protecting worker exposure, and typical grading and building permit conditions of approval routinely incorporate hours-of-operation and equipment-maintenance requirements.

The General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions that would reduce potential noise impacts, including construction noise impacts. Specifically, Policy SAF-6.6 requires construction activities to reduce noise impacts on adjacent uses to the criteria identified in Table SAF-2, or, if the criteria cannot be met, to the maximum extent feasible.

Because construction noise associated with buildout of the General Plan would be temporary and limited in duration at any given location, subject to hours-of-operation restrictions under the Municipal Code noise ordinance, subject to setbacks (and resulting distance attenuation) consistent with the City's Municipal Code and Specific Plans, and further reduced through standard construction noise control measures required as a condition of development approval, construction-related noise impacts associated with implementation of the General Plan would be ***less than significant***.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Policy SAF-6.6: Construction Noise. Require construction activities to reduce noise impacts on adjacent uses to the criteria identified in Table SAF-2, or, if the criteria cannot be met, to the maximum extent feasible. Construction activities outside of the

permitted construction hours identified in the Mountain House Municipal Code may be approved on a case by case basis.

Policy SAF-6.11: In cases where the City's noise standards are exceeded, dedicate code enforcement resources to ensure compliance.

Impact 3.12-6: General Plan implementation may result in exposure to groundborne vibration (Less than Significant)

The main sources of vibration in the Planning Area are related to vehicles, trains, and construction. Typical roadway traffic, including heavy trucks, rarely generates vibration amplitudes high enough to cause structural or cosmetic damage. However, there have been cases in which heavy trucks traveling over potholes or other discontinuities in the pavement have caused vibration high enough to result in complaints from nearby residents. These types of issues typically can be resolved by smoothing the roadway surface.

Construction activities that produce vibration that can be felt by adjacent land uses include the use of vibratory equipment, large bulldozers, and pile drivers. The primary sources of vibration during construction are usually vibratory rollers and large bulldozers. As shown in Table 3.12-6, the highest levels of vibration typically occur from pile driving operations. Pile driving vibrations are typically below 0.5 in/sec, PPV at distances of 50 feet or more. This impact would be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of General Plan Action SAF-6e, which requires vibration impact studies for all new discretionary projects when construction utilizes pile drivers within 200 feet of existing buildings or vibratory rollers within 50 feet of existing buildings. The studies shall include a detailed mitigation plan to avoid any potential significant impacts to existing structures due to groundborne vibrations, based on the Caltrans Construction Vibration Guidance Manual.

While the proposed Project does not include any new railways and would not increase railway operations, development facilitated by the General Plan could expose persons to excessive groundborne vibration levels attributable to trains, including the existing Mococo line and future Valley Link line. The proposed locations of buildings and their specific sensitivity to vibration are not known at this time; however, such uses located in close proximity to railroad tracks could be exposed to ground vibration levels exceeding FTA guidelines. This impact would be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of General Plan Action SAF-6d, which requires new residential projects located adjacent to major freeways and railroad lines to follow the FTA vibration screening distance criteria to ensure that residential uses are not exposed to vibrations exceeding 72 VdB for frequent events (more than 70 events per day), 75 VdB for occasional events (30-70 events per day), or 80 VdB for infrequent events (less than 30 events per day).

With implementation of General Plan actions, impacts related to vibration would be reduced to a ***less than significant*** level.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Policy SAF-6.7: Mixed-Use Development. Ensure that mixed-use structures and projects are designed to prevent transfer of noise and vibration from non-residential areas to residential areas

Action SAF-6d: Require new residential projects located adjacent to major freeways and railroad lines to follow the Federal Transit Administration vibration screening distance criteria to ensure that residential uses are not exposed to vibrations exceeding 72 VdB for frequent events (more than 70 events per day), 75 VdB for occasional events (30-70 events per day), or 80 VdB for infrequent events (less than 30 events per day).

Action SAF-6e: Require vibration impact studies for all new discretionary projects when construction utilizes pile drivers within 200 feet of existing buildings or vibratory rollers within 50 feet of existing buildings. The studies shall include a detailed mitigation plan to avoid any potential significant impacts to existing structures due to groundborne vibrations, based on the California Department of Transportation's Construction Vibration Guidance Manual.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant Impact.

3.12.4 REFERENCES

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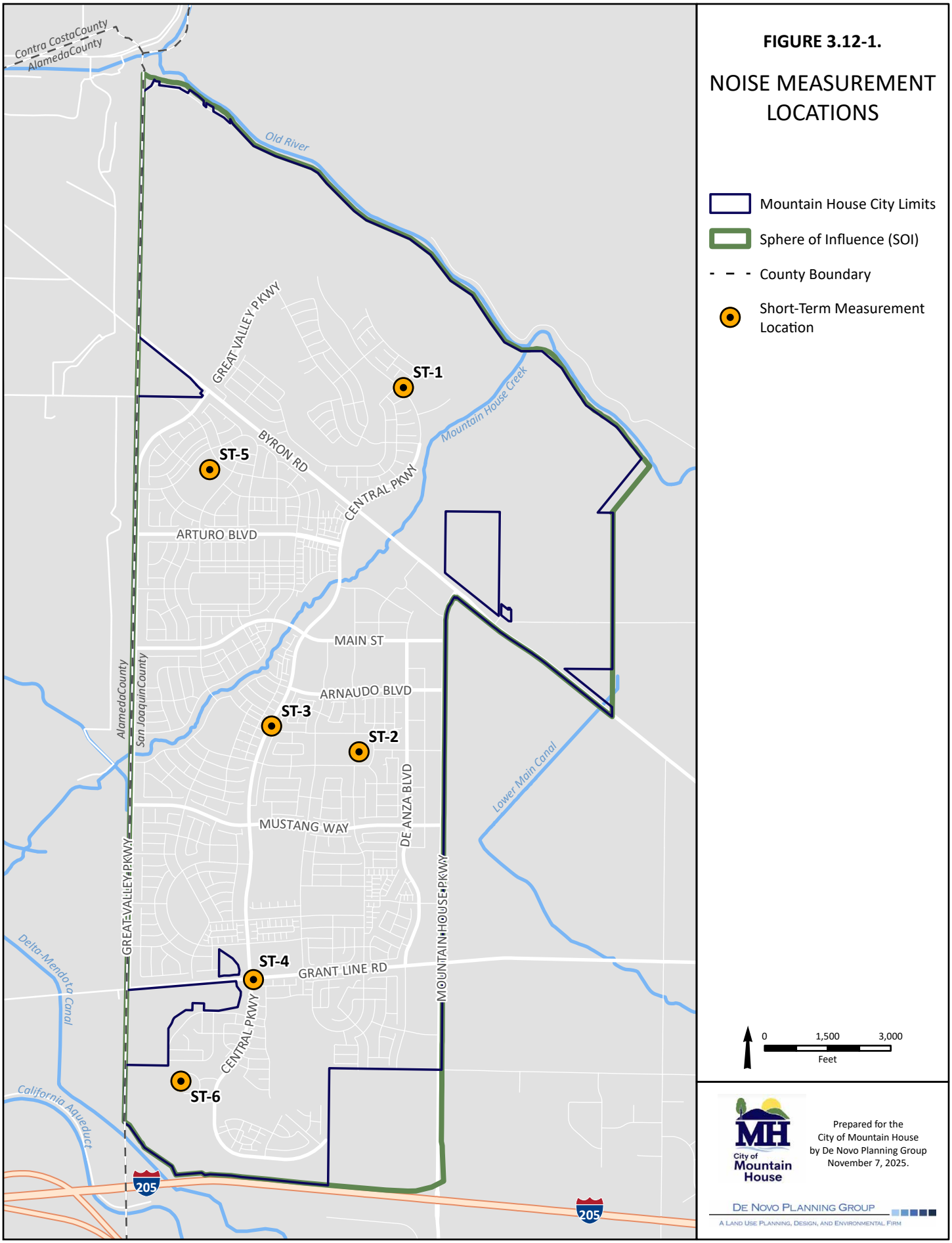

FIGURE 3.12-1.

NOISE MEASUREMENT LOCATIONS

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary
- Short-Term Measurement Location

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
November 7, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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Public services such as fire and police protection are vital to maintaining a safe and healthy community. Educational services serve as a foundation for providing citizens with the skills and resources to excel today and in the future. There are many other public services that are important to a community, such as parks and recreational opportunities, libraries, museums, hospitals, and other healthcare facilities.

This section provides a background discussion and analysis of fire protection services, police services, schools, parks and recreational facilities, libraries, and other community facilities and services. This section is organized with an existing setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis. Figure 3.13-1 shows all the community facilities within the Planning Area.

Utilities services, including water, sewer, stormwater and drainage, and solid waste disposal, are addressed in Section 3.15, Utilities and Service Systems, of this Draft EIR.

Comments were received during the NOP comment period, including during the Scoping Meeting, regarding this environmental topic. A comment letter received from Igor Kiselev, dated May 28, 2026, recommends that the EIR address impacts resulting from student generation. Copies of comment letters received during the NOP comment period are provided in Appendix A of this Draft EIR.

3.13.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICES

Fire protection and emergency medical services in the Planning Area are provided by the Mountain House Fire Department (through contract with the French Camp McKinley Fire District) and the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority (through the Tracy Rural Fire Protection District), as discussed further below.

Mountain House Fire Department

The City contracts with the French Camp McKinley Fire District for fire protection, suppression, and emergency medical services (EMS). Organized under Section 13880 et al. of the California Health and Safety Code, the French Camp McKinley Fire District was established in 1946 and is currently governed by an elected five-member Board of Directors serving staggered four-year terms. In addition to the City limits, the French Camp McKinley Fire District serves a portion of the unincorporated County near French Camp and assists with protecting approximately 90 square miles of the County's "Unprotected Area."

The French Camp McKinley Fire District operates as a combination agency, utilizing a staffing model of full-time professional line staff supported by reserve firefighter personnel. The French Camp McKinley Fire District operates out of three stations: Fire Station 11-1, located in French Camp, and Fire Stations 16-1 and 16-2, located in Mountain House. The City is primarily served by Stations 16-1 and 16-2.

Mountain House Fire Station 16-1 is located at 911 Tradition Street in Mountain House. Station 16-1 is staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days per year with a minimum of three personnel, consisting of one Captain, one Engineer, and one Firefighter. Serving as the primary fire station for the western portion of the City, Station 16-1 provides structural firefighting, emergency medical response, water rescue, and support operations. Station 16-1 houses a Type 1 Engine Company and cross staffs the department's Water Rescue Unit, providing specialized rescue capabilities for waterways, canals, retention basins, and flood-related incidents throughout the district and surrounding mutual response areas.[1]

Station 16-1 houses the following apparatus:

- Engine 16-1 – Type I Structural Engine (Frontline)
- Engine 16-3 – Type I Structural Engine (Reserve)
- Boat 16-1 – Water Rescue Unit
- Utility 16-1 – Utility/Support Pickup

Mountain House Fire Station 16-2 is located at 1448 N. Diapreet Drive in Mountain House. Station 16-2 is staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days per year with a minimum of three personnel, consisting of one Captain, one Engineer, and one Firefighter. Serving the eastern portion of the City, Station 16-2 houses a Type I Engine Company and cross-staffs the department's Type VI Wildland Fire Apparatus, providing initial attack capabilities for vegetation fires, interface incidents, and regional Office of Emergency Services (OES) mobilizations.

Station 16-2 houses the following apparatus:

- Engine 16-2 – Type I Structural Engine (Frontline)
- Engine 16-3 – Type I Structural Engine (Frontline)
- Brush 16-1 – Type VI Wildland Engine

According to the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Mountain House Operating Budget, the City plans on hiring six new full-time firefighters to ensure consistent staffing levels and enhance service delivery.[2]

RESPONSE STATISTICS

As of June 2026, the Mountain House Fire Department maintains an 82 percent compliance rate for responding to emergencies within the 429 second (7 minutes, 9 seconds) performance standard. This is comparable to the 84 percent compliance rate recorded in March 2025 and the 87 percent

[1] Mountain House Fire Department. June 19, 2026. Email correspondence. Jason Fullmer, Deputy Chief. Operations & Training.

[2] City of Mountain House. 2025. Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Operating Budget. Available at: https://www.mountainhouseca.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/142. Accessed April 9, 2026.

compliance rate recorded in February 2026.[3,4] While this meets the department's current operational objectives, the long-term goal is to achieve a 90 percent compliance rate with the adopted response time performance standard.

In 2025, the Fire Department reported 1,085 total incidents (calls), representing an 11 percent increase over the 975 incidents reported in 2024.[5] As shown in Table 3.13-1, emergency medical service (EMS) calls consistently account for the majority of the incidents.

TABLE 3.13-1: COMPARISON OF CALL TYPES BY MONTH

Call Category	March 2026	%	February 2026	%	March 2025	%
EMS	54	60%	71	69%	52	56%
Fire Incidents	3	3%	6	6%	1	1%
Service Calls	10	11%	6	6%	10	11%
False Alarms/Calls	12	13%	9	9%	22	24%
Mutual Aid	4	4%	6	6%	0	0%
Traffic Accidents	7	8%	5	5%	8	9%
Water Rescue	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total Calls for Service	**90**	**100%**	**103**	**100%**	**93**	**100%**

Source: City of Mountain House. April 29, 2026. Public Safety Report. Available at: https://pub-mountainhouse.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=1402. Accessed June 18, 2026.

ISO RATING

ISO stands for Insurance Services Office (ISO), which is an independent, for-profit organization. The ISO scores fire departments on how they are doing against its organization's standards to determine property insurance costs. The ISO assigns a Public Protection Classification from 1 to 10. Class 1 represents exemplary public protection, and Class 10 indicates that the area's fire-suppression program doesn't meet ISO's minimum criteria. The French Camp McKinley Fire District's ISO score is 3/3Y.[6]

South San Joaquin County Fire Authority

The Tracy Rural Fire Protection District provides fire protection services for the surrounding unincorporated areas of the City of Tracy, including unincorporated portions of the Planning Area within the City's SOI. The Tracy Rural Fire Protection District and City of Tracy are members of the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority, an all-risk fire service provider formed through a Joint

[3] Mountain House Fire Department. June 19, 2026. Email correspondence. Jason Fullmer, Deputy Chief. Operations & Training.

[4] City of Mountain House. April 29, 2026. Public Safety Report. Available at: https://pub-mountainhouse.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=1402. Accessed June 18, 2026.

[5] City of Mountain House. January 28, 2026. Public Safety Report. Available at: https://pub-mountainhouse.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=1249. Accessed June 18, 2026.

[6] French Camp McKinley Fire District, Our District. Available at: https://www.frenchcampfire.com/our-district. Accessed July 10, 2026.

Powers Authority. Through the governmental structure of the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority, fire response is delivered within the members' service boundary without restriction or concern for jurisdictional boundaries of the member agencies.

In 2025, there were a total of 101 full time staff members comprised of 80 sworn line, seven sworn staff, five community risk reduction, three support staff, and six emergency medical services.[7] Daily minimum staffing include 24 uniform personnel, one battalion chief, eight companies (captain, engineer, and firefighter), and one ambulance company (paramedic and EMT). Daily in-service facilities and apparatus include seven fire stations, seven advanced life support (ALS) engine companies, one ALS truck company, one battalion chief, and one ambulance.

RESPONSE STATISTICS

The South San Joaquin County Fire Authority responded to a total of 10,108 reported incidents in 2025, averaging approximately 27.69 responses per day. Table 3.13-2 includes a breakdown of reported calls made in 2025. The predominant incident type were EMS calls, with a total of 6,247 incidents comprising 61.8 percent of calls for service. There were a total of 16,402 apparatus responses in 2025, averaging approximately 44.94 apparatus responses per day. The average on-scene time is 23 minutes and 40 seconds.

TABLE 3.13-2: SOUTH SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY 2025 RESPONSE DATA

Call Category	Call Volume	Percentage
EMS	6,247	61.8%
Fire Incidents	446	4.41%
Service Calls	681	6.74%
False Alarms/Calls	556	5.5%
Good intent	2,052	20.3%
Hazmat	118	1.17%
Special Incident	7	0.07%
Severe Weather	1	0.01%
Total Calls for Service	**10,108**	**100%**

Source: South San Joaquin County Fire Authority, 2025 Annual Report. Available at: https://www.flipsnack.com/659BB577C6F/tracy-fire-annual-report-2025-compressed. Accessed June 19, 2026.

[7] South San Joaquin County Fire Authority. 2025 Annual Report. Available at: https://www.flipsnack.com/659BB577C6F/tracy-fire-annual-report-2025-compressed. Accessed June 19, 2026.

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Within the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority's 2026-2028 Strategic Plan, there are multiple facility improvements included to enhance firefighter training capacity and support community growth.[8] These facilities improvements include:

- Relocate and rebuild Station 97;
- Construct and staff Station 98;
- Complete Phase II of the Regional Training Facility;
- Plan for future Station 99 (Pacific Gateway);
- Remodel and expand Station 91; and
- Identify needs for additional fire stations based on anticipated developments and growth projections.

POLICE PROTECTION SERVICES

Law enforcement services in the City of Mountain House are provided by Mountain House Police Services (through contract with the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office), with additional community patrols from Rank Investigations and Protection. The Sheriff's Office provides full police services to Mountain House, including patrol, investigations, traffic enforcement, and crime prevention support.

The San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office headquarters is located at 7000 Michael N. Canlis Boulevard in French Camp, with substations and specialized units positioned throughout the County to support regional operations. The San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office had 775 employees in 2025, including 321 deputy sheriffs, 237 correctional officers, and 217 professional staff.[9]

Mountain House Police Services

San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office command staff and deputies operate out a satellite office located at the City of Mountain House Town Hall (251 E. Main Street).[10] According to the Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Plan 2025 Update, San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office presently assigns six Patrol Deputies, one Sergeant full-time, two Motor Deputies, one School Resource Deputy, and one full-time Lieutenant to function as the "Chief of Police" to the City of Mountain House.

[8] South San Joaquin County Fire Authority, Strategic Plan 2026-2028. Available at: https://www.flipsnack.com/659BB577C6F/2026-2028-strategic-plan. Accessed June 19, 2026.
[9] San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, 2025 Annual Report, 2026. Available at: https://sjsheriff.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2025-Annual-Report-FNL-WEB.pdf. Accessed April 13, 2026.
[10] City of Mountain House, Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Plan 2025 Update, 2025. Available at: https://sjclafco.specialdistrict.org/files/00c1d7d75/Mountain%2BHouse%2B%2B2025%2BMSR%2BUpdate%2B2025-04-18.pdf. Accessed April 13, 2026.

Mountain House Police Services maintains an average response time of 8.6 minutes for Priority 1 calls (highest priority), 9.5 minutes for Priority 2 calls, and 20.2 minutes for Priority 3 calls (lowest priority calls) in the City. The following includes a description of each type of Priority call:

- Priority 1 Calls: Highest Priority, requires immediate dispatching, A crime, typically in-progress, where the physical well-being of a person is in jeopardy, e.g., assault, homicide, kidnapping, robbery, home invasion, burglary (suspect possibly on premises), brandishing a weapon, bomb threats, coroner's case, missing or lost children, disaster, etc.

- Priority 2 Calls: Priority 2 calls do not require an immediate response but should be dealt with as soon as possible. Non-violent persons' crimes and property crimes with known suspects, e.g., family disturbance, suspicious person (no weapons seen), burglary (suspect not on premises), theft of property with possible suspect lead, welfare check, etc.

- Priority 3 Calls: The majority of calls fall into Priority 3; these calls are handled in the order in which the call is received. Property crimes with no suspect leads, incidents where the victim delayed reporting the crime. Examples include cold burglary, property theft or damage, mail theft, noise complaints, information requests, etc.

According to Rex Osborn, Director of Public Safety for the City, current facilities adequately support existing police services operations and there are no immediate plans to construct a standalone police station. Current and future staffing levels for Mountain House Police Services are evaluated based on community needs, calls for service, crime trends, and service expectations. Future facility, staffing, or equipment needs will be evaluated as part of the City's ongoing planning and budget processes.[11]

Rank Security Services

To enhance public safety, Mountain House partners with Rank Investigations and Protection, a licensed private investigator and private patrol operator, to provide additional security services to the City. Rank performs a variety of services to support law enforcement efforts, enhance the prevention of crime programs, and contribute to a safer community environment through community engagement. In addition to patrol services and targeted code enforcement, Rank plays a key role in traffic control and enhances student pedestrian safety by assisting with the volunteer-based crossing guard program.

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The City of Mountain House Parks and Recreation Department currently manages approximately 111.87 acres of park land throughout the City. In addition to its network of neighborhood and community parks, Mountain House offers a variety of recreational facilities, including sports fields, community centers, picnic shelters, dog parks, playgrounds, trails, and water play areas. Mountain

[11] Mountain House Public Safety. June 18, 2026. Email correspondence. Rex Osborn, Director of Public Safety.

House also offers a comprehensive system of trails and open space areas that provide for recreational opportunities.

Types of Parks

Parks are designed and developed to support recreation and community gathering space for Mountain House neighborhoods and the entire community. Parks are divided into two classifications (neighborhood and community) and several types, including multi-use community parks, special use parks, linear parks, village parks, and mini parks.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Multi-Use Community Parks: Multi-use community parks form the core of the public recreation system, offering a wide range of facilities and activities for residents of all ages. These large parks typically include sports fields, courts, swimming pools, thematic play areas, gathering spaces, and indoor and outdoor recreation centers. They support organized programs, large-scale events, and social activities while promoting active lifestyles, community cohesion, and social interaction. As central hubs, they provide both recreational diversity and spaces for civic engagement.

Special Use Parks: Special use parks are designed around a specific function or theme and serve particular user groups or activity needs. They may include waterfront public areas, athletic complexes, urban plazas, or other specialized facilities. These parks enhance the functionality of the overall park system by offering targeted recreational opportunities and often complement surrounding land uses, such as educational campuses, business districts, or residential areas.

Linear Parks: Linear parks are elongated green corridors located along natural waterways, greenways, or utility alignments. Their primary role is to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity while offering opportunities for passive recreation, nature appreciation, and ecological enhancement. These parks encourage outdoor activity, support low-impact recreation, and create continuous green networks within the urban fabric, contributing to environmental quality and accessibility.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Village Parks: Village parks are medium-sized neighborhood spaces located within a comfortable walking distance of nearby homes. They provide daily recreational opportunities, including children's play areas, picnic spaces, sports facilities, and social gathering areas. These parks play a vital role in building community identity, promoting public health, and enhancing the quality of life by serving as accessible, welcoming spaces for routine leisure and community interaction.

Mini Parks: Mini parks are small-scale green spaces embedded within residential neighborhoods, typically within a short five-minute walk. They provide convenient areas for informal play, relaxation, and neighborly interaction, enriching daily life with accessible green spaces. Despite their compact size, mini parks significantly contribute to walkability, livability, and the overall recreational network of the community.

TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE

In addition to park land, Mountain House also provides other trails and open space. As part of the nonmotorized transportation system, trails are located in non-park corridors, including utility corridors and pipeline corridors. Open space lands include wetlands, natural areas, and manicured landscape areas to support community greening, beautification, and ecological functions. These elements do not count as park land and are not included in the District's level-of-service standards.

Trail Corridors: Trail corridors are landscaped pathways that support non-motorized transportation and recreational movement across the community. Usually located along utility or infrastructure corridors, they connect parks, public spaces, and community amenities, facilitating safe and convenient walking and cycling. These corridors also serve as linear recreational destinations in their own right, supporting fitness activities and promoting active transportation.

Open Space: Open space areas include natural preserves, wetlands, grasslands, landscaped zones, and ecological restoration sites that provide environmental, scenic, and educational benefits. They enhance biodiversity, support habitat conservation, and improve the community's visual and ecological quality. By integrating nature into the urban landscape, open spaces promote sustainability and foster a deeper connection between residents and their environment.

City Parks

Table 3.13-3 summarizes the City's existing park facilities.

TABLE 3.13-3: SUMMARY OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Park/Facility Name	Facility Type	Acreage
Wicklund Park	Village Parks	5.00
Central Community Park	Multi-Use Community Parks	11.51
Bethany Village Park	Village Parks	4.98
Bethany Park	Mini Parks	1.17
Questa Park	Village Parks	5.03
Altamont Park	Village Parks	5.00
Mountain House Creek Park	Linear Parks	59.42
Questa Village Park	Mini Parks	0.55
Portfolio at College Park	Village Parks	0.13
Century Communities Legacy at College Park	Mini Parks	0.28
Costa Park	Village Parks	8.81
Hansen Park	Village Parks	5.00
Cordes Park	Village Parks	5.00
	Total	**111.87**

Source: De Novo Planning Group and City of Mountain House, GIS.

Parkland Standards

As shown in Table 3.13-3 above, within the Mountain House Planning Area there are 111.87 acres of existing or under construction parks facilities. The current Master Plan establishes a parkland standard for the establishment of future parkland as a minimum of five usable acres of

neighborhood and community parkland for every 1,000 persons living in the City. Based on the 2025 population of 28,795 persons[12], the City would need approximately 144 acres of useable parkland to serve existing residents.

SCHOOLS

The Lammersville Unified School District (LUSD) provides public school services for elementary and middle school students (grades TK–8) as well as high school students (grades 9–12) within Mountain House and parts of Tracy and unincorporated San Joaquin and Alameda Counties. The district operates multiple TK–8 schools that offer comprehensive elementary and middle school education. High school education is provided at Mountain House High School, the district's sole comprehensive high school facility.

Table 3.13-4 lists schools in LUSD and their recent enrollment in the 2025-2026 school year.

TABLE 3.13-4: LAMMERSVILLE JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, 2025-2026 ENROLLMENT

School	Grades Served	Address	Enrollment 2025-26 School Year
Elementary and Middle Schools			
Altamont Elementary School	TK–8	452 W St Francis Ave	620
Bethany Elementary School	TK–8	570 S Escuela Dr	804
Evelyn Costa Elementary School	TK–8	1675 Gobind Blvd	608
Hansen Elementary School	TK–8	1400 S Durant Terrace	921
Julius Cordes Elementary School	TK–8	296 Parco Ave	872
Lammersville Elementary School*	TK–8	16555 Von Sosten Rd, Tracy	181
Nonpublic, Nonsectarian Schools	TK-12	-	1
Sebastian Questa Elementary School	TK–8	685 N Montebello	832
Wicklund Elementary School	TK–8	300 E Legacy Dr	687
Total			**5,526**
High Schools			
Mountain House High School	9-12	1090 Central Pkwy	2,560
Total			**2,560**

Source: California Department of Education. Educational Demographics Unit Enrollment for 2025-2026, Lammersville Joint Unified Report. Available at: https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrGrdLevels.aspx?cds=3976760&agglevel=district&year=2025-26. Accessed July 2026.
*Note: *The Lammersville Elementary School is located outside of the Mountain House Planning Area.*

[12] California Department of Finance. E-4 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2021-2025 with 2020 Census Benchmark. May 2025.

As shown in Table 3.13-4, LUSD had a total enrollment of approximately 8,086 students in the 2025–2026 school year. Of these, 5,526 were enrolled in elementary and middle school (grades TK–8) and 2,560 were enrolled in high school (grades 9–12).

Table 3.13-5 provides a summary of the public school enrollment by grade within LUSD.

TABLE 3.13-5: ENROLLMENT BY GRADE, LAMMERSVILLE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (2025-2026)

LUSD	Grade Level														
	TK	**K**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**Total 2025-2026**
Total	335	393	516	498	569	600	619	626	689	681	711	654	580	615	**8,086**

Source: California Department of Education. Educational Demographics Unit Enrollment for 2025-2026, Lammersville Joint Unified Report. Available at: https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrGrdLevels.aspx?cds=3976760&agglevel=district&year=2025-26. Accessed July 2026.

OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES

Library Services

The Mountain House Branch Library is part of the Stockton–San Joaquin County Public Library system and serves as a key community resource for residents of Mountain House. Located at 201 East Main Street, the library originally opened in 2007 as an interim facility and now operates within the permanent Town Hall and Library building. It offers a wide range of public services, including free Wi-Fi, printing, copying, faxing, and public computer access, along with four study rooms and a 24-hour outdoor book drop. The library operates with extended weekday hours and weekend service, supporting educational, cultural, and recreational needs for residents of all ages.[13]

[13] Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library. Mountain House. Available at: https://www.ssjcpl.org/your-library/locations/mountain-house. Accessed April 13, 2026.

3.13.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

There are no federal regulations applicable to the environmental topics of public services and recreation.

STATE AND LOCAL

Fire Protection and Emergency Response

CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE

California Government Code Section 65302.5 requires the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection to provide recommendations to a local jurisdiction's General Plan fire safety element at the time that the General Plan is amended. While not a direct and binding fire prevention requirement for individuals, General Plans that adopt the Board's recommendations will include goals and policies that provide for contemporary fire prevention standards for the jurisdiction.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

Under CCR Title 14, Natural Resources, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has the primary responsibility for implementing wildfire planning and protection for State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands. CAL FIRE develops fire safe regulations and issues fire safe clearances for land within the SRA. The CAL FIRE Resource Management Program manages more than 31 million acres of California's privately-owned wildlands and provides emergency services in 36 of the state's 58 counties via contracts with local governments.

In addition to fighting and planning for wildland fires, CAL FIRE's responsibilities involve responding to other types of emergencies that may occur on a daily basis, including residential or commercial structure fires, automobile accidents, heart attacks, drowning victims, lost hikers, hazardous material spills on highways, train wrecks, floods, and earthquakes.

Under CCR Title 24, Regulations Development, the Office of the State Fire Marshal is responsible for promulgating regulations that promote fire and life safety for inclusion into the State Building Codes, including the California Building Code, California Fire Code, California Electrical Code, California Mechanical Code, California Plumbing Code, and California Historical Building Code. The process incorporates a great deal of public participation and is guided by the state Building Standards Law.

CALIFORNIA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

In compliance with CCR, Title 8, Section 1270, Fire Prevention, and Section 6773, Fire Protection and Fire Equipment, the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) has established minimum standards for fire suppression and emergency medical services. Cal/OSHA standards include guidelines on the handling of highly combustible materials, fire hose sizing

requirements, restrictions on the use of compressed air, access roads, and the testing, maintenance, and use of firefighting and emergency medical equipment, among others.

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS OF THE CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY SERVICES ACT

The California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement, as provided by the California Emergency Services Act, provides statewide mutual aid between and among local jurisdictions and the state. The statewide mutual aid system exists to ensure that adequate resources, facilities, and other supports are provided to jurisdictions whenever resources prove to be inadequate for a given situation. Each jurisdiction controls its own personnel and facilities but can give and receive help whenever needed.

CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE (CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 24)

The California Building Code (CBC) contains general building design and construction requirements relating to fire and life safety, structural safety, and access compliance. CBC provisions provide minimum standards to safeguard life or limb, health, property, and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all buildings and structures and certain equipment.

CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE AND UNIFORM BUILDING CODE SECTION 13000 ET SEQ.

State fire regulations are set forth in Section 13000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code, which is divided into “Fires and Fire Protection” and “Buildings Used by the Public.” The regulations provide for the enforcement of the Uniform Building Code (UBC) and mandate the abatement of fire hazards. The California Health and Safety Code establishes broadly applicable regulations, such as standards for buildings and fire protection devices, in addition to regulations for specific land uses, such as childcare facilities and high-rise structures.

ASSEMBLY BILL 1600 MITIGATION FEE ACT

A development impact mitigation fee is a monetary exaction, other than a tax or special assessment, that is charged by a local governmental agency to an applicant in connection with an approval of a development project for the purpose of defraying all or a portion of the cost of public facilities related to the development project (Government Code Section 66000(b)). The legal requirements for enactment of development impact fee program are set forth in Government Code Sections 66000-66025 (the "Mitigation Fee Act"), the bulk of which were adopted as Assembly Bill (AB) 1600 and commonly referred to as “AB 1600 requirements.” A development impact fee is not a tax or special assessment; by its definition, a fee is voluntary and must be reasonably related to the cost of the service provided by the local agency.

NFPA 1710

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 Standards are applicable to urban areas and where staffing is comprised of career Firefighters. According to these guidelines, a career fire department needs to respond within six minutes, 90 percent of the time with a response time measured from the 911 call to the time of arrival of the first responder.

The standards are divided as follows:

- Dispatch time of one minute or less for at least 90 percent of the alarms;
- Turnout time of one minute or less for EMS calls (80 seconds for fire and special operations response);
- Fire response travel time of four minutes or less for the arrival of the first arriving engine company at a fire incident and eight minutes or less travel time for the deployment of an initial full alarm assignment at a fire incident;
- Eight minutes or less travel time for the arrival of an advanced life support (ALS) (4 minutes or less if provided by the fire department.

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

The San Joaquin County EOP establishes the countywide emergency management structure and facilitates multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional coordination during emergency operations, public information functions, and resource management. The County EOP coordinates mutual aid within the San Joaquin County Operational Area, which consists of all the political subdivisions within the geographical boundaries of San Joaquin County.[14]

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) addresses the City's planned response to emergency situations. It outlines the City's protocols related to emergency operations and preparedness and conforms with the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 2, *Public Safety Services Tax*, provides for a special tax to fund the capital and operating costs of providing public safety services, including fire protection services.

The City of Mountain House Municipal Code includes a number of ordinances relating to fire protection, such as Section 5-3-131, *Fire Protection Facility and Water Flow Standards*. This section establishes the essential water flow standards and infrastructure requirements for local fire protection. It mandates that the City's water system maintains adequate volume and pressure for emergency firefighting, while setting strict rules for the installation and spacing of hydrants and water mains. Section 5-3-132, *Review of Plans and Final Inspection by Fire Service Provider*, mandates that the City's fire service provider must review building permit applications. Section 5-3-133, *Maintenance of On-Site Fire Protection Facilities*, requires property owners to keep all on-site fire protection facilities in good working order, which includes performing routine upkeep like clearing vegetation and painting, while prohibiting alterations without the City Manager's consent.

[14] San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services. February 2022. Emergency Operations Plan. Available at: https://www.sjgov.org/docs/default-source/office-of-emergency-services-documents/emergency-plans/2022-sjc-emergency-operations-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=6fdd3c17_3. Accessed April 15, 2026.

Title 4, Division 1, *Fire Prevention*, establishes the local regulatory framework for fire protection and public safety by adopting applicable state fire codes and outlining emergency prevention measures. Additionally, it provides the authority to assess development-related fees, such as plan review costs, permit charges, and fire facility impact fees, ensuring that developers and new construction projects bear the financial responsibility for the expanded fire protection infrastructure and services required to keep the growing community safe.

Police Protection

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

Refer to the discussion above.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Refer to the discussion above.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 2, *Public Safety Services Tax*, provides for a special tax to fund the capital and operating costs of providing public safety services, including police protection and security services.

Parks and Recreation

QUIMBY ACT

The Quimby Act (California Government Code Section 66477) states that "the legislative body of a city or county may, by ordinance, require the dedication of land or impose a requirement of the payment of fees in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for park or recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a tentative or parcel map." Requirements of the Quimby Act apply only to the acquisition of new parkland and do not apply to the physical development of new park facilities or associated operations and maintenance costs. The Quimby Act seeks to preserve open space needed to develop parkland and recreational facilities; however, the actual development of parks and other recreational facilities is subject to discretionary approval and is evaluated on a case-by-case basis with new residential development. The City has adopted park fees as allowed by the Quimby Act, as described in greater detail below.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE PARKS, RECREATION AND LEISURE PLAN

The City of Mountain House adopted the Parks, Recreation and Leisure Plan in May 2021. The Plan is an update to their 2004 guide and focuses on providing direction for the development, maintenance, operations, and programming of their parks and recreation facilities.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 3, *Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities Services Tax*, provides for a special tax to fund the capital and operating costs of providing parks, recreation and community facilities and services.

Schools

LEROY F. GREENE SCHOOL FACILITIES ACT OF 1998 (SB 50)

The "Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998," also known as Senate Bill (SB) 50 (Chapter 407, Statutes of 1998), establishes the comprehensive legal framework governing a public school district's authority to levy school impact fees on new commercial, industrial, and residential real estate construction. This comprehensive legislation, enacted alongside Proposition 1A (a $9.2 billion education bond act approved by the voters in November 1998), restructured school construction financing in California. SB 50 established the State School Facility Program, which enables qualifying school districts to secure State matching funds for new campus construction and structural modernization.

Importantly, SB 50 imposes statutory limitations on the power of cities and counties to require localized school facility mitigation above capped levels as a mandatory condition of project approval. Under California Government Code Section 65995, school districts are authorized to collect fees across three distinct levels:

- Level I fees are the current statutory fees allowed under Education Code 17620. This code section provides the basic authority for school districts to levy a fee against residential and commercial construction for the purpose of funding school construction or reconstruction of facilities. These fees vary by district for residential construction and commercial construction and are increased biannually.
- Level II fees are outlined in Government Code Section 65995.5, allowing school districts to impose a higher fee on residential construction if certain conditions are met. These conditions include having a substantial percentage of students on multi-track year-round scheduling, having an assumed debt equal to 15 to 30 percent of the district's bonding capacity (percentage is based on revenue sources for repayment), having at least 20 percent of the district's teaching stations housed in relocatable classrooms, and having placed a local bond on the ballot in the past four years which received at least 50 percent plus one of the votes cast. A Facility Needs Assessment must demonstrate the need for new school facilities for unhoused pupils is attributable to projected enrollment growth from the construction of new residential units over the next five years.
- Level III fees are outlined in Government Code Section 65995.7. If State funding becomes unavailable, this code section authorizes a school district that has been approved to collect Level II fees to collect a higher fee on residential construction. This fee is equal to twice the amount of Level II fees. However, if a district eventually receives State funding, this excess fee may be reimbursed to the developers or subtracted from the amount of State funding.

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS

The CCR Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 4.9, Payment of Fees, Charges, Dedications, or Other Requirements Against a Development Project, Section 65995-65998 (h) is related to the payment or satisfaction of a fee, charge, or other requirement levied or imposed pursuant to Section 17620 of

the Education Code in the amount specified in Section 65995 and, if applicable, any amounts specified in Section 65995.5 or 65995.7. It stipulates that payment of developer fees to schools are deemed to be full and complete mitigation of the impacts of any legislative or adjudicative act, or both, involving, but not limited to, the planning, use, or development of real property, or any change in governmental organization or reorganization as defined in Section 56021 or 56073, on the provision of adequate school facilities.

ASSEMBLY BILL 602

Passed in 2022, AB 602 introduced additional requirements for the Mitigation Fee Act, requiring local agencies to conduct impact fee nexus studies before adopting new development fees. These nexus studies must identify the existing level of service for public facilities and calculate fees proportionally based on the square footage of proposed housing units, rather than utilizing flat per-unit averages. This prevents disproportionate fee burdens on smaller configurations. Additionally, AB 602 mandates public transparency by requiring local agencies to keep updated information about fee schedules on their websites.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The California Department of Education (CDE) School Facilities Planning Division (SFPD) prepared a School Site Selection and Approval Guide that provides criteria for locating appropriate school sites in the State of California. School site and size recommendations were changed by the CDE in 2000 to reflect various changes in educational conditions, such as reducing class sizes and use of advanced technology. The expanded use of school buildings and grounds for community and agency joint use, and concern for the safety of the students and staff members also influenced the modification of the CDE recommendations.

Specific recommendations for school size are provided in the School Site Analysis and Development Guide. This document suggests a ratio of 1:2 between buildings and land. CDE is aware that in a number of cases, primarily in urban settings, smaller sites cannot accommodate this ratio. In such cases, the SFPD may approve an amount of acreage less than the recommended gross site size and building-to-ground ratio.

Certain health and safety requirements for school site selection are governed by State regulations and the policies of the SFPD relating to:

- Proximity to airports, high-voltage power transmission lines, railroads, and major roadways;
- Presence of toxic and hazardous substances;
- Hazardous facilities and hazardous air emissions within one-quarter mile;
- Proximity to high-pressure natural gas lines, propane storage facilities, gasoline lines, pressurized sewer lines, or high-pressure water pipelines;
- Noise;
- Results of geological studies or soil analyses; and
- Traffic and school bus safety issues.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE MUNICIPAL CODE

Chapter 9-12-2, *School Facilities Financing for New Development*, establishes the requirements and procedures for assessing school facility impact fees on new development projects. By mandating these fees, the City ensures that developers financially contribute to the construction and expansion of local educational infrastructure needed to accommodate the increased student population generated by their builds.

3.13.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project will have a significant impact on public services and recreation if it would 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:
    - Fire Protection;
    - Police Protection;
    - Schools;
    - Parks;
    - Other public facilities;
- An increase in the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
- If it includes recreational facilities or requires the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.13-1: General Plan implementation could result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant

environmental impacts, for fire protection and emergency services (Less than Significant)

FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Development accommodated under the proposed General Plan would result in additional residents and businesses in the City, which would increase demand for fire protection services. As described in Section 2.0 of the EIR, the proposed General Plan land use map could yield up to 18,163 dwelling units, 54,258 persons, 7,869,878 square feet of non-residential development, and 8,199 jobs within Mountain House. This represents net change over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs.

Fire protection and emergency medical services in the City are provided by the Mountain House Fire Department (through contract with the French Camp McKinley Fire District), while South San Joaquin County Fire Authority serves the unincorporated portions of the Planning Area within the SOI. Future development within the Planning Area may result in the need for additional Mountain House Fire Department and/or South San Joaquin County Fire Authority resources (i.e., additional staffing, equipment, expanded/new facilities). In correspondence with the Mountain House Fire Department regarding long-term service demands, Deputy Fire Chief Fullmer identified that while current operational objectives are being met, future growth may necessitate expanded facilities, staffing, and equipment to maintain the Department's desired level of service as development continues into the future.[15]

Future development associated with implementation of the General Plan is assumed to occur over time, with 2045 as the theoretical full buildout year of the proposed General Plan; thus, any increase in demand for fire protection services would occur gradually as additional development and associated population growth is added to the Planning Area. Mountain House Fire Department and South San Joaquin County Fire Authority would continue to regularly monitor fire department resources in coordination with the City and County to ensure that adequate facilities are available to serve existing and subsequent development and population increases.

The environmental effect of providing fire protection and emergency services is associated with the physical impacts of providing new and expanded facilities. The specific impacts of providing new and expanded facilities cannot be determined at this time, as the General Plan does not propose or authorize development nor designate specific sites for new or expanded fire facilities. Although buildout of the proposed General Plan Land Use Element would provide for new growth within the City, the need for expanded fire facilities or new fire facilities and their potential location would be based on multiple factors, including but not limited to the location of existing fire facilities, the condition of existing facilities and equipment, growth in the service area, and response times, and would consider the larger Mountain House Fire Department (through contract with the French Camp

[15] Mountain House Fire Department. June 19, 2026. Email correspondence. Jason Fullmer, Deputy Chief. Operations & Training.

McKinley Fire District) and South San Joaquin County Fire Authority service areas, which includes the Planning Area as well as other unincorporated areas of the County and the City of Tracy.

However, any potential new fire facilities would likely be provided on sites with land use designations that allow such uses and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the facilities would be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the proposed General Plan. These impacts are described in the relevant sections (Sections 3.1 through 3.16, and 4.0) of this EIR. Any future development of fire facilities would be subject to project-specific CEQA review and be required to comply with all federal, State, and local laws and regulations. With adherence to the City's development review process and compliance with applicable regulations, impacts related to the provision of new or physically altered fire facilities would be less than significant.

Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes a range of policies listed below to ensure that fire protection and emergency services are provided in a timely fashion, are adequately funded, are coordinated between the City and other relevant agencies, and that new development funds its fair share of services. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Policy LU-2.3: Fair Share. Require new development to pay their fair share of costs for providing public services.

Public Services and Facilities

Goal PSF-1: Infrastructure and Public Services. A community that maintains and delivers high-quality infrastructure and public services.

Policy PSF-1.1: Community Facilities, Infrastructure, and Services. Provide and maintain high-quality community facilities, infrastructure, and public services that meet the needs of existing and future residents while enhancing the community's overall livability.

Policy PSF-1.2: Public Facilities Plans. Maintain and implement public facility master plans, in collaboration with appropriate service providers, to maintain optimal service levels and operational efficiency.

Policy PSF-1.3: Fair Share. Require that new development and major redevelopment projects provide for and fund their fair share of the costs for the expansion of public infrastructure and services, recreational amenities and facilities, and other public facilities.

Policy PSF-1.5: Maintenance. Regularly maintain and rehabilitate public facilities and critical infrastructure to ensure efficient service delivery and extend its useful life.

Policy PSF-1.7: Embrace Innovation. Encourage the use of Smart City technologies and other innovative technology solutions to enhance public services, promote public programs and community engagement, improve efficiency, and reduce costs.

Action PSF-1a: Regularly conduct public facilities and critical infrastructure assessments that consider multiple criteria such as structural condition, reliability, capacity and performance, cost-effectiveness, and community satisfaction, and use this information to inform the Capital Improvement Program process.

Action PSF-1b: As part of the development review process, determine the potential impacts of development projects on public infrastructure and services, and ensure that new development contributes its fair share toward necessary improvements. Require new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate that the City's public services and facilities can accommodate the increased demand associated with the project prior to approval.

Action PSF-1d: Periodically review the City's fee schedules and development impact fees for the provision of utilities, facilities, and services and revise fees as necessary to maintain acceptable service levels.

Goal PSF-2: Public Safety Services. A City that ensures its public safety services meet the growing needs of the community and proactively works to achieve timely and reliable emergency response.

Policy PSF-2.1: Adequate Service Levels. The City shall maintain adequate staffing, equipment, and operational resources for police, fire, emergency medical response, and related public safety services, consistent with adopted service standards, to meet existing and future needs.

Policy PSF-2.2: Public Safety Services. Ensure public safety facilities, emergency access routes, and supporting infrastructure are planned and maintained to provide effective service throughout Mountain House. When siting new fire stations, police stations, or other

public safety facilities, the City shall give priority to locations in or near commercial areas or adjacent to public parks, to optimize emergency response coverage and maximize joint use of public land.

Policy PSF-2.4: Interagency Coordination. Maintain strong coordination among the City, the French Camp McKinley Fire District, the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, and mutual aid partners for emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.

Policy PSF-2.5: Public Safety Technology. Support the use of modern communication, dispatch, emergency notification, and data tools that improve coordination, situational awareness, and service delivery.

Policy PSF-2.7: Fire Protection. Ensure the delivery of effective fire protection and emergency services throughout the community by actively managing fire service contracts and regularly reviewing performance metrics, staffing adequacy, and response times. Ensure that local development maintains adequate water supply, fire flow, and emergency access to support firefighting operations.

Policy PSF-2.8: Emergency Medical Response. Support timely and effective emergency medical response through coordination with service providers and planning for the facilities, staffing, equipment, and access needed to serve existing and future residents.

Action PSF-2a: Conduct periodic staffing and resource assessments for police, fire, and emergency medical services.

Action PSF-2b: Pursue available funding opportunities, including grants, fee programs, and partnership opportunities for public safety equipment, training, and technology upgrades.

Action PSF-2c: Require new development to preserve or construct emergency access routes in accordance with adopted standards and best practices.

Safety Element

Goal SAF-4: Fire Hazards. A community with reduced exposure to urban and wildland fire hazards.

Policy SAF-4.4: Services and Facilities. Provide adequate fire prevention services and facilities to meet the service standards identified by the French Camp McKinley Fire District. Fire station siting, staffing levels, response times, and equipment standards shall be consistent with the adopted Mountain House Fire Protection Plan and any updates thereto.

Action SAF-4g: The City shall implement the Mountain House Fire Protection Plan to maintain an urban level of fire and emergency medical service. The City shall ensure that all new development projects provide their fair share of funding for fire infrastructure and that station siting and staffing levels are adjusted according to the Fire Protection Plan's performance standards to maintain a 5-minute response time for 90 percent of calls.

Goal SAF-5: Emergency Preparedness and Response. A community that is well-prepared for emergency response and disaster management to mitigate impacts on all people, property, and the environment.

Policy SAF-5.1: Emergency Operations Plan. Update the Mountain House Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) on a regular basis to reflect changing conditions, best practices, regulatory environment, and to maintain eligibility for public assistance grants.

Policy SAF-5.2: Critical Facilities. Coordinate with service providers to ensure the resilience of critical facilities, lifeline services, and infrastructure, and plan for the use of critical facilities during post-disaster response and recovery.

Policy SAF-5.4: Multi-Agency Emergency Collaboration. Coordinate with the French Camp McKinley Fire District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, special districts, local utility providers, and local businesses to ensure effective preparation, response, and recovery services are available throughout the community before, during, and after an emergency event.

Action SAF-5d: Conduct regular emergency response training exercises and/or participate in regional exercises to ensure that emergency response personnel are adequately trained and prepared for emergency situations. Critical facilities within the city should also be annually assessed to ensure they are properly supplied.

Action SAF-5f: Develop and adopt a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for Mountain House and update it at least every five years to maintain eligibility for federal hazard mitigation funding and to reflect changing conditions, best practices, and regulatory requirements.

Action SAF-5g: Develop and adopt a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to ensure that essential City functions are able to continue during and after an emergency event.

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-2.7: Infrastructure Maintenance. Maintain and rehabilitate public facilities and infrastructure to ensure reliable services and equitable access for residents.

Action EJ-2d: Coordinate annually with the French Camp McKinley Fire District, the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, and local

health care providers to review service coverage, facility needs, and emergency preparedness needs associated with planned growth.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.13-2: General Plan implementation could result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, for police protection (Less than Significant)

POLICE PROTECTION

Buildout of the proposed General Plan would result in additional residents and businesses in the City, which would increase demand for police protection services provided by the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office. Additional facilities, personnel, and equipment may be required to maintain adequate levels of police protection within the City.

Law enforcement services in the City of Mountain House are provided by Mountain House Police Services (through contract with the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office), with additional community patrols from Rank Investigations and Protection. According to Rex Osborn, Director of Public Safety for the City, current facilities adequately support existing police services operations and there are no immediate plans to construct a standalone police station. Current and future staffing levels for Mountain House Police Services are evaluated based on community needs, calls for service, crime trends, and service expectations. Future facility, staffing, or equipment needs will be evaluated as part of the City's ongoing planning and budget processes.[16]

Future development is assumed to occur over time, with 2045 as the theoretical full buildout year of the proposed General Plan; thus, any increase in demand for police protection services would occur gradually as additional development and associated population growth is added to the Planning Area. In coordination with the City and County, San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office service levels and staffing requirements would be evaluated on an annual basis to determine if additional staffing and/or facilities would be required to meet increases in population and demand for police protection services.

The environmental effect of providing police protection services is associated with the physical impacts of providing new and expanded facilities. The specific need for and the potential environmental effect of providing new police facilities cannot be determined at this time, as the

[16] Mountain House Public Safety. June 18, 2026. Email correspondence. Rex Osborn, Director of Public Safety.

General Plan does not propose or authorize development nor designate specific sites for new or expanded police facilities. Although buildout of the proposed General Plan would provide for new growth within the City, the need for expanded police facilities or new facilities and their potential location would be based on multiple factors, including but not limited to the location of existing police facilities, the condition of existing facilities and equipment, growth in the service area, and response times, and would consider the larger San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office service area, which includes the Planning Area as well as other areas of the County.

However, any potential new police facilities would likely be provided on sites with land use designations that allow such uses and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the facilities would be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the proposed General Plan. These impacts are described in the relevant sections (Sections 3.1 through 3.16, and 4.0) of this EIR. Any future development of police facilities would be subject to CEQA review and be required to comply with all federal, State, and local laws and regulations. With adherence to the City's development review process and compliance with applicable regulations, impacts related to the provision of new or physically altered police facilities would be less than significant.

Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes a range of policies listed below to ensure that adequate police protection services are provided to serve growth associated with its implementation. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Public Services and Facilities

Goal PSF-1: Infrastructure and Public Services. A community that maintains and delivers high-quality infrastructure and public services.

Policy PSF-1.1: Community Facilities, Infrastructure, and Services. Provide and maintain high-quality community facilities, infrastructure, and public services that meet the needs of existing and future residents while enhancing the community's overall livability.

Policy PSF-1.2: Public Facilities Plans. Maintain and implement public facility master plans, in collaboration with appropriate service providers, to maintain optimal service levels and operational efficiency.

Policy PSF-1.3: Fair Share. Require that new development and major redevelopment projects provide for and fund their fair share of the costs for the expansion of public infrastructure and services, recreational amenities and facilities, and other public facilities.

Policy PSF-1.5: Maintenance. Regularly maintain and rehabilitate public facilities and critical infrastructure to ensure efficient service delivery and extend its useful life.

Policy PSF-1.7: Embrace Innovation. Encourage the use of Smart City technologies and other innovative technology solutions to enhance public services, promote public programs and community engagement, improve efficiency, and reduce costs.

Action PSF-1a: Regularly conduct public facilities and critical infrastructure assessments that consider multiple criteria such as structural condition, reliability, capacity and performance, cost-effectiveness, and community satisfaction, and use this information to inform the Capital Improvement Program process.

Action PSF-1b: As part of the development review process, determine the potential impacts of development projects on public infrastructure and services, and ensure that new development contributes its fair share toward necessary improvements. Require new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate that the City's public services and facilities can accommodate the increased demand associated with the project prior to approval.

Action PSF-1d: Periodically review the City's fee schedules and development impact fees for the provision of utilities, facilities, and services and revise fees as necessary to maintain acceptable service levels.

Goal PSF-2 Public Safety Services. A City that ensures its public safety services meet the growing needs of the community and proactively works to achieve timely and reliable emergency response.

Policy PSF-2.1: Adequate Service Levels. The City shall maintain adequate staffing, equipment, and operational resources for police, fire, emergency medical response, and related public safety services, consistent with adopted service standards, to meet existing and future needs.

Policy PSF-2.2: Public Safety Services. Ensure public safety facilities, emergency access routes, and supporting infrastructure are planned and maintained to provide effective service throughout Mountain House. When siting new fire stations, police stations, or other public safety facilities, the City shall give priority to locations in or near commercial areas or adjacent to public parks, to optimize emergency response coverage and maximize joint use of public land.

Policy PSF-2.4: Interagency Coordination. Maintain strong coordination among the City, the French Camp McKinley Fire District, the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, and mutual aid partners for emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.

Policy PSF-2.5: Public Safety Technology. Support the use of modern communication, dispatch, emergency notification, and data tools that improve coordination, situational awareness, and service delivery.

Policy PSF-2.6: Police Services. Ensure the provision of responsive, high-quality law enforcement services for existing neighborhoods and future growth areas by actively managing law enforcement service contracts and regularly reviewing performance metrics, staffing adequacy, and response times.

Action PSF-2a: Conduct periodic staffing and resource assessments for police, fire, and emergency medical services.

Action PSF-2b: Pursue available funding opportunities, including grants, fee programs, and partnership opportunities for public safety equipment, training, and technology upgrades.

Safety Element

Goal SAF-5: Emergency Preparedness And Response. A community that is well-prepared for emergency response and disaster management to mitigate impacts on all people, property, and the environment.

Policy SAF-5.2: Critical Facilities. Coordinate with service providers to ensure the resilience of critical facilities, lifeline services, and infrastructure, and plan for the use of critical facilities during post-disaster response and recovery.

Policy SAF-5.4: Multi-Agency Emergency Collaboration. Coordinate with the French Camp McKinley Fire District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, special districts, local utility providers, and local businesses to ensure effective preparation, response, and recovery services are available throughout the community before, during, and after an emergency event.

Policy SAF-5.8: Police Services. The City shall maintain an urban level of law enforcement that ensures community safety through the following standards:

- Operational Demand and Workload-Based Deployment: Maintain a workload based public safety staffing and deployment model based on a comprehensive evaluation of calls for service (CFS), community growth patterns, public safety expectations, and proactive policing goals.
- Response Times: Target a 5-minute average response time for Priority 1 (emergency) calls.
- Contractual Excellence: Ensure that law enforcement service contracts provide specialized urban patrol services distinct from rural county standards.
- Strategic Facilities: Plan for and construct a permanent, centralized police facility with direct access to major arterial roadways to optimize deployment to all neighborhoods.
- Fiscal Sustainability: Regularly evaluate and adjust Public Safety Special Taxes and development fees to ensure the long-term funding of required personnel and infrastructure.

Action SAF-5f: Develop and adopt a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for Mountain House and update it at least every five years to maintain eligibility for federal hazard mitigation funding and to reflect changing conditions, best practices, and regulatory requirements.

Action SAF-5g: Develop and adopt a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to ensure that essential City functions are able to continue during and after an emergency event.

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-2.7: Infrastructure Maintenance. Maintain and rehabilitate public facilities and infrastructure to ensure reliable services and equitable access for residents.

Action EJ-2d: Coordinate annually with the French Camp McKinley Fire District, the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, and local health care providers to review service coverage, facility needs, and emergency preparedness needs associated with planned growth.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.13-3: General Plan implementation could result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, for schools (Less than Significant)

SCHOOLS

Implementation of the proposed General Plan could result in the development of up to 9,723 dwelling units over existing conditions. School districts typically use student generation factors to determine the potential number of students that would be generated by the amount of residential development to accurately anticipate the needs for new/expanded facilities. Table 3.13-6 estimates the number of students generated by the proposed General Plan buildout in 2045.

TABLE 3.13-6: LUSD STUDENT GENERATION FACTORS

Grades	Student per Household	Proposed Housing Units	Potential Student Generation
Elementary School (TK-8)	0.7359	9,723	7,155
High School (Grades 9-12)	0.3334		3,242
Total	**1.0693**		**10,397**

SOURCE: LAMMERSVILLE JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, SCHOOL FACILITIES FEE JUSTIFICATION REPORT, MAY 6, 2026. AVAILABLE AT: HTTPS://4.FILES.EDL.IO/55B9/04/17/26/144508-0D707D99-A7CC-46F2-BAA6-751F13ACAE16.PDF

As shown in Table 3.13-6, approximately 10,397 students (7,155 elementary school students and 3,242 high school students) are anticipated to be generated from buildout associated with the General Plan. LUSD's 2026 School Facilities Fee Justification Report found that while the LUSD currently has enough facilities for elementary school students, the school district enrollment in the 2025-2026 academic year exceeded its capacity for high school students. As described in the LUSD

2026 School Facilities Fee Justification Report, which identifies future needs based on an additional 4,621 residential units planned to be built within the district boundaries, LUSD anticipates that projected enrollment will exceed available capacity due to future residential development. The LUSD expects that projected enrollment will require the construction of new school facilities. This is a potentially significant impact.

The exact location of future development and associated student generation is currently unknown. However, future development projected within the projected General Plan is anticipated to occur gradually through 2045 and would be largely based on market demand. Thus, any increase in demand for school services would occur gradually, as additional development occurs in the Planning Area. The proposed General Plan does not propose or authorize development nor designate specific sites for new or expanded school facilities. However, in the event the school district determines that new or expanded school facilities would be needed, it is likely that existing campuses would be utilized to accommodate increased students before new school sites are developed. Similar to fire and police facilities, it is likely that any potential new schools would be located on sites with land use designations that allow such uses and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the facilities would be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the proposed General Plan. These impacts are described in the relevant sections (Sections 3.1 through 3.16, and 4.0) of this EIR. Any future development of schools or expansion of schools would be subject to their own CEQA review and be required to comply with all federal and State laws and regulations. With compliance with applicable regulations, impacts related to the provision of new or physically altered school facilities would be less than significant.

Further, school districts assess development impact fees against residential and non-residential development to mitigate impacts resulting from the increase in demand for school related services. Pursuant to SB 50, payment of fees to the applicable school district constitutes full mitigation for project impacts. Therefore, individual development projects would be required to pay the statutory fees, so that school facilities can be constructed/expanded, if necessary, at the nearest sites to accommodate the impact of project-generated students; therefore, impacts would be further reduced to a less than significant level.

Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes a range of policies listed below to ensure that adequate school services are provided to serve growth associated with its implementation. The proposed General Plan includes several policies listed below related to school services. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-1: Parks, Recreation, And Open Space. A connected and accessible network of parks, trails, and open space corridors that supports recreation, habitat conservation, and community connectivity.

Policy RM-1.5: Partnerships and Joint Use Agreements. Engage with the Lammersville Unified School District, San Joaquin Delta College, private schools, homeowners associations, and other local agencies to establish partnerships and joint use agreements aimed at expanding the range of recreational facility options available to the public.

Public Services and Facilities

Goal PSF-1: Infrastructure and Public Services. A community that maintains and delivers high-quality infrastructure and public services.

Policy PSF-1.1: Community Facilities, Infrastructure, and Services. Provide and maintain high-quality community facilities, infrastructure, and public services that meet the needs of existing and future residents while enhancing the community's overall livability.

Policy PSF-1.2: Public Facilities Plans. Maintain and implement public facility master plans, in collaboration with appropriate service providers, to maintain optimal service levels and operational efficiency.

Policy PSF-1.3: Fair Share. Require that new development and major redevelopment projects provide for and fund their fair share of the costs for the expansion of public infrastructure and services, recreational amenities and facilities, and other public facilities.

Policy PSF-1.5: Maintenance. Regularly maintain and rehabilitate public facilities and critical infrastructure to ensure efficient service delivery and extend its useful life.

Policy PSF-1.6: Accessibility. Ensure public facilities and services are accessible and usable for residents of all ages and abilities.

Policy PSF-1.7: Embrace Innovation. Encourage the use of Smart City technologies and other innovative technology solutions to enhance public services, promote public programs and community engagement, improve efficiency, and reduce costs.

Action PSF-1a: Regularly conduct public facilities and critical infrastructure assessments that consider multiple criteria such as structural condition, reliability, capacity and performance, cost-effectiveness, and community satisfaction, and use this information to inform the Capital Improvement Program process.

Action PSF-1b: As part of the development review process, determine the potential impacts of development projects on public infrastructure and services, and ensure that new development contributes its fair share toward necessary improvements. Require new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate that the City's public services and facilities can accommodate the increased demand associated with the project prior to approval.

Action PSF-1d: Periodically review the City's fee schedules and development impact fees for the provision of utilities, facilities, and services and revise fees as necessary to maintain acceptable service levels.

Goal PSF-3: Educational Resources. Educational environments and learning opportunities that empower residents of all ages to cultivate the knowledge, skills, and resources to thrive.

Policy PSF-3.1: Educational Providers. The City shall collaborate with the Lammersville Unified School District (LUSD), private and faith-based schools, and other educational organizations to identify and address community needs for school facilities, programs, and activities that support high-quality learning environments. The City should strive to ensure that land use designations and development approvals are consistent with the school facilities program maintained by LUSD.

Policy PSF-3.2: School Siting. Ensure that educational facilities are designated and planned to accommodate existing and future capacity and are located nearby planned residential development. The following school siting criteria shall be used:

- K-8 school centrally located in each neighborhood (except for Neighborhoods B and L);
- Core facilities and classrooms separated from commercial areas using playfields;
- No direct pedestrian access between school and Neighborhood Commercial;
- Each K-8 school shall have shared use of adjacent Neighborhood Park (joint-use design requirements); and
- All school sites shall have frontage on minimum two intersecting streets.

Policy PSF-3.3: Early Childhood Education. Collaborate with local childcare providers, preschools, faith-based organizations, and other early education organizations to promote early childhood education programs.

Policy PSF-3.5: Higher Education. Promote opportunities to collaborate and provide educational opportunities with nearby post-secondary education institutions such as Delta College, University of the Pacific, and California State University, Stanislaus.

Action PSF-3a: Coordinate regularly with the Lammersville Unified School District, private and faith-based schools, and other educational organizations to:

1. Assess educational facility needs and support planning for future schools;

2. Consult with the Lammersville Unified School District during the development review process to ensure new growth areas are adequately served by public education facilities.

Action PSF-3b: The City will collaborate with the Lammersville Unified School District (LUSD) on the biennial Student Generation Rate (SGR) Audit, which is conducted by the LUSD.

Audit Purpose: Compare actual student yields from completed neighborhoods against the 1994 Master Plan assumptions.

Mitigation Nexus: If the SGR Audit identifies a capacity deficit, the City shall provide notice of the audit findings to applicants of subsequent Residential Subdivision Maps or Development Permits. The City will encourage and facilitate coordination between the applicant and LUSD to address identified capacity constraints.

Phasing Requirements: To the extent permitted by State law, the City will work cooperatively with LUSD and developers to explore voluntary School Funding Agreements (SFAs), credit/reimbursement agreements, or the utilization of Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts (CFDs) to address funding gaps identified in the SGR Audit prior to the recordation of final maps.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-2: Public Facilities. Equitable access to public facilities and services for the entire community.

Policy EJ-2.7: Infrastructure Maintenance. Maintain and rehabilitate public facilities and infrastructure to ensure reliable services and equitable access for residents.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.13-4: General Plan implementation could result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, for parks (Less than Significant)

PARKS

As described above, the City maintains a network of parks and recreational facilities. Based on the anticipated growth, as described in Section 2.0 of this EIR, buildout of the proposed General Plan

could yield a net change over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs. The expected influx of new residents will increase demand for parks and recreational facilities within the Planning Area, which could cause or accelerate their physical deterioration. The additional demand for existing parks and recreational facilities would increase the need for maintenance and improvements. These improvements could have environmental impacts, although the exact impacts cannot be determined since the potential improvements are currently unknown.

Although site-specific development is not currently proposed, new park facilities would be provided at a pace and in locations appropriate to serve new development, as required to maintain the City adopted parkland standard of five acres of parkland for every 1,000 persons, as well as the Mountain House Municipal Code requirements related to new residential development. Any new park facilities that may be constructed in the future would be primarily provided on sites with land use designations that allow such uses and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the park facilities would likely be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the proposed General Plan. These impacts are described in the relevant chapters (Sections 3.1 through 3.16, and 4.0) of this EIR. Any future development of park facilities would be subject to project-specific CEQA review and be required to comply with all federal, State, and local laws and regulations. With adherence to the City's development review process and compliance with applicable regulations, impacts related to the provision of new recreational facilities, or the construction or expansion of recreational facilities would be less than significant.

Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes a range of policies listed below to ensure that adequate park and recreation services are provided to serve growth associated with its implementation. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-1: Comprehensive Land Use Planning. A balanced land use pattern that meets the needs of the community, providing a range of housing options, offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities, and promoting a robust local economy.

Policy LU-1.7: Parks and Recreation. Provide accessible, high-quality parks and recreation amenities throughout the City. The City shall ensure the majority of residential units are located within one-half mile of a Neighborhood Center consisting of a K-8 school, Neighborhood Park, and Neighborhood Commercial area. The City shall also strive to ensure that all residents are within a safe, comfortable walking distance of a park, trail, and/or open space area.

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted

Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Policy LU-2.3: Fair Share. Require new development to pay their fair share of costs for providing public services.

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-1: Parks, Recreation, And Open Space. A connected and accessible network of parks, trails, and open space corridors that supports recreation, habitat conservation, and community connectivity.

Policy RM-1.1: Parkland Level of Service. The City shall maintain a minimum combined community and neighborhood parkland ratio of not less than five acres per 1,000 residents. The City shall also maintain the commitment to require the construction and maintenance of the 100-acre Old River Regional Park.

Policy RM-1.2: Parkland Dedication and Fee Programs. Require new residential development to dedicate parkland and/or pay in-lieu funding consistent with State and City requirements. Update park impact fees periodically and ensure that privately owned parks and recreation areas include durable funding and maintenance responsibilities.

Policy RM-1.3: Diverse Recreational Opportunities. Provide a broad range of public recreational lands, facilities, trails, and other amenities for community members of all ages, abilities, and interests.

Policy RM-1.4: Equitable Access Design. Ensure parks, trails, and recreation facilities are designed to be safe and accessible for all ages and abilities, including continuous pedestrian and bicycle connections, shade where feasible, and barrier-free access from public streets and transit stops.

Policy RM-1.7: Integrated Corridor Management. Promote coordinated planning and management of Old River Park, Mountain House Creek Park, and other open space corridors to support ecological functions such as habitat conservation and stormwater management, in addition to recreational opportunities.

Policy RM-1.8: Public Outreach. Support ongoing public outreach and community engagement to ensure the City's parks, recreational amenities, and recreational programming meets the community's needs and preferences.

Policy RM-1.9: Funding Opportunities. Pursue funding opportunities and collaborative partnerships to expand and maintain parks, recreational amenities, and community open space, including State and federal grants, regional funding programs,

development impact fees, public-private partnerships, and partnerships with other agencies.

Action RM-1a: Continue to implement City adopted parkland and recreation facility level-of-service standards, including acreage ratios, facility types, and service radii, through development review, the capital improvement program, and fee programs.

Action RM-1b: Prepare and maintain an inventory of existing parks, trails, open space areas, and recreation facilities, and update the inventory periodically to track acreage, facility types, and service areas.

Action RM-1c: Implement and regularly update the Mountain House Parks, Recreation and Leisure Plan.

Action RM-1d: Develop and periodically update design guidance or review criteria for parks, trails, and recreation facilities to address resident needs through maintenance, renovation, and other design considerations such as accessibility, shade, lighting, pedestrian access, bicycle access, and user safety.

Action RM-1e: Identify and pursue available funding opportunities, including grants, fee programs, and partnership opportunities, for park acquisition, trail improvements, open space enhancements, and recreation facility maintenance.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-2: Public Facilities. Equitable access to public facilities and services for the entire community.

Policy EJ-2.2: Parks and Recreation. Maintain and expand parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities in a manner that supports equitable neighborhood access, community health, and the City's adopted park standards.

Policy EJ-2.7: Infrastructure Maintenance. Maintain and rehabilitate public facilities and infrastructure to ensure reliable services and equitable access for residents.

Action EJ-2b: Annually review park acreage, neighborhood park access, and implementation of the Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Plan, and identify parkland dedication, trail connections, and recreation improvements needed to maintain the City's park standards as growth occurs.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.13-5: General Plan implementation could result in adverse physical impacts on the environment associated with the need for new governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, for other public facilities (Less than Significant)

OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES

Buildout associated with the proposed General Plan may result in increased demand for additional public facilities, such as libraries (i.e., additional staffing, equipment, expanded/new facilities). The Mountain House Branch Library, located in the City, is part of the Stockton–San Joaquin County Public Library system. Mountain House residents also have access to other Stockton–San Joaquin County Public Library services and facilities, including the library's digital eLibrary collection and branch libraries located within the neighboring cities of Stockton, Lathrop, Linden, Manteca, Ripon, Thornton, Tracy, and Escalon.

At this time, it is unknown whether the Stockton–San Joaquin County Public Library system would need to expand or construct new facilities to meet the demand of future development in the Planning Area. Future development associated with implementation of the General Plan is assumed to occur over time through 2045; thus, any increase in demand for library services would occur gradually as additional development and associated population growth is added to the City.

The environmental effect of providing library and community services is associated with the physical impacts of providing new and expanded facilities. The specific impacts of providing new and expanded facilities cannot be determined at this time, as the proposed General Plan Land Use Element does not propose or authorize development, nor does it designate specific sites for new or expanded public facilities. However, if it is determined that new or expanded public facilities would be needed, they would likely be provided on sites with land use designations that allow such uses, and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the facilities would likely be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the proposed General Plan. These impacts are described in the relevant sections (Sections 3.1 through 3.16, and 4.0) of this EIR. Any subsequent development of public facilities would be subject to project-specific CEQA review and be required to comply with all federal, State, and local laws and regulations. With adherence to the development review process and compliance with applicable regulations, impacts related to the provision of new or physically altered other public facilities, including libraries, would be less than significant.

Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes a range of policies listed below to ensure that adequate library and other community services are provided to serve growth associated with its implementation. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Public Services and Facilities

Goal PSF-1: Infrastructure and Public Services. A community that maintains and delivers high-quality infrastructure and public services.

Policy PSF-1.1: Community Facilities, Infrastructure, and Services. Provide and maintain high-quality community facilities, infrastructure, and public services that meet the needs of existing and future residents while enhancing the community's overall livability.

Policy PSF-1.2: Public Facilities Plans. Maintain and implement public facility master plans, in collaboration with appropriate service providers, to maintain optimal service levels and operational efficiency.

Policy PSF-1.3: Fair Share. Require that new development and major redevelopment projects provide for and fund their fair share of the costs for the expansion of public infrastructure and services, recreational amenities and facilities, and other public facilities.

Policy PSF-1.5: Maintenance. Regularly maintain and rehabilitate public facilities and critical infrastructure to ensure efficient service delivery and extend its useful life.

Policy PSF-1.6: Accessibility. Ensure public facilities and services are accessible and usable for residents of all ages and abilities.

Policy PSF-1.7: Embrace Innovation. Encourage the use of Smart City technologies and other innovative technology solutions to enhance public services, promote public programs and community engagement, improve efficiency, and reduce costs.

Action PSF-1a: Regularly conduct public facilities and critical infrastructure assessments that consider multiple criteria such as structural condition, reliability, capacity and performance, cost-effectiveness, and community satisfaction, and use this information to inform the Capital Improvement Program process.

Action PSF-1b: As part of the development review process, determine the potential impacts of development projects on public infrastructure and services, and ensure that new development contributes its fair share toward necessary improvements. Require new development and significant redevelopment projects to demonstrate that the City's public services and facilities can accommodate the increased demand associated with the project prior to approval.

Action PSF-1d: Periodically review the City's fee schedules and development impact fees for the provision of utilities, facilities, and services and revise fees as necessary to maintain acceptable service levels.

Goal PSF-3: Educational Resources. Educational environments and learning opportunities that empower residents of all ages to cultivate the knowledge, skills, and resources to thrive.

Policy PSF-3.4: Library Resources. Collaborate with the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library to encourage the provision of library resources that meet the educational, cultural, civic, business, and lifelong learning needs of all residents.

Action PSF-3c: Partner with the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library to identify facility improvements, technology upgrades, and space needs that enhance access to library resources for all residents.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-2: Public Facilities. Equitable access to public facilities and services for the entire community.

Policy EJ-2.7: Infrastructure Maintenance. Maintain and rehabilitate public facilities and infrastructure to ensure reliable services and equitable access for residents.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.13-6: General Plan implementation could increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated (Less than Significant)

Based on the anticipated growth, buildout of the proposed General Plan could yield a net change over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs. These new residents are expected to use park and recreational facilities, and this additional use may result in greater demands on parks and recreational facilities in the Planning Area such that deterioration of these facilities could occur or be accelerated. The additional demand on existing parks and recreational facilities would increase the need for maintenance and improvements. These improvements could have environmental impacts, although the exact impacts cannot be determined since the potential improvements are currently unknown.

The provision of new parks and recreation facilities would reduce the potential for adverse impacts and physical deterioration of existing parks and recreation facilities by providing additional facilities to accommodate the demand for parks and recreation facilities. These new facilities would be provided at a pace and in locations appropriate to serve new development, as required to maintain the City adopted standard for parkland at five acres for every 1,000 residents. Table 3.13-7 shows the required parkland dedication to meet the City's standard.

TABLE 3.13-7: REQUIRED PARKLAND DEDICATION

Existing Conditions (2025)				Proposed General Plan	
Population	**Parkland Acreage**	**Required Parkland**	**Parkland Deficit**	**Net Population Growth**	**Required Parkland**
28,795	111.87	143.98	32.11	+25,463	271.30

The City currently provides 3.89 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people. Based on the City's adopted standard of five acres per 1,000 residents, the increase in population due to implementation of the proposed General Plan would require approximately 127.32 acres of additional parkland, for a total of 271.3 acres of parkland, assuming a total population of 54,258 residents. It should be noted that new development would be required to fund its fair share for required parkland but would not make up for existing system deficiencies.

As described in Section 2.0 of the EIR, the proposed General Plan land use map designates approximately 452.1 acres to parks (59.56 acres of Neighborhood Park, 292 acres of Community Park, and 100.54 acres of Regional Park) within the Planning Area. In addition, the proposed General Plan Land Use Map designates approximately 31.90 acres of Open Space/Resource Conservation and 143.06 acres for Open Space/Other within the Planning Area. As such, the proposed General Plan designates enough land for parks to meet the City's standard of five acres per 1,000 residents, assuming a total population of 54,258 residents.

The specific impacts of providing new and expanded parks and recreation facilities cannot be determined at this time, as the proposed General Plan does not propose or authorize development, nor does it designate specific sites for new or expanded parks or recreation facilities. However, if it is determined that new or expanded parks and recreation facilities would be needed, they would likely be provided on sites with land use designations that allow such uses, and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the facilities would likely be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the proposed General Plan Land Use Element. These impacts are described in the relevant sections (Sections 3.1 through 3.16, and 4.0) of this EIR. Any subsequent development of public facilities would be subject to project-specific CEQA review and be required to comply with all federal, State, and local laws and regulations. With adherence to the development review process and compliance with applicable regulations, impacts related to the provision of new or physically altered public facilities would be less than significant.

Although implementation of the proposed General Plan would cause an incremental increase in demand for parks and recreation facilities in the future, the impact would be further reduced to a less than significant level through the payment of park fees. Mountain House Municipal Code Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 3, *Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities Services Tax*, provides for a special tax to fund the capital and operating costs of providing parks, recreation and community facilities and services. Compliance with and the implementation of applicable proposed General Plan policies and actions, as described below, and compliance with the City's Municipal Code would

ensure parks and recreational facilities would not be overused to the point of substantial deterioration.

The proposed General Plan includes a range of policies to further ensure that park facilities continue to be available and maintained to serve growth associated with its implementation. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Refer to the goals, policies, and actions in Impact 3.13-4.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.13-7: General Plan implementation could include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment (Less than Significant)

As described above, the proposed General Plan would result in future growth in the Planning Area. New residents, employees, and visitors to the City would potentially increase the use of existing parks or other recreational facilities in the Planning Area such that deterioration of these facilities could occur or be accelerated. The additional demand on existing parks and recreational facilities could increase the need for maintenance and improvements. The improvements are not currently known and therefore the potential for environmental impacts cannot be determined at this time.

As shown in Table 3.13-7, based on the anticipated 2045 buildout population of 54,258 (net increase of approximately 25,463 people), a total of 271.3 acres of parkland will be needed to comply with the City's park standard of five acres per 1,000 people. Construction of future parks could result in environmental impacts, including disturbances or conversion of habitat, water pollution during construction, increased noise levels, and an increase in impermeable surfaces. At the time future parks are proposed, they would require a separate environmental review and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of new parks. Furthermore, these future parks would be subject to proposed General Plan policies and actions intended to protect the environment and the programmatic mitigation framework established in this EIR. Therefore, with compliance to environmental regulations established at the time of future park and recreational projects are proposed, and adherence to proposed General Plan policies and actions, the environmental impacts associated with the construction or expansion of recreational facilities would be ***less than significant*** and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Refer to Impact 3.13-4 goals, policies, and actions.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

3.13.4 REFERENCES

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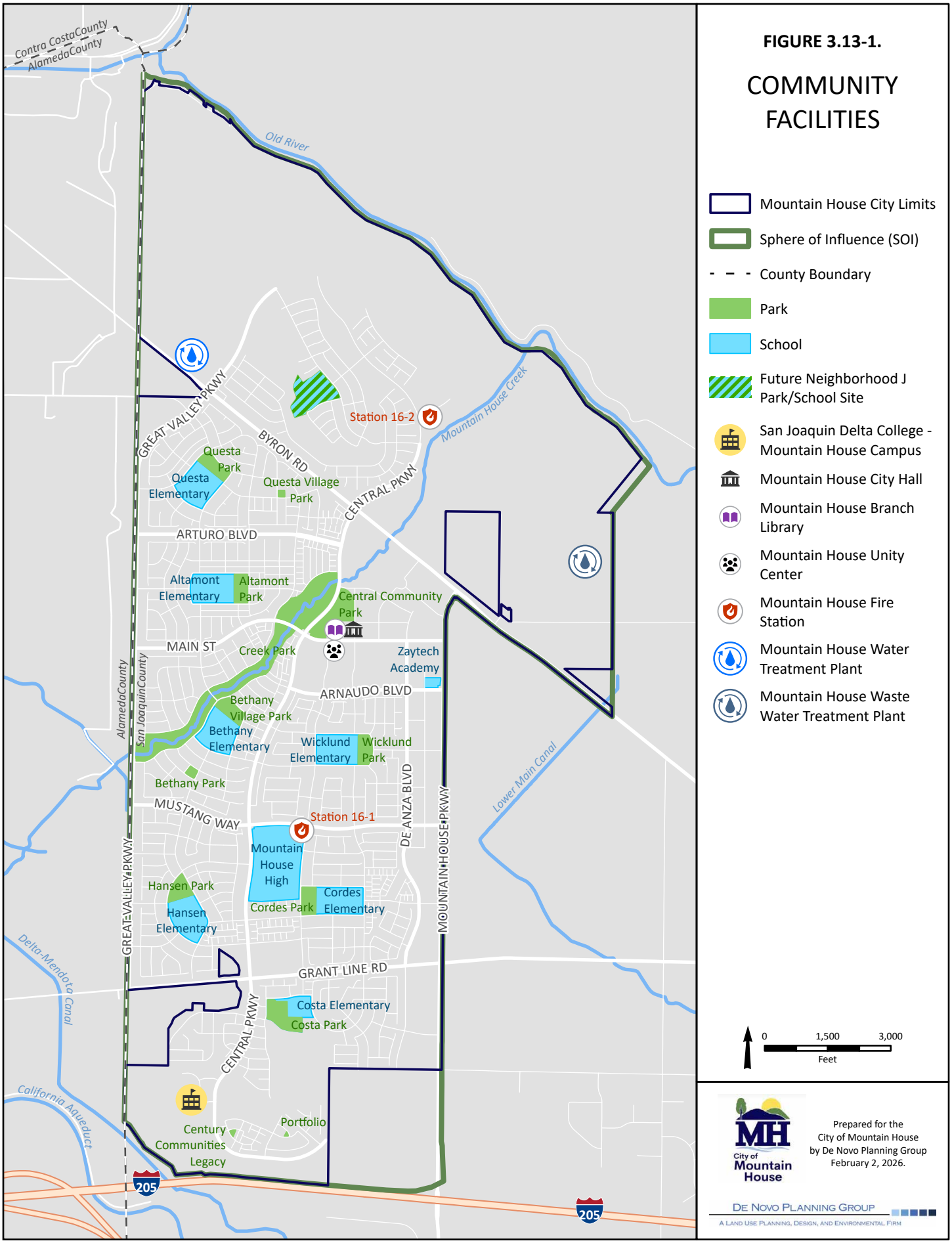

FIGURE 3.13-1.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary
- Park
- School
- Future Neighborhood J Park/School Site
- San Joaquin Delta College - Mountain House Campus
- Mountain House City Hall
- Mountain House Branch Library
- Mountain House Unity Center
- Mountain House Fire Station
- Mountain House Water Treatment Plant
- Mountain House Waste Water Treatment Plant

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group February 2, 2026.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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This section describes the existing physical and operational conditions for the transportation system and provides an analysis of potential transportation impacts associated with adoption and implementation of the General Plan. This section is based in part on transportation technical data prepared by Advanced Mobility Group (AMG); refer to Appendix C.

With the implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 743, local agencies may no longer rely on vehicular delay or capacity-based analyses for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) impact determination. Instead, agencies must analyze transportation impacts utilizing vehicle miles traveled (VMT), a measure of the total distance traveled by vehicles for trips beginning or ending in Mountain House on a typical weekday. VMT impacts are calculated and assessed using an efficiency metric (for example, VMT per household for residential projects or per employee for commercial projects). This is a change from the prior method of analyzing transportation impacts, which measured level of service (LOS) at intersections and roadway segments, using measures from LOS A to LOS F. While SB 743 does not allow LOS to be used to measure transportation impacts under CEQA, it may still be included in goals and policies in a local agency's general plan.

One comment was received during the NOP comment period regarding this environmental topic; refer to Appendix A. The comment letter received from Igor Kiselev, dated May 28, 2026, recommends that the EIR address transportation impacts associated with vehicles traveling to and from the high school, including transportation infrastructure and circulation, emergency response, and pedestrian and bicycle safety.

3.14.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section provides a contextual background to the City's existing transportation system. The General Plan addresses the overall circulation system for residents and visitors in a multi-modal framework. Transportation system components include the roadway network, public transportation system, bicycle and pedestrian system, and goods movement.

The City of Mountain House is located in the southwestern portion of San Joaquin County, situated east of the Alameda County line, north of Interstate 205 (I-205), and northwest of the City of Tracy. Regional access to Mountain House is provided primarily by I-205 and Interstate 580 (I-580) via Grant Line Road. I-205 connects Mountain House to Tracy and the Central Valley to the east, and to the Tri-Valley area and the broader San Francisco Bay Area to the west. I-580 provides access to the Tri-Valley and the Bay Area over the Altamont Pass. Mountain House is a predominantly residential community; the majority of its employed residents commute outside the City for work, primarily to employment centers in the Tri-Valley, the South Bay, and the greater Bay Area.

According to the California Department of Finance (DOF), Mountain House's population was estimated to be 28,795 people in 2025.[1] The U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) estimates the

[1] California Department of Finance. E-4 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2021-2025 with 2020 Census Benchmark. May 2025.

Mountain House census designated place (CDP) had 11,817 employed residents 16 years of age or older.[2] As a planned community developed primarily for residential use, Mountain House has a significant number of long-distance commuters. Many residents commute to employment centers in the Tri-Valley, Silicon Valley, and the broader San Francisco Bay Area via I-580 and I-205, and via the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) commuter rail service.

According to the ACS 2020–2024 Five-Year Estimates for the Mountain House CDP, approximately 60.1 percent of workers drove alone to work, 11.3 percent carpooled, 0.8 percent used public transit, 2.3 percent used other means (such as bicycle, taxicab, motorcycle), and 25.5 percent worked from home. Note that ACS estimates for Mountain House CDP should be interpreted with caution due to small sample sizes. It should be noted that these statistics only represent home-based work trips, which represent approximately 12 percent of all trips made per household, according to the California Household Travel Survey.

Table 3.14-1 provides an overview of the Mountain House CDP's commuting to work mode split data compared to San Joaquin County and the State of California. It should be noted that prior to incorporation, the U.S. Census Bureau classified and tabulated data for Mountain House as a CDP. CDPs are statistical geographic entities representing closely settled, unincorporated communities that are locally recognized and identified by name. The Mountain House CDP boundaries do not precisely correspond to the current City of Mountain House boundaries.

TABLE 3.14-1: DEMOGRAPHIC AND JOURNEY TO WORK DATA

Measure	**Mountain House CDP**		**San Joaquin County**		**California**	
Population	25,513		797,334		39,287,377	
Employed persons	11,817		351,099		18,742,898	
Workers 16 and Over Commuting to Work	10,854		337,508		18,371,933	
Mode Split	**Number**	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**
Drove alone	6,522	60.1%	248,632	73.7%	12,076,803	65.7%
Carpooled	1,231	11.3%	41,532	12.3%	1,740,292	9.5%
Public transit	87	0.8%	3,011	0.9%	524,948	2.9%
Walked	0	0.0%	3,897	1.2%	434,023	2.4%
Other means (e.g., Bicycle, Taxicab, Motorcycle)	250	2.3%	4,619	1.4%	441,043	2.4%
Worked from home	2,764	25.5%	35,817	10.6%	3,154,824	17.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2020–2024)
Note: ACS estimates for Mountain House CDP should be interpreted with caution due to small sample sizes

[2] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2020-2024) DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics, Mountain House CDP, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2024.DP03?q=DP03:+Selected+Economic+Characteristics&g=160XX00US0649582, accessed August 3, 2026.

ROADWAY SYSTEM

This section describes the physical characteristics of Mountain House's roadway network. Figure 3.14-1 shows the roadway classification system in Mountain House.

State Highways

Two highways operated and maintained by Caltrans provide regional access to Mountain House: I-205 and I-580. Mountain House Road serves as the primary local connection to I-205.

- I-205 is a 6-lane freeway running along the southern edge of the Mountain House planning area. I-205 connects Mountain House to Tracy and the Central Valley to the east and to I-580 and the Bay Area to the west. I-205 provides the primary freeway access to Mountain House via the Mountain House Road/Grant Line Road interchange.
- I-580 is a multi-lane freeway that provides access to the Tri-Valley communities (Dublin, Pleasanton, Livermore) and the greater Bay Area to the west of Mountain House via the Altamont Pass. Residents traveling to the Bay Area typically access I-580 via I-205 or via local roadways connecting to Vasco Road or other interchanges.

Arterials

Arterial streets are designed to serve through traffic and major local traffic generators such as residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.

Mountain House's north-south arterials are described below:[3]

Mountain House Parkway is a primarily four-lane road that runs along the eastern edge of the planning area in a generally north-south alignment and serves as the primary gateway connecting Mountain House to I-205 and Grant Line Road to the south. Mountain House Parkway provides access to the Town Center area and the Delta College satellite campus. The average daily traffic is approximately 17,800 vehicles per day (vpd).

Central Parkway is a four-lane north-south arterial serving the central portion of Mountain House, connecting multiple residential neighborhoods and providing access to schools and neighborhood parks. Central Parkway intersects De Anza Boulevard, Arturo Boulevard, Grant Line Road, and Main Street. The average daily traffic is approximately 4,900 vpd.

Great Valley Parkway is a four-lane north-south arterial serving the western portion of the developed community. Great Valley Parkway connects several neighborhoods and provides access to neighborhood commercial areas and schools. The average daily traffic is approximately 6,100 vpd.

De Anza Boulevard is a four-lane road that runs in a generally north-south alignment through the eastern portion of Mountain House, connecting residential neighborhoods to the Town Center and commercial uses along Grant Line Road.

[3] *ADT counts were collected in August 2025.*

Mountain House's east-west arterials are described below:[4]

Grant Line Road is a four-lane road and the primary east-west arterial running through the southern portion of Mountain House and provides direct access to I-205. Grant Line Road serves as the community's main commercial corridor and connects Mountain House Parkway to the west with the broader regional road network. The average daily traffic is approximately 7,900 vpd[5].

Byron Road is a two-lane east-west arterial running through the northern portion of the city. Byron Road provides access to Tracy and East Contra Costa County. The average daily traffic is approximately 17,000 vpd.

Arturo Boulevard is a two-lane east-west collector running through the central area of the city and connects residential areas to Central Parkway and commercial uses. The average daily traffic is approximately 7,300 vpd.

Traffic Volumes

Count data collected for segments as shown above are key roadways in Mountain House's local circulation system and its connectivity to the regional transportation network.

Figure 3.14-2 shows the existing average daily traffic (ADT) volumes for roadways within the Mountain House Planning Area.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

By definition, one vehicle mile traveled (VMT) occurs when one vehicle (regardless of number of occupants) is driven on a roadway for one mile. For the purposes of this EIR, VMT is estimated and projected for a typical weekday when schools are in session. VMT values in this analysis represent the full length of a given trip and are not truncated at jurisdiction boundaries. Additionally, these VMT values are for trips beginning or ending in the City (i.e., are associated with Mountain House land uses). Trips passing through the City without stopping are not included in these VMT estimates, as the City has little or no control over such trips.

VMT is used to measure performance of the existing transportation network and to evaluate potential transportation impacts. Although the absolute amount of VMT is typically reported, impact analysis is typically based on VMT expressed as an efficiency metric. VMT efficiency metrics, such as VMT per resident, VMT per employee, or VMT per dwelling unit, allow the VMT performance of different-sized projects to be compared. Such metrics provide a measure of travel efficiency and help depict whether people are traveling by vehicle more or less over time, across different areas, or across different planning scenarios. A per-dwelling-unit or per-employee decline in VMT compared to a baseline condition indicates that the transportation network is operating more efficiently.

The San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) Travel Demand Model, a trip-based model, was used to estimate VMT in the Planning Area. It was calibrated/validated to 2016 conditions and applied for 2022 RTP/SCS conformity analysis, which contains 2016 and 2046 model years. The 2046 Model was assumed to represent the

[4] ADT counts October 2024.
[5] ADT counts October 2024

Cumulative Baseline conditions. Table 3.14-2 shows the model conditions for the 2046 Cumulative Baseline, which reflects 2046 forecast conditions under land uses in the existing Mountain House Master Plan.

TABLE 3.14-2: GENERAL PLAN BASELINE MODEL

Scenario	Dwelling Units	Jobs
2046 Cumulative Baseline	12,442	3,068

Source: Advanced Mobility Group, 2026.

It is noted that inherent potential limitations exist when using a future year travel demand model as changes in travel behavior and transportation systems are expected to occur in response to emerging trends, new technologies, and evolving user preferences. Some emergent changes that could influence future travel forecasts include:

- Impact of online shopping and home delivery for some shopping or meal-related travel.
- Substitution of telework for commute travel. Mountain House has a high proportion of residents who commute long distances to Bay Area employment centers; changes in remote work patterns may have an outsized effect on VMT for this community.
- New travel modes and choices. Transportation networking companies (TNCs), such as Uber and Lyft), have increased the travel options available to travelers and have contributed to changes in traditional travel demand relationships. Additional options such as car share, bike share, scooter share, and on-demand micro transit are also emerging.
- Future role of automated and connected vehicles.

Like most models, travel demand models do not explicitly capture the above-mentioned new modes of travel and emerging trends in travel behavior. Significant uncertainties exist at the present time that prevent explicit modeling of these new modes and emerging trends for the analysis of the General Plan. However, since VMT is a "relative efficiency" metric, to the extent that these trends could cause systematic changes across the City and beyond, uncertainties in these effects effectively cancel each other out when comparing VMT efficiency for a given horizon period.

Two measures of VMT are used in this analysis:

- **VMT per capita, for residential land uses.** Includes VMT for trips produced by a dwelling unit's residents, such as to work, school, or shop, and with one end of the trip at home, on a typical weekday.
- **VMT per employee, for non-residential land uses.** Includes all trips with one end at the land use, including employees, customers, and deliveries, on a typical weekday. (Note that this ratio is different than the VMT generated by each employee, as the latter only includes trips made by employees).

VMT per resident estimates can be made based on estimates of residents per household. VMT estimates for 2046 Cumulative Baseline conditions are shown in Table 3.14-3.

Regarding the non-residential uses, the most common use types are shown including retail, office, industrial (warehouse, wholesale), and educational services. The VMT per employee reported here does not only reflect the actual amount of travel by each employee but is a ratio of that land use's total amount of travel (by all users including employees, customers, visitors, and deliveries) divided by employees. The

VMT reported here represents all vehicle trips, from origin to destination, associated with the land use, including portions of the trip outside of the study area, in accordance with OPR Technical Advisory guidance (described in the Regulatory Framework section).

TABLE 3.14-3: VMT, BASELINE CONDITIONS

Scenario	VMT per Capita	VMT per Employee
2046 Cumulative Baseline	30.0	21.2

Source: Advanced Mobility Group, 2026.

Safety

Collision history data for injury collisions in the Mountain House planning area was retrieved for the years 2020–2025 inclusive, from the California Crash Reporting System (CCRS). Table 3.14-4 displays this data by year for all injury collisions and those involving pedestrians and bicyclists. History of collisions involving killed or seriously injured (KSI) victims is presented in Table 3.14-5. The data indicate that most collisions occur on arterials.

Over the period shown, an average of 12.8 injury collisions and 0.7 KSI collisions per year within the Mountain House (excluding freeways) were reported. These collision patterns indicate a need for improvements in roadway safety, including speed management, safer intersection design, and multimodal infrastructure. Speeding has been observed on several roadways, including Central Parkway, Great Valley Parkway, De Anza Boulevard, and Mountain House Parkway, despite generally low traffic volumes. Even though many of these corridors provide separate facilities like Class I shared-use pathways, fast-moving vehicles make bicyclists and pedestrians feel unsafe, especially near intersections. Based on the CCRS dataset (2020–2025), Mountain House experienced 77 injury collisions, including 4 KSI collisions (KSI rate of 5.2 percent). By comparison, San Joaquin County recorded 2,321 KSI collisions out of 18,632 injury collisions, corresponding to a countywide KSI rate of 12.5 percent during the same period.

TABLE 3.14-4: INJURY COLLISIONS, 2020-2025

Year	All	Pedestrian	Bicyclist
2020	12	3	3
2021	13	1	1
2022	16	1	7
2023	24	1	7
2024	10	1	1
2025	2	0	1
Total	77	7	20

Source: CCRS Dataset

TABLE 3.14-5: KILLED OR SERIOUS INJURY COLLISIONS, 2020-2025

Year	All	Pedestrian	Bicyclist
2020	1	0	0
2021	1	0	0
2022	1	1	0
2023	1	0	0
2024	0	0	0
2025	0	0	0
Total	4	1	0

Source: CCRS Dataset

Table 3.14-6 displays the primary collision factors associated with this history. Unsafe speed was the top factor.

TABLE 3.14-6: PRIMARY COLLISION FACTOR, 2020-2025

Primary Collison Factor	All Injury Collisions		Killed or Serious Injury Collisions	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
Unsafe Speed	11	14.3%	0	0.0%
Automobile Right of Way	14	18.2%	0	0.0%
Traffic Signals and Signs	13	16.9%	1	25.0%
Improper Turning	17	22.1%	1	25.0%
Driving or Bicycling (DUI)	4	5.2%	1	25.0%
Wrong Side of Road	1	1.3%	0	0.0%
Pedestrian Violation	2	2.6%	0	0.0%
Other Improper Driving	1	1.3%	0	0.0%
Other	14	18.2%	1	25.0%
Total	77	100.0%	4	100

Source: UC Berkeley Traffic Injury and Management System, 2022
Note: CCRS Dataset

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

This section summarizes the current and proposed public transit services that connect destinations within Mountain House as well as the broader region. It includes a review of bus and passenger rail transit facilities.

Public Bus Transit

Mountain House does not currently have a fixed-route public bus service within the community. Residents using transit depend on commuter buses that link to Bay Area employment centers and regional bus connections that are offered in neighboring Tracy and Mountain House. A future Park-and-Ride lot near Mountain House Parkway has been designated as a major transportation hub by SJCOG, where regional commuter buses and possible future local services might connect.

Regional Transit Service

Mountain House residents have access to regional bus and rail networks through nearby cities. Key regional transit connections include the following:

San Joaquin Regional Transit District (RTD): RTD provides commuter services along the I-205 and I-580 lines connecting Tracy, Mountain House, and Stockton to the Bay Area. Hopper Route 90 provides deviated fixed-route service on weekdays between the Tracy Transit Station and Stockton, with stops including Grant Line/Chrisman, Mountain House/Harlan, San Joaquin County Hospital, and the Downtown Transit Center (DTC) in Stockton. Northbound service begins as early as 5:37 AM from the Tracy Transit Station, with the last northbound departure at 8:37 PM. Southbound service from the DTC begins at 6:30 AM, with the last departure at 7:20 PM. Route 90 is a Hopper service, meaning it can deviate up to three-quarters of a mile from the fixed route to accommodate ADA-certified passengers. For RTD's express services, the Mountain House Parkway Park-and-Ride is expected to be an important system component. RTD also operates Van Go! on-demand rideshare service, which provides travel anywhere within San Joaquin County with advance reservation.

Tracy Tracer Transit: Tracy Tracer Transit provides fixed-route service in Tracy and may expand in the future or provide shuttle links to connect residents of Mountain House to Tracy's transit hub and Amtrak station.

Passenger Rail Service

Regional transit services include the following passenger rail connections within the vicinity of Mountain House:

Altamont Corridor Express (ACE): ACE offers weekday commuter rail service between Stockton, Tracy, and San Jose. The nearest stations to Mountain House are the Tracy ACE Station (4800 S. Tracy Blvd., Tracy, CA 95377) and the Mountain House/Manteca ACE Station (17800 Shideler Pkwy., Mountain House, CA 95330). During weekdays, four westbound trains (ACE 01, 03, 05, and 07) serve the Tracy Station between 4:41 AM and 8:03 AM, and four eastbound trains (ACE 02, 04, 06, and 08) serve the Tracy Station between 3:56 PM and 7:11 PM. ACE trains allow bicycles on designated passenger train cars. ACE operates Monday through Friday, with no service on major holidays. Long-term ACE Forward plans include increased service frequency and potentially additional stations that could improve regional access for Mountain House residents.

Amtrak San Joaquins: Amtrak San Joaquins service is available at the Tracy and Stockton stations, connecting residents to Sacramento, Oakland, and Bakersfield.

California High-Speed Rail: The future California High-Speed Rail system will include a station near Merced, enhancing long-distance rail connections for Mountain House residents traveling to Southern California and the Bay Area.

Paratransit

San Joaquin Regional Transit provides paratransit, also known as dial-a-ride or door-to-door service, for people who are unable to independently use the transit system due to a physical or mental disability. Individuals must be registered and certified as ADA eligible before using the service. Paratransit operators are required by the ADA to service areas within three-quarters of a mile of their respective public fixed-route service.

Taxi Service and Transportation Networking Companies

Taxi service in Mountain House is provided by private operators that serve the city and the greater San Joaquin County area. Lyft and Uber provide connections to local and regional destinations. Availability varies depending on driver availability and service may not be available at all times.

Mountain House Mobility Hub

The Mountain House Mobility Hub is planned in coordination with the Valley Link project and has been identified as a Phase 1B improvement. Implementation of the Mountain House Mobility Hub is contingent upon Valley Link securing funding and advancing the Phase 1B project. Upon confirmation and advancement of Valley Link Phase 1B, development of the Mountain House Mobility Hub would proceed as a coordinated effort to deliver multimodal access to regional rail service.

The Mobility Hub would be implemented in phases, allowing supporting facilities and services — such as park-and-ride infrastructure, local shuttle or circulator service, pedestrian and bicycle connections, and transit-supportive land uses — to be delivered incrementally and aligned with regional project delivery. This phased approach provides flexibility for the City to scale transit services over time while ensuring that local investments are synchronized with regional funding, construction schedules, and operational readiness. The Mountain House Mobility Hub is intended to serve as a long-term anchor for regional connectivity, first- and last-mile solutions, and transit-supportive development as Mountain House continues to grow.

Proposed and Future Transit Projects

Independent of the General Plan Project, several future projects have been proposed to expand transit access in Mountain House as the community builds out:

Local Shuttle or Circulator Service: A shuttle or circular bus service to connect residential neighborhoods to the Town Center, schools, parks, and the proposed I-205 Park-and-Ride. First and last mile connectivity to local train and bus systems would be offered by this service.

Enhanced Regional Bus Service: Expansion of RTD express routes along I-205 and I-580, including dedicated stops in Mountain House, would offer more direct commuter connections to the Bay Area.

Future ACE Extension: Although not currently scheduled for Mountain House, future ACE Forward program phases may feature more stations or improved connections that would directly benefit commuters traveling to the South Bay and Tri-Valley.

Valley Link Rail: The proposed Valley Link project would provide regional rail connectivity between the Tri-Valley BART system and Stockton, passing through or near Mountain House. Valley Link would give Mountain House residents a new transit mode and help alleviate vehicular traffic on I-205 and I-580. When combined with the Mountain House Mobility Hub, Valley Link would substantially reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles and promote sustainable growth.

Integration with Emerging Mobility Options: Flexible and on-demand options to complement regular bus service may be provided in the future through partnerships with shared mobility, vanpool, or micro transit operators.

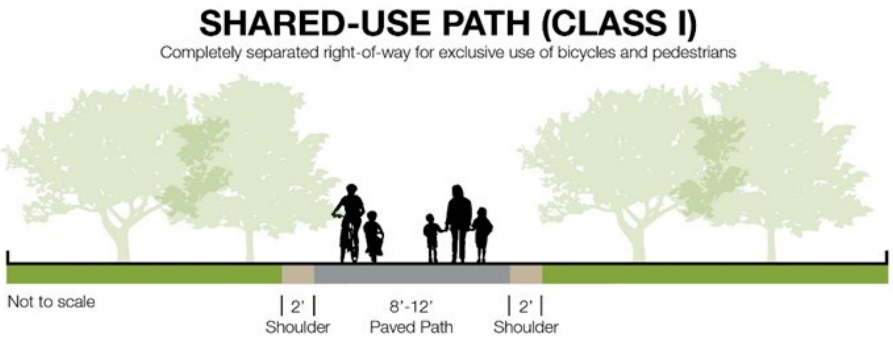
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM

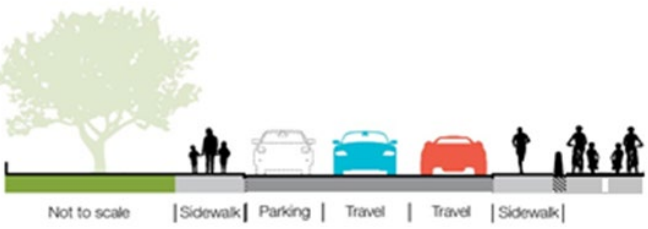
The following section describes the bicycle and pedestrian network in Mountain House.

Bicycle Facilities

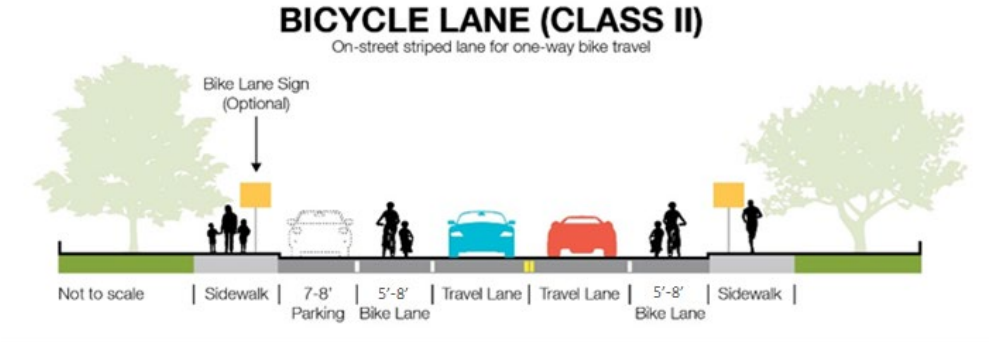
Bicycle facilities in Mountain House are categorized into three types as described and depicted in illustrations below. Note that while the graphics include typical widths for the various facilities, the exact configuration of a bike facility may vary depending on its location.

- **Class I Bikeway (Bike Path):** Also known as a shared-use path or multi-use path, a bike path is a paved right-of-way for bicycle travel that is completely separate from any street or highway.

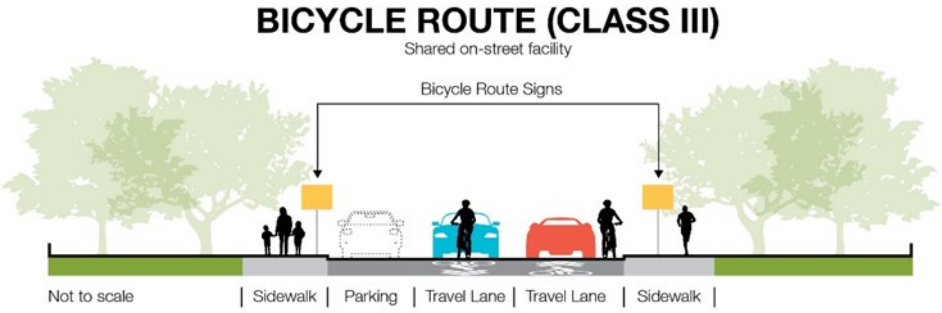




- **Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane):** A striped and stenciled lane for one-way bicycle travel on a street or highway. This facility could include a buffered space between the bike lane and vehicle lane and the bike lane could be adjacent to on-street parking.



- **Class III Bikeway (Bike Route):** A signed route along a street where the bicyclist shares the right-of-way with motor vehicles. This facility can also be designated using a shared lane marking (sharrow).



Bicycle facilities in Mountain House are shown in Figure 3.14-3 and include the following:

- Class I shared-use bike paths: Mountain House Parkway, Central Parkway, Byron Road, Arnaudo Road, De Anza Boulevard, Main Street
- Class II bike lanes: Grant Line Road
- Class III bike routes: streets that typically serve residential neighborhoods, schools, parks and community facilities, and local commercial areas

Pedestrian Facilities

Pedestrian facilities include sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signal infrastructure, curb ramps, and streetscape amenities. The majority of Mountain House's pedestrian system is made up of sidewalks in residential areas, with shared-use pathways along important thoroughfares like Central Parkway and Mountain House Parkway. Most developed arterial streets in Mountain House provide sidewalk coverage, accessible curb ramps, and marked crosswalks. Sidewalks are also provided in most of Mountain House's single-family residential neighborhoods, in multi-family residential developments, and in commercial developments. On-street pedestrian infrastructure is augmented by an integrated network of multi-use trails and corridors, as shown in Figure 3.14-4.

While the pedestrian network is generally well developed in Mountain House, there are some locations where gaps in the sidewalk network can be found. In some locations where adjacent parcels have not been developed, the street is not fully built-out and hence sidewalks have not been constructed. In general, gaps may remain in areas with unfinished development or along arterial corridors with limited pedestrian crossings.

GOODS MOVEMENT

Truck Routes

Designated truck routes in the City include the following:[6]

- Grant Line Road
- Mountain House Parkway
- Byron Road
- A portion of Kelso Road and Great Valley Parkway, leading from Byron Road to the western boundary of the Planning Area

3.14.2 REGULATORY SETTING

The City of Mountain House General Plan, along with regional, state, and federal plans, legislation, and policy directives, provide guidelines for the safe operation of streets and transportation facilities in Mountain House. While the City of Mountain House has primary responsibility for the maintenance and operation of transportation facilities within the City, Mountain House staff works on a continual basis with responsible regional, state, and federal agencies including the County of San Joaquin, the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and others, to maintain, improve, and balance the multi-modal transportation needs of the community and the region.

FEDERAL

Americans With Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 provides comprehensive rights and protections to individuals with disabilities. The goal of the ADA is to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. To implement this goal, the United States Access Board has created accessibility guidelines for public rights-of-way. The guidelines address various issues, including roadway design practices, slope and terrain issues, pedestrian access to streets, sidewalks, curb ramps, street furnishings, pedestrian signals, parking, and other components of public rights-of-way.

STATE

OPR General Plan Guidelines

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) publishes General Plan Guidelines for cities and counties developing their general plans. OPR released its updated guidelines in 2017, which includes legislative changes, new guidance, policy recommendations, external links to resource documents, and additional resources. For each general plan element, the guidelines discuss statutory requirements in detail, provide recommended policy language, and include examples of city and county general plans that have adopted similar policies.

[6] Mountain House CSD, Truck Route Map, February 2020. Available at https://www.mountainhouseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1054/Truck-Routes-PDF?bidId=. Accessed July 2026.

Senate Bill 743

SB 743, passed in 2013, resulted in several statewide CEQA changes. It required the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), now known as the California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI), to establish new metrics for determining the significance of transportation impacts of projects within transit priority areas (TPAs) and allows OPR to extend use of the metrics beyond TPAs. OPR selected VMT as the preferred transportation impact metric and applied their discretion to require its use statewide. This legislation also established that aesthetic and parking effects of a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center projects on an infill site within a TPA are not significant impacts on the environment. The revised CEQA Guidelines that implement this legislation became effective on December 28, 2018, and state that vehicle LOS and similar measures related to delay shall not be used as the sole basis for determining the significance of transportation impacts for land use projects, and that as of July 1, 2020, this requirement shall apply statewide, but that until that date, lead agencies may elect to rely on VMT rather than LOS to analyze transportation impacts.

The OPR "Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA" (December 2018) includes specifications for VMT methodology and recommendations for significance thresholds, screening of project that may be presumed to have less than significant impacts, and mitigation.

Screening criteria include:

- **Small projects**: The Technical Advisory concludes that, absent any information to the contrary, projects that generate 110 trips per day or less may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact.

- **Projects near transit stations**: Projects located within ½ mile of an "existing major transit stop" or an "existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor" would have a less-than-significant impact on VMT.

- **Affordable residential development**: Projects consisting of a high percentage of affordable housing may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact on VMT because they may improve jobs-housing balance and/or otherwise generate less VMT than market-based units.

- **Redevelopment projects**: If a proposed redevelopment project leads to a net overall decrease in VMT (when compared against the VMT of the existing land uses), the project would lead to a less-than-significant transportation impact.

- **Local-serving retail**: Trip lengths may be shortened and VMT reduced by adding "local-serving" retail opportunities that improve retail destination proximity. Page 17 of the Technical Advisory generally describes retail development including stores less than 50,000 square feet as local serving. In May 2020, OPR staff indicated during online webinars that any retail building that is 50,000 square feet or less may be considered local serving.

Other key guidance includes:

- VMT is the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project's transportation impact.

- OPR recommends tour- and trip-based travel models to estimate VMT but ultimately defers to local agencies to determine the appropriate tools.

- OPR recommends measuring VMT for residential and office projects on a "per rate" basis. Specifically, OPR recommends VMT per capita for residential projects and VMT per employee for office projects.

- OPR recommends that a per capita or per employee VMT that is fifteen percent below that of existing development may be a reasonable threshold (page 10). In other words, an office project that generates VMT per employee that is more than 85 percent of the regional VMT per employee could result in a significant impact. OPR notes that this threshold is supported by evidence that connects this level of reduction to the State's emissions goals (pages 10-11).

- For retail projects, OPR recommends measuring the net decrease or increase in VMT in the planning area with and without the project. The recommended impact threshold is any increase in total VMT.

- Lead agencies ultimately have the discretion to set or apply their own significance thresholds, provided they are based on significant evidence.

- Cities and counties still have the ability to use measures of delay such as LOS for other plans, studies, or network monitoring. However, according to CEQA section 15064.3, Determining the Significance of Transportation Impacts, "effect on automobile delay shall not constitute a significant environmental impact."

California Air Resources Board 2017 Scoping Plan-Identified VMT Reductions and Relationship to State Climate Goals

ARB has specific guidance for VMT thresholds in the ARB 2017 "Scoping Plan-Identified VMT Reductions and Relationship to State Climate Goals" (January 2019). This document provides recommendations for VMT reduction thresholds that would be necessary to achieve the state's GHG reduction goals and acknowledges that the SCS targets alone are not sufficient to meet climate goals. ARB concluded that a 14.3-percent reduction in total VMT per capita and a 16.8 percent reduction in light-duty VMT per capita (over current conditions; 2015-2018) were needed to meet these goals. The Mountain House travel forecasting model is trip-based and includes all vehicle trips, thus the total VMT per capita metric is applicable. Additionally, the OPR "Technical Advisory" cites this document as support for the 15-percent reduction threshold.

Caltrans Vehicle Miles Traveled-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide

The Caltrans "Vehicle Miles Traveled-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide" (TISG), dated May 20, 2020, was prepared to provide guidance to Caltrans districts, lead agencies, tribal governments, developers, and consultants regarding Caltrans' review of VMT impact analysis for land use projects and land use plans. Caltrans seeks to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips, provide a safe transportation system, reduce per capita VMT, increase accessibility to destinations via cycling, walking, carpooling, and transit, and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The TISG notes that, for land use projects and plans, automobile delay is no longer considered a significant impact on the environment under CEQA. Caltrans' primary review focus for a land use project's transportation impact is now VMT. The TISG generally endorses the OPR "Technical Advisory," including the thresholds in that document. Caltrans may review VMT thresholds, methodology, and mitigations.

Caltrans Interim Land Development and Intergovernmental Review (LDIGR) Safety Review Practitioners Guidance

The Interim LDIGR Safety Review Practitioners Guidance (July 2020) was developed to provide immediate direction about the safety review while final guidance is being developed. This interim guidance does not establish thresholds of significance for determining safety impacts under CEQA. The guidance notes that the significance of impacts should be determined with careful judgment on the part of a public agency and based, to the greatest extent possible, on scientific and factual data consistent with Caltrans' CEQA guidance contained in Caltrans' Standard Environmental Reference. The guidance notes that District traffic safety staff will use available data to determine if the proposed project may influence or contribute to locations identified by traffic safety Investigations generated by network screening or initiated by the district.

Assembly Bill 1358: State of California Complete Streets Act

On September 30, 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Assembly Bill (AB) 1358, the California Complete Streets Act of 2008, into law. AB 1358 requires any substantive revision of the circulation element of a city or county's general plan to identify how they will safely accommodate the circulation of all users of the roadway including pedestrians, bicyclists, children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and transit riders, as well as motorists.

Caltrans Deputy Directive 64-R1: Complete Streets – Integrating the Transportation System

In 2001, Caltrans adopted Deputy Directive (DD) 64, a policy directive related to non-motorized travel throughout the state. In October 2008, DD 64 was strengthened to reflect changing priorities and challenges. DD 64-R1 states:

The Department views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system.

The Department develops integrated multimodal projects in balance with community goals, plans, and values. Addressing the safety and mobility needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users in all projects, regardless of funding, is implicit in these objectives. Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit travel is facilitated by creating "complete streets" beginning early in system planning and continuing through project delivery and maintenance and operations. Developing a network of "complete streets" requires collaboration among all Department functional units and stakeholders to establish effective partnerships.

Providing safe mobility for all users, including motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and transit riders, contributes to the Department's vision: "Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability."

Successful long-term implementation of this policy is intended to result in more options for people to go from one place to another, less traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, more walkable communities (with healthier, more active people), and fewer barriers for older adults, children, and people with disabilities.

Economically, complete streets can help revitalize communities, and they can give families the option to lower transportation costs by using transit, walking or bicycling rather than driving to reach their destinations. The Department is actively engaged in implementing its complete streets policy in all

planning, programming, design, construction, operations, and maintenance activities and products on the State Highway System.

Caltrans Director's Policy 22 (DP-22): Director's Policy on Context Sensitive Solutions

Director's Policy 22, a policy regarding the use of "Context Sensitive Solutions" on all state highways, was adopted by Caltrans in November of 2001. The policy reads:

> The Department uses "Context Sensitive Solutions" as an approach to plan, design, construct, maintain, and operate its transportation system. These solutions use innovative and inclusive approaches that integrate and balance community, aesthetic, historic, and environmental values with transportation safety, maintenance, and performance goals. Context sensitive solutions are reached through a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach involving all stakeholders.
>
> The context of all projects and activities is a key factor in reaching decisions. It is considered for all State transportation and support facilities when defining, developing, and evaluating options. When considering the context, issues such as funding feasibility, maintenance feasibility, traffic demand, impact on alternate routes, impact on safety, and relevant laws, rules, and regulations must be addressed.

The policy recognizes that "in towns and cities across California, the State highway may be the only through street or may function as a local street," that "these communities desire that their main street be an economic, social, and cultural asset as well as provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods," and that "communities want transportation projects to provide opportunities for enhanced non-motorized travel and visual quality." The policy acknowledges that addressing these needs will assure that transportation solutions meet more than just traffic and operational objectives.

LOCAL

SJCOG Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy

The current Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy (RTP/SCS) produced by SJCOG was adopted in 2022. The 2022 RTP/SCS is a long-term coordinated transportation/land use strategy providing a framework for transportation investment out to the year 2046. The RTP/SCS sets forth regional transportation policy and provides capital program planning for all regional, state, and federally funded projects. The RTP/SCS also demonstrates how land use development and transportation can work together to meet greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for cars and light trucks. The RTP can be considered the San Joaquin region's "statement of priorities" for the future transportation system. The RTP/SCS states that it "recognizes the significant impact the transportation network has on the region's public health, mobility, and economic vitality" and "serves as a guide for achieving public policy decisions that will result in balanced investments for a wide range of multimodal transportation improvements."

The 2022 RTP/SCS includes policies and supportive strategies to reduce VMT and GHG emissions and increase transit ridership. Policies include:

- Enhance the Environment for Existing and Future Generations and Conserve Energy
- Maximize Mobility and Accessibility
- Preserve the Efficiency of the Existing Transportation System

- Support Economic Vitality
- Promote Interagency Coordination and Public Participation for Transportation Decision-Making and Planning Efforts
- Maximize Cost-Effectiveness
- Improve the Quality of Life for Residents

Measure K: San Joaquin County Local Transportation Improvement Plan

Measure K, the San Joaquin County Local Transportation Improvement Plan, was passed by San Joaquin County voters in November 1990 and renewed in November 2006. Measure K assesses a half-cent sales tax on purchases made throughout the County to provide direct funding for local transportation projects. The funds are dedicated to the specific programs and projects specified in the Measure K expenditure plan, including improved highways and local streets, new passenger rail service, regional and interregional bus routes, park-and-ride lots, new bicycle facilities, and railroad crossings. The renewal of Measure K is estimated to generate $2.552 billion for these transportation programs in the region through the year 2041. Funding from Measure K has been used to construct transportation improvements throughout San Joaquin County.

City of Mountain House Specific Plans

Mountain House has developed several Specific Plans that serve as the primary instruments of the City of Mountain House in carrying out policies and proposals of the Mountain House General Plan. The following Specific Plans have been adopted by the City:

- Mountain House Specific Plan I (1994) – Neighborhoods E, F, and G (approx. 1,348 acres)
- Mountain House Specific Plan II (2005) – Neighborhoods C, H, I, J, K, L, and part of Neighborhood D, and the Town Center (approx. 2,300 acres)
- Mountain House Specific Plan III (2005) – Neighborhoods A and B and part of Neighborhood D (approx. 816 acres)

City of Mountain House Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The Mountain House Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, last updated in 2021, was developed to improve and expand active transportation opportunities in Mountain House. The Plan outlines strategies for creating a safe, connected bicycling network as the city approaches build-out. Priority projects are identified in the Plan, such as new Class I shared-use paths that close current network gaps, lighting enhancements, and intersection renovations.

3.14.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The transportation impact analysis assesses how the Mountain House Planning Area's transportation system would operate with the implementation of the proposed General Plan. The potential impacts were identified based on a set of significance criteria based on the CEQA Guidelines. The transportation impact analysis methodology includes a combination of quantitative and qualitative evaluations of the roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit components of the transportation system. All analysis presumes that future background travel options and behaviors remain similar to current conditions and do not explicitly

account for potential changes associated with disruptive trends, emerging technologies, and changes in travel choices.

Analysis Scenarios

The following scenarios were analyzed using the travel demand model.

- Baseline Conditions. Conditions under the land uses in the existing Mountain House Master Plan, with a 2046 buildout horizon year, as shown in the SJCOG 2022 RTP Model.
- Proposed General Plan Conditions. Buildout of the land use development in the proposed General Plan, including approximately 18,154 dwelling units and 8,339 jobs within Mountain House, with a 2046 buildout horizon year.[7] Note that non-residential land uses are shown in jobs for trip estimates in the model as shown in Table 3.14-7.

TABLE 3.14-7: TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL ANALYSIS SCENARIOS

Scenario	Dwelling Units	Jobs
2046 Cumulative Baseline	12,442	3,068
2046 Cumulative General Plan	18,154	8,339

Source: Advanced Mobility Group, 2026.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

The travel demand model was used to estimate VMT for the City. Two measures of VMT are used in this analysis:

- **VMT per capita, for residential land uses.** Includes VMT for trips produced by a dwelling unit's residents, such as to work, school, or shop, and with one end of the trip at the home end, on a typical weekday.
- **VMT per employee, for non-residential land uses.** Includes all trips with one end at the work land use, including trips by both employees, customers, and deliveries, on a typical weekday.

Additional VMT-related measures are also provided for informational purposes:

- **Total VMT.** Includes all trips with at least one end in the planning area on a typical weekday.

Estimates of current VMT and forecasts of future VMT are inherently dependent on the methodology used and are based on a presumption that future travel behavior will be consistent with recent travel behavior. Travel models, including the model used for this analysis, base their forecasts of future behavior on past behavior. Any subsequent changes including changes in usage of transportation network companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft, large changes in fuel prices, public availability of autonomous vehicles (AVs), and shifts in work arrangements such as telecommuting may change future travel

[7] The travel demand model projects 18,154 dwelling units and 8,339 jobs, representing a variance of 9 fewer dwelling units (-0.05%) and 140 additional jobs (+1.71%) compared to the General Plan 2045 buildout projections (18,163 dwelling units and 8,199 jobs; refer to Table 2.0-2). These minor variances are *de minimis* and do not alter the analysis or impact conclusions. Further, the travel demand model represents a conservative approach by overestimating trips and VMT for non-residential land uses.

behaviors, resulting in future VMT differing from current forecasts. The future effect of these changes is unknown, and thus difficult to model.

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

For the purposes of this EIR, adoption and/or implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in significant impacts under CEQA if any of the following would occur:

- Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.
- Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b).
- Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).
- Result in inadequate emergency access.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the General Plan would result in a significant transportation impact if it would conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)(1), which states for land use projects, "Vehicle miles traveled exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact." CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)(4) states "A lead agency has discretion to choose the most appropriate methodology to evaluate a project's vehicle miles traveled, including whether to express the change in absolute terms, per capita, per household or in any other measure. A lead agency may use models to estimate a project's vehicle miles traveled and may revise those estimates to reflect professional judgment based on substantial evidence."

Since the City has not yet officially adopted VMT thresholds and guidelines for the preparation of transportation studies, this analysis relies on guidance from the OPR "Technical Advisory" to evaluate CEQA guidelines for VMT. This methodology is also consistent with San Joaquin County.[8]

The City has selected to measure VMT by land use type:

- VMT per capita for residential land uses
- VMT per employee for work

Consistent with the OPR Technical Advisory, the City has selected a threshold of 15 percent below citywide baseline VMT per dwelling unit (for residential land uses) or employee (employment-related land uses) by land use type. Therefore, if any of the VMT metrics above under General Plan conditions exceed 85 percent of the same value under Baseline Conditions, VMT impacts on transportation may be considered significant. VMT thresholds by land use type are shown in Table 3.14-8.

TABLE 3.14-8: VMT THRESHOLD DEVELOPMENT

Baseline Daily VMT per Capita	Project Type	Threshold Calculation	Daily VMT Threshold
30.0	Residential Projects	15% Below Baseline	25.5
21.2	Work Projects	15% Below Baseline	18.0

SOURCE: ADVANCED MOBILITY GROUP, 2026.

[8] San Joaquin County, CEQA Transportation Analysis Guidelines, September 2020.

NOTE: VMT PER EMPLOYEE RATIOS INCLUDE ALL TRIPS BY EMPLOYEES, CUSTOMERS, AND DELIVERIES.

Transit, Bicycles, and Pedestrians

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines indicates that impacts may be significant if a project conflicts with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. The proposed General Plan would have a significant impact on transit, bicycles, or pedestrians if it would conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding these systems, or create or exacerbate disruptions to the performance or safety of these systems.

Hazards and Emergency Access

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines indicates that impacts may be significant if a project would substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). Impacts may also be significant if a project results in inadequate emergency access. The proposed General Plan would have a significant impact on the transportation system if it would increase hazards due to a design feature, incompatible uses, or inadequate emergency access.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.14-1: General Plan implementation may conflict with a program, plan, policy, or ordinance addressing the circulation system, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities (Less Than Significant)

Implementation of the proposed Project would not directly approve or construct any specific development or infrastructure project. However, buildout of the General Plan would accommodate future development of residential and non-residential uses within the Planning Area, resulting in increased jobs and population. The Circulation Element proposed as part of the Project has been designed to accommodate future growth while maintaining a multimodal transportation network that delivers safe, equitable, and efficient mobility options for all users and travel modes. This includes the adoption of a hierarchical system of roadway types (i.e., Roadway Classifications) consisting of major arterials, minor arterials, collector streets, and local streets (refer to Figure 3.14-1); a Bicycle and Trails Network identifying existing and future bike and trails infrastructure (refer to Figures 3.14-3 and 3.14-4); and a list of priority transportation corridors and improvements so that transportation investments will provide the greatest benefit to regional mobility and community connectivity.

The Circulation Element also contains goals, policies, and actions that support access to and performance of the City's circulation system, including active transportation options and public transit services. For example, proposed Circulation Element Goal CIR-1 and related policies and actions are related to safe and complete streets to accommodate all users and improve connectivity and safety. Goal CIR-2 and related policies and actions are related to improvements to the City's active transportation network such as bike and pedestrian infrastructure. Goal CIR-3 and related policies and actions are related to transit service and regional connectivity. Goal CIR-4 and related policies and actions are related to sustainability, including reduced VMT and GHG emissions and improved air quality. Goal CIR-5 and related policies and actions are related to transportation system management, including ensuring adequate improvements and system performance to meet future growth. A full list of applicable policies and actions is provided below. Further, the Plan includes mixed-use development that is supportive of active transportation and transit. Overall, the policy framework proposed in the General Plan is designed to help make the circulation system, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, consistent with regional

transportation plans such as SJCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS and local plans, policies, and ordinances, such as the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, as well as address the needs of growth accommodated by the proposed General Plan. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system and impacts would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Circulation Element

Goal CIR-1: Safe And Complete Streets. A safe and efficient roadway system that accommodates all users and provides connections between neighborhoods, employment areas, and regional transportation corridors.

Policy CIR-1.1: Multimodal Street Network. The City shall design and maintain a multimodal street network that accommodates motorists and freight vehicles while ensuring safe and accessible travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-1.2: Complete Streets. The City shall plan, design, construct, and maintain transportation facilities as Complete Streets that provide safe, accessible, and convenient travel for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets features shall be incorporated into all new roadway construction and significant reconstruction projects.

Policy CIR-1.3: Safe Systems Design. The City shall apply Safe Systems design principles that reduce the likelihood and severity of traffic injuries and fatalities. New roadway construction and significant reconstruction projects shall be evaluated for conformance with Safe Systems principles.

Policy CIR-1.5: Context-Sensitive Design. Ensure roadway design reflects surrounding land uses and neighborhood context.

Policy CIR-1.6: Connectivity. Maintain strong connectivity within the roadway network to distribute traffic and reduce congestion.

Policy CIR-1.7: Traffic Calming. Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods and near schools to promote safety and minimize cut-through traffic on local streets.

Policy CIR-1.8: Truck Routes. Maintain a network of designated local truck routes to facilitate goods movement to regional roads and to discourage the use of residential roads.

Policy CIR-1.9: Accessibility. Ensure transportation facilities remain accessible to mobility-impaired and visually impaired users, such as individuals with disabilities and seniors.

Action CIR-1a: Prepare and periodically update a Local Roadway Safety Plan identifying high-injury corridors and priority safety improvements.

Action CIR-1b: Evaluate key community mobility corridors depicted as Major and Minor Arterials such as Central Parkway, Great Valley Parkway, and De Anza Boulevard for Complete Streets improvements including bike lanes, pedestrian crossings, and streetscape enhancements.

Action CIR-1c: Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods, including roundabouts, curb extensions, speed feedback signs, median islands, and raised crosswalks. Priority should be given to neighborhoods with a demonstrated need based on public outreach and other criteria that may include safety data, vehicle speeds/volumes, and pedestrian activity.

Action CIR-1d: Install high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian refuge islands, and enhanced signal timing at key intersections along major corridors.

Action CIR-1e: Integrate multimodal improvements into roadway resurfacing and reconstruction projects.

Action CIR-1f: Maintain a pavement management program to ensure roadway safety and reliability.

Action CIR-1h: Review and update the City's designated truck routes as needed while considering the potential mobility conflicts and the location of sensitive land uses.

Action CIR-1i: Monitor e-commerce trends and develop regulations and guidance to address potential adverse effects of goods movement deliveries, including increased truck traffic and increased demand for curbside loading.

Goal CIR-2: Connected Active Transportation Network. A safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle network linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, commercial areas, and community destinations.

Policy CIR-2.1: Pedestrian Network. Develop and maintain a continuous pedestrian network that enhances walkability through safe and attractive pedestrian infrastructure.

Policy CIR-2.2: Bicycle Network. Expand high-quality bicycle infrastructure to support riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-2.3: Safe Routes. Prioritize safe routes to schools and community facilities.

Policy CIR-2.4: Pedestrian Crossings. Improve pedestrian crossings on arterial roadways.

Policy CIR-2.5: Bicycle Facilities. Provide secure bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities at key destinations and qualifying private development projects.

Policy CIR-2.6: Multi-Use Trails Network. Expand and enhance the City's active transportation network by providing multi-use trails along creek and utilities corridors and open space areas.

Policy CIR-2.7: Walkable Neighborhoods. Encourage development patterns that support walkable neighborhoods.

Action CIR-2a: Continue to implement and periodically update the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

Action CIR-2b: Construct bicycle lanes and shared-use paths along key corridors, including Central Parkway, Great Valley Parkway, De Anza Boulevard, Arturo Boulevard, and Mustang Way.

Action CIR-2c: Improve pedestrian crossings near schools, parks, and community facilities.

Action CIR-2d: Install bicycle parking, lighting, and wayfinding signage at major destinations.

Action CIR-2e: Explore opportunities to incorporate multi-use trail connections along Mountain House Creek and open space corridors.

Action CIR-2f: Pursue State and federal funding programs for active transportation improvements such as those identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Goal CIR-3: Transit and Regional Connectivity. Improve connections between Mountain House and regional transportation systems while expanding local transit opportunities.

Policy CIR-3.1: Regional Transit Service. Support regional transit service connecting Mountain House with surrounding communities

Policy CIR-3.2: Transit-Supportive Development. Encourage transit-supportive development in the Town Center and near major activity centers.

Policy CIR-3.3: First- and Last-Mile Connections. Improve first- and last-mile connections between neighborhoods and transit services.

Policy CIR-3.4: Mobility Hubs. Support the development of mobility hubs to serve as centralized, convenient points linking a variety of transportation options.

Policy CIR-3.5: Regional Coordination. Coordinate with regional transit providers to expand transit service in Mountain House.

Policy CIR-3.6: Innovation. Support innovative transit options including micro-transit and on-demand services.

Action CIR-3a: Coordinate with regional transportation providers to expand transit service and provide enhanced amenities for safe and comfortable transit access.

Action CIR-3b: Identify and plan for mobility hub locations within the Town Center, adjacent to I -205 and major activity centers.

Action CIR-3c: Improve first- and last-mile connections through sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and wayfinding.

Action CIR-3d: Evaluate the feasibility of local shuttle, circulator services, or autonomous shuttle.

Action CIR-3e: Advocate for the development of a regional mobility hub in Mountain House that includes park-and-ride facilities serving regional transit routes.

Action CIR-3f: Partner with neighboring jurisdictions and regional transit providers to expand regional rail and bus transit projects serving Mountain House to include ACE and Valley Link.

Goal CIR-4: Sustainable Mobility. Promote transportation choices that reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and support environmental sustainability.

Policy CIR-4.1: Compact Development Patterns. Coordinate land use and transportation planning to support compact development patterns.

Policy CIR-4.2: Transportation Demand Management. The City shall continue to implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program consistent with the requirements of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and regional air quality plans. The TDM program shall include measures such as carpooling, vanpooling, telecommuting, transit subsidies, and bicycle facilities. The City shall continue to require TDM programs for major employers and large development projects as a condition of approval.

Policy CIR-4.3: Reduce VMT. Incorporate Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction strategies into land use and transportation decisions, including promoting infill development, mixed-use projects, transit-oriented design, and pedestrian-friendly environments that reduce the need for vehicle travel. New development projects shall be evaluated for VMT performance consistent with Action CIR-4a and State CEQA guidelines.

Policy CIR-4.4: Shared Mobility. Promote shared mobility services.

Policy CIR-4.5: Reduce GHG Emissions. Support strategies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Action CIR-4a: Require proposed development projects that could have a potentially significant VMT impact to consider reasonable and feasible project modifications, transportation demand management programs, and other measures during the project design and environmental review stage of project development that would reduce VMT effects in a manner consistent with State guidance on VMT reduction.

Action CIR-4b: Require new development to incorporate electric vehicle charging in accordance with the California Green Building Standards Code. Explore opportunities to install electric vehicle charging stations at public facilities.

Action CIR-4c: As need for transit grows, review and consider alternatives to conventional transit systems, such as smaller shuttle buses (micro-transit), on-demand transit services, or transportation networking company services that connect neighborhood centers to local and regional activity centers with greater cost efficiencies.

Action CIR-4d: As new and evolving transportation technologies and mobility services (e.g. autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, electric bicycles and scooters, micro-mobility options transportation network companies, and smart cities infrastructure) are implemented and used by the public, review and update City policies and plans to maximize the benefit to the public of such technologies and services without adversely affecting the City's transportation network. Updates to the City's policies and plans may cover topics such as electric vehicle charging stations, smart parking sensors and curb space management, changes in parking supply requirements, policies regarding electric bicycle and scooter use, autonomous shuttle service, etc.

Goal CIR-5: Transportation System Management And Implementation. Ensure that transportation infrastructure and mobility improvements are implemented in coordination with community growth and that the transportation system is monitored and managed to maintain safe and efficient mobility.

Policy CIR-5.1: Right-Sized Infrastructure. Coordinate transportation infrastructure improvements with community growth and development.

Policy CIR-5.2: New Development. Require new development and significant redevelopment projects to develop or pay their fair share for appropriate transportation infrastructure improvements.

Policy CIR-5.3: Transportation Capital Improvement Program. Maintain and periodically update a Transportation Capital Improvement Program that identifies and prioritizes transportation projects.

Policy CIR-5.4: System Performance. Monitor traffic volumes, safety conditions, and multimodal travel patterns to evaluate system performance.

Policy CIR-5.5: Regional Mobility. Coordinate transportation planning with regional agencies to address regional mobility needs.

Policy CIR-5.6: Funding. Support funding strategies and grant opportunities that improve transportation infrastructure and mobility options.

Policy CIR-5.7: Project Coordination. Ensure that roadways, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure are implemented in a coordinated manner.

Policy CIR-5.8: Integrated Improvements. Encourage integration of transportation improvements with development projects and roadway maintenance programs.

Policy CIR-5.9: Transportation Trigger Points. Continue to implement trigger points through the Capital Improvement Program, Transportation Demand Management program, and adopted Specific Plans to guide the timing of transportation improvements.

Action CIR-5a: Maintain and periodically update the Transportation Impact Fee (TIF) identifying priority transportation projects. Update transportation improvement priorities as development occurs and travel patterns evolve.

Action CIR-5b: Monitor traffic volumes, safety conditions, and multimodal travel trends throughout the transportation network.

Action CIR-5c: Actively pursue State and federal transportation funding programs, including safety, active transportation, and transit funding opportunities.

Action CIR-5d: Coordinate with regional agencies such as the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) and neighboring jurisdictions on regional transportation planning initiatives.

Action CIR-5e: Ensure transportation improvements are implemented concurrently with development of new neighborhoods and activity centers.

Action CIR-5f: Maintain and update development impact fee programs that support transportation infrastructure improvements.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant.

Impact 3.14-2: General Plan implementation may result in VMT per capita that is greater than 85 percent of Baseline conditions (Significant and Unavoidable)

A significant Project VMT or cumulative VMT impact would occur:

- Project Threshold: if the Project's VMT per capita or VMT per employee exceeds 15 percent below the baseline conditions daily average VMT per capita, or VMT per employee, respectively.
- Cumulative Threshold: if the Project threshold is exceeded, or if the Project is determined to be inconsistent with the RTP/SCS.

Table 3.14-9 compares the VMT per dwelling unit and VMT per employee associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan with the threshold. As shown in the table, the proposed General Plan would exceed the VMT threshold for residential projects but would not exceed the threshold for employment-related land uses.

TABLE 3.14-9: VMT GENERATED BY LAND USES

Project Type	Baseline Conditions	Proposed General Plan	Impact Threshold	Exceeds Threshold?
Residential Projects	30.0	29.5	25.5	**Yes**
Work Projects	21.2	16.3	18.0	**No**

SOURCE: ADVANCED MOBILITY GROUP, 2026.

While future conditions with the proposed General Plan represent an improvement over baseline conditions (i.e., a reduction of 0.5 daily average VMT per dwelling unit and 4.9 daily average VMT per employee), it does not reach the target threshold of 25.5 (15 percent below baseline) for residential projects. This is a potentially significant impact.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions designed to reduce vehicle trips and VMT. Specifically, the proposed Circulation Element directs the City to provide additional pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities and opportunities, promote non-vehicle travel modes, and coordinate on trip and VMT reduction efforts. The proposed Environmental Justice Element also contains policies and actions to encourage active transportation and increase connectivity in the City. General Plan policies and actions that would contribute to reductions in VMT are identified below. These policies and actions would help to reduce the severity of VMT impacts to the greatest extent feasible.

While the General Plan goals, policies, and actions listed below are anticipated to achieve meaningful reductions in VMT generated by land uses within the City, reductions in VMT per capita from 29.5 to 25.5 would be required to achieve thresholds as shown in Table 3.14-9. The City cannot demonstrate at this time that the General Plan policies and actions would reduce VMT to the degree required to meet these thresholds. VMT reduction depends on factors such as demographic change, household preferences for housing types and locations, the cost of fuel, and the competitiveness of regional transit relative to driving, which relates to congestion along vehicular commute routes that are not under the City's jurisdiction, as well as transit provided by agencies other than the City. Additionally, future development projects under the General Plan would be required to complete project-specific VMT analyses, including Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures designed to reduce VMT, if required. While such measures are likely to result in less than significant VMT impacts when considered at an individual project level, they cannot be guaranteed and are not possible to fully quantify or mitigate at a citywide level as part of this

programmatic analysis. Hence, it cannot be demonstrated that additional TDM measures could reduce VMT per capita or per employee by the amounts needed to meet the impact thresholds. Therefore, this impact is considered ***significant and unavoidable***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Circulation Element

Land Use Element

Policy LU-1.1: Holistic Land Use Planning. Land use decisions shall consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability; community livability and public health; choices in housing, jobs, amenities, and transportation; and opportunities to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of non-renewable resources. The City shall provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.2: Complete Neighborhoods. Promote the development of compact, complete neighborhoods that locate parks, services, and amenities within walking and biking distance of neighborhood residents, allowing people to meet their daily needs close to their homes.

Circulation Element

Goal CIR-1: Safe And Complete Streets. A safe and efficient roadway system that accommodates all users and provides connections between neighborhoods, employment areas, and regional transportation corridors.

Policy CIR-1.1: Multimodal Street Network. The City shall design and maintain a multimodal street network that accommodates motorists and freight vehicles while ensuring safe and accessible travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-1.2: Complete Streets. The City shall plan, design, construct, and maintain transportation facilities as Complete Streets that provide safe, accessible, and convenient travel for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets features shall be incorporated into all new roadway construction and significant reconstruction projects.

Policy CIR-1.6: Connectivity. Maintain strong connectivity within the roadway network to distribute traffic and reduce congestion.

Policy CIR-1.7: Traffic Calming. Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods and near schools to promote safety and minimize cut-through traffic on local streets.

Action CIR-1b: Evaluate key community mobility corridors depicted as Major and Minor Arterials such as Central Parkway, Great Valley Parkway, and De Anza Boulevard for Complete Streets improvements including bike lanes, pedestrian crossings, and streetscape enhancements.

Action CIR-1g: Monitor traffic volumes and safety conditions through monitored TDM's along major corridors and update improvement priorities as needed.

Goal CIR-2: Connected Active Transportation Network. A safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle network linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, commercial areas, and community destinations.

Policy CIR-2.1: Pedestrian Network. Develop and maintain a continuous pedestrian network that enhances walkability through safe and attractive pedestrian infrastructure.

Policy CIR-2.2: Bicycle Network. Expand high-quality bicycle infrastructure to support riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-2.3: Safe Routes. Prioritize safe routes to schools and community facilities.

Policy CIR-2.4: Pedestrian Crossings. Improve pedestrian crossings on arterial roadways.

Policy CIR-2.5: Bicycle Facilities. Provide secure bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities at key destinations and qualifying private development projects.

Policy CIR-2.6: Multi-Use Trails Network. Expand and enhance the City's active transportation network by providing multi-use trails along creek and utilities corridors and open space areas.

Policy CIR-2.7: Walkable Neighborhoods. Encourage development patterns that support walkable neighborhoods.

Action CIR-2a: Continue to implement and periodically update the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

Action CIR-2b: Construct bicycle lanes and shared-use paths along key corridors, including Central Parkway, Great Valley Parkway, De Anza Boulevard, Arturo Boulevard, and Mustang Way.

Action CIR-2c: Improve pedestrian crossings near schools, parks, and community facilities.

Action CIR-2d: Install bicycle parking, lighting, and wayfinding signage at major destinations.

Action CIR-2e: Explore opportunities to incorporate multi-use trail connections along Mountain House Creek and open space corridors.

Action CIR-2f: Pursue State and federal funding programs for active transportation improvements such as those identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Goal CIR-3: Transit And Regional Connectivity. Improve connections between Mountain House and regional transportation systems while expanding local transit opportunities.

Policy CIR-3.1: Regional Transit Service. Support regional transit service connecting Mountain House with surrounding communities

Policy CIR-3.2: Transit-Supportive Development. Encourage transit-supportive development in the Town Center and near major activity centers.

Policy CIR-3.3: First- and Last-Mile Connections. Improve first- and last-mile connections between neighborhoods and transit services.

Policy CIR-3.4: Mobility Hubs. Support the development of mobility hubs to serve as centralized, convenient points linking a variety of transportation options.

Policy CIR-3.5: Regional Coordination. Coordinate with regional transit providers to expand transit service in Mountain House.

Policy CIR-3.6: Innovation. Support innovative transit options including micro-transit and on-demand services.

Action CIR-3a: Coordinate with regional transportation providers to expand transit service and provide enhanced amenities for safe and comfortable transit access.

Action CIR-3b: Identify and plan for mobility hub locations within the Town Center, adjacent to I -205 and major activity centers.

Action CIR-3c: Improve first- and last-mile connections through sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and wayfinding.

Action CIR-3d: Evaluate the feasibility of local shuttle, circulator services, or autonomous shuttle.

Action CIR-3e: Advocate for the development of a regional mobility hub in Mountain House that includes park-and-ride facilities serving regional transit routes.

Action CIR-3f: Partner with neighboring jurisdictions and regional transit providers to expand regional rail and bus transit projects serving Mountain House to include ACE and Valley Link.

Goal CIR-4 Sustainable Mobility. Promote transportation choices that reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and support environmental sustainability.

Policy CIR-4.1: Compact Development Patterns. Coordinate land use and transportation planning to support compact development patterns.

Policy CIR-4.2: Transportation Demand Management. The City shall continue to implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program consistent with the requirements of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and regional air quality plans. The TDM program shall include measures such as carpooling, vanpooling, telecommuting, transit subsidies, and bicycle facilities. The City shall continue to require TDM programs for major employers and large development projects as a condition of approval.

Policy CIR-4.3: Reduce VMT. Incorporate Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction strategies into land use and transportation decisions, including promoting infill development, mixed-use projects, transit-oriented design, and pedestrian-friendly environments that reduce the need for vehicle travel. New development projects shall be evaluated for VMT performance consistent with Action CIR-4a and State CEQA guidelines.

Policy CIR-4.4: Shared Mobility. Promote shared mobility services.

Policy CIR-4.5: Reduce GHG Emissions. Support strategies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Action CIR-4a: Require proposed development projects that could have a potentially significant VMT impact to consider reasonable and feasible project modifications, transportation demand management programs, and other measures during the project design and environmental review stage of project development that would reduce VMT effects in a manner consistent with State guidance on VMT reduction.

Action CIR-4b: Require new development to incorporate electric vehicle charging in accordance with the California Green Building Standards Code. Explore opportunities to install electric vehicle charging stations at public facilities.

Action CIR-4c: As need for transit grows, review and consider alternatives to conventional transit systems, such as smaller shuttle buses (micro-transit), on-demand transit services, or transportation networking company services that connect neighborhood centers to local and regional activity centers with greater cost efficiencies.

Action CIR-4d: As new and evolving transportation technologies and mobility services (e.g. autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, electric bicycles and scooters, micro-mobility options transportation network companies, and smart cities infrastructure) are implemented and used by the public, review and update City policies and plans to maximize the benefit to the public of such technologies and services without adversely affecting the City's transportation network. Updates to the City's policies and plans may cover topics such as electric vehicle charging stations, smart parking sensors and curb space management, changes in parking supply requirements, policies regarding electric bicycle and scooter use, autonomous shuttle service, etc.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-5: Physical Activity. Accessible, safe, and inclusive opportunities for physical activity for all residents.

Policy EJ-5.1: Active Transportation Network. Support a safe, connected, and comfortable network of sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and crossings that encourages daily physical activity and improves access to schools, parks, community facilities, transit, and neighborhood services.

Action EJ-5c: During development review, require or encourage pedestrian and bicycle connections, secure bicycle parking, and shade trees in new development and major redevelopment to support walking, biking, and outdoor activity.

Goal EJ-8 Public Improvements & Community Programs. Public improvements and community programs that promote healthy, connected, and resilient neighborhoods.

Policy EJ-8.2: Accessibility Improvements. Promote and implement sidewalk, curb ramp, trail, and pedestrian accessibility improvements that improve mobility, reduce tripping hazards, and support safe access to schools, parks, transit stops, and community facilities.

Action EJ-8b: Maintain and periodically update an inventory of sidewalk lifts, missing curb ramps, ADA barriers, and other pedestrian access needs in neighborhoods, parks, schools, and arterials, and prioritize repairs and upgrades through the City's sidewalk and accessibility improvement programs.

MITIGATION MEASURES

There is no feasible mitigation for this impact.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significant and Unavoidable.

Impact 3.14-3: General Plan implementation may increase hazards due to a design feature, incompatible uses, or inadequate emergency access (Less Than Significant)

A significant impact would occur if the Project substantially increases hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment), or if it results in inadequate emergency access. The proposed General Plan is a policy document that does not include any site-specific designs or proposals; the following analysis addresses potential impacts at the programmatic level.

Implementation of the General Plan would accommodate future development of residential and non-residential uses and associated infrastructure within the Planning Area. Hazards due to geometric design features are typically assessed at the individual project level when site-specific development or an actual design and construction of a circulation facility is proposed. Specific development projects and the details of future development activities that may occur with buildout of the General Plan, including site access and circulation, are not known at this time. The City's development review process provides the mechanism by which site-specific development proposals, including review of the site plans for compliance with the City's General Plan, applicable Specific Plan, and Municipal Code are conducted. Site-specific development review would include a review of the proposed development's land use compatibility and review of all on- and off-site improvements to ensure site design, ingress and egress, and site distance standards have been implemented and that no hazardous conditions associated with a geometric design feature or incompatible use occur. Further, development would occur consistent with the proposed Land Use Element, which addresses and plans for compatible land use development within the City.

The City's design and construction standards and specifications provide for coordinated and standardized development of City facilities, including roadways. The standards apply to, regulate, and guide the design and preparation of plans, and the construction of streets, traffic signals, site access, and related public improvements. As individual projects would undergo review by the City for approval and construction and would have to meet engineering design guidelines, potential safety design hazards associated with subsequent roadway improvements and land development projects would be addressed. Prior to implementation, any improvements would be subject to detailed review and future consideration by the City's Public Works engineering staff and other relevant City departments. An evaluation of the roadway alignments, intersection geometrics, and traffic control features would be conducted at the project design level. Roadway improvements would occur in accordance with the City's roadway design guidelines.

The types of land uses included as part of the General Plan are generally similar to existing and surrounding uses and are intended to be compatible with the existing and planned land uses in the Planning Area and in the surrounding area. The General Plan would not introduce incompatible land uses with the potential to substantially increase hazards associated with the specific use (e.g., farm equipment). Implementation of the proposed General Plan would provide for consistent and compatible development within the City and would not substantially increase hazards due to incompatible uses.

While road and infrastructure improvements could occur to accommodate the new growth, future development within the Planning Area is not anticipated to result in the substantial modification of roadways surrounding specific development sites or the placement of any permanent physical barriers on adjacent roadways. Construction activities that could temporarily affect roadways, access points, or circulation would be subject to encroachment permits, traffic control requirements, construction management requirements, and coordination with City staff and emergency service providers as applicable. Operationally, future development would be required to maintain required access, fire lanes, driveway widths, turning radii, signage, address visibility, water supply for fire protection, and other fire and emergency access features required by the Fire Code and Development Code. These requirements would ensure that future projects do not physically interfere with emergency response or evacuation. Further, while localized, peak-hour traffic queuing such as during school drop-off and pick-up periods may result in temporary, intermittent roadway congestion, emergency response vehicles are granted right-of-way under California Vehicle Code Section 21806; as such, localized peak queuing would not physically block or prevent adequate emergency access.

In addition, the proposed Safety Element and Mobility developed as part of the General Plan contain policies in support of roadway network safety, emergency access, and reducing design hazards along local roads. For example, proposed Circulation Element Policy CIR-1.3 directs the City to apply Safe Systems design principles that reduce the likelihood and severity of traffic injuries and fatalities. New roadway construction and significant reconstruction projects shall be evaluated for conformance with Safe Systems principles. Policy CIR-1.4 directs the City to prioritize safety improvements on corridors and intersections with higher collision rates. Proposed Safety Element Policy SAF-5.3 directs the City to work with the French Camp Mckinley Fire District and San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office to define minimum standards for evacuation of residential areas, particularly in Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, and to maintain, update, and regularly exercise emergency access, protocols, and evacuation routes to assess their effectiveness under a range of emergency scenarios. If areas with inadequate evacuation routes are identified, the City shall develop appropriate mitigation measures, improvement plans, or education programs to ensure safe evacuation. Action SAF-5c requires periodic review, maintenance, and repair of City roadways and emergency access routes and the installation of signage where necessary to clearly identify emergency access routes. Action SAF-5e requires consultation with police and fire departments during development review to ensure that projects provide adequate emergency access. The implementation of goals, policies, and actions contained in the General Plan, as well as compliance with the Municipal Code and other City regulations, would ensure that new development in the Planning Area would not result in hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses, or inadequate emergency access; impacts would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Circulation Element

Goal CIR-1: Safe and Complete Streets. A safe and efficient roadway system that accommodates all users and provides connections between neighborhoods, employment areas, and regional transportation corridors.

Policy CIR-1.3: Safe Systems Design. The City shall apply Safe Systems design principles that reduce the likelihood and severity of traffic injuries and fatalities. New roadway construction and significant reconstruction projects shall be evaluated for conformance with Safe Systems principles.

Policy CIR-1.4: Safety Improvements. Prioritize safety improvements on corridors and intersections with higher collision rates.

Policy CIR-1.7: Traffic Calming. Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods and near schools to promote safety and minimize cut-through traffic on local streets.

Action CIR-1a: Prepare and periodically update a Local Roadway Safety Plan identifying high-injury corridors and priority safety improvements.

Action CIR-1g: Monitor traffic volumes and safety conditions through monitored TDM's along major corridors and update improvement priorities as needed.

Goal CIR-2: Connected Active Transportation Network. A safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle network linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, commercial areas, and community destinations.

Policy CIR-2.1: Pedestrian Network. Develop and maintain a continuous pedestrian network that enhances walkability through safe and attractive pedestrian infrastructure.

Policy CIR-2.2: Bicycle Network. Expand high-quality bicycle infrastructure to support riders of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR-2.3: Safe Routes. Prioritize safe routes to schools and community facilities.

Action CIR-2c: Improve pedestrian crossings near schools, parks, and community facilities.

Action CIR-2d: Install bicycle parking, lighting, and wayfinding signage at major destinations.

Safety Element

Goal SAF-5: Emergency Preparedness And Response. A community that is well-prepared for emergency response and disaster management to mitigate impacts on all people, property, and the environment.

Policy SAF-5.3: Emergency Evacuation. Work with the French Camp Mckinley Fire District and San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office to define minimum standards for evacuation of residential areas, particularly in Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, and to maintain, update, and regularly exercise emergency access, protocols, and evacuation routes to assess their effectiveness under a range of emergency scenarios. If areas with inadequate evacuation routes are identified, develop appropriate mitigation measures, improvement plans, or education programs to ensure safe evacuation.

Action SAF-5c: Periodically review, maintain, and repair City roadways and emergency access routes, and provide signage, where necessary, to clearly identify emergency access routes.

Action SAF-5e: As part of the development review process, consult with the police and fire departments in order to ensure that the project provides adequate emergency access.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less Than Significant.

3.14.4 REFERENCES

California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Technical Advisory On Evaluating Transportation Impacts In CEQA, April 2018.

Mountain House CSD, Truck Route Map, February 2020. Available at https://www.mountainhouseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1054/Truck-Routes-PDF?bidId=. Accessed July 2026.

SJCOG, 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), August 25, 2022.

San Joaquin County, CEQA Transportation Analysis Guidelines, September 2020.

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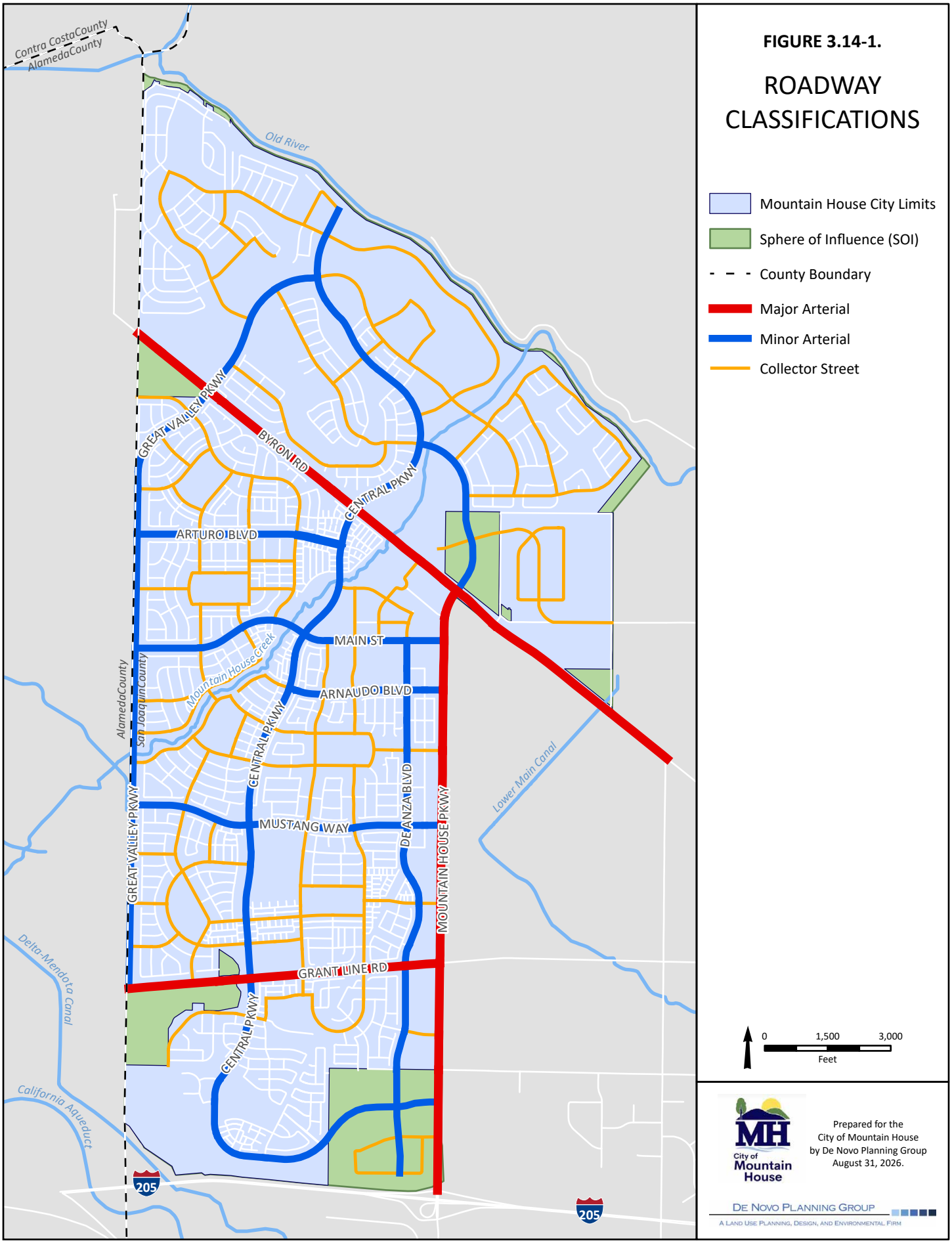

Sources: San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset; Mountain House Master Plan, May 2024.

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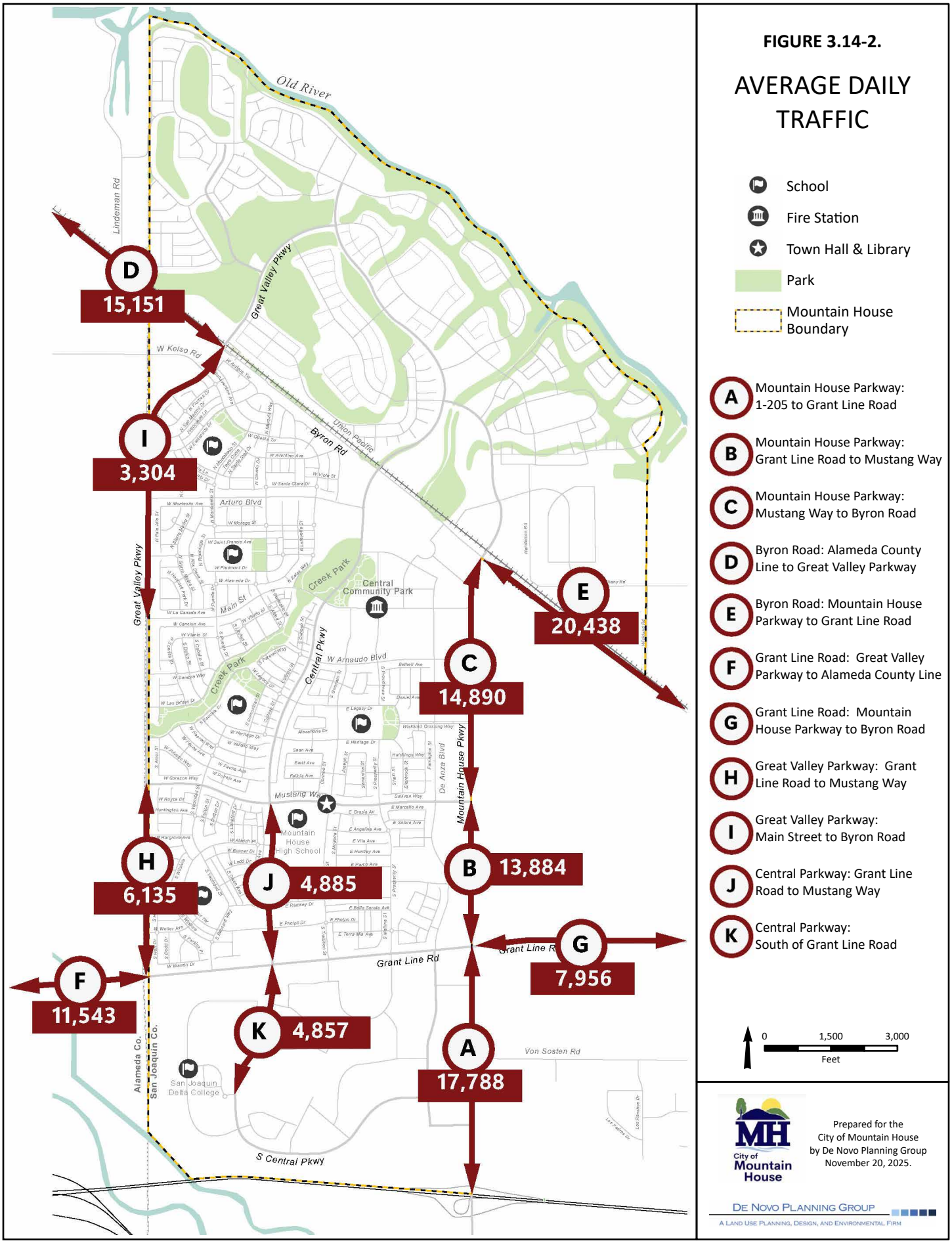
FIGURE 3.14-2.

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC



Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group November 20, 2025.

DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP
A LAND USE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FIRM

Source: Advanced Mobility Group

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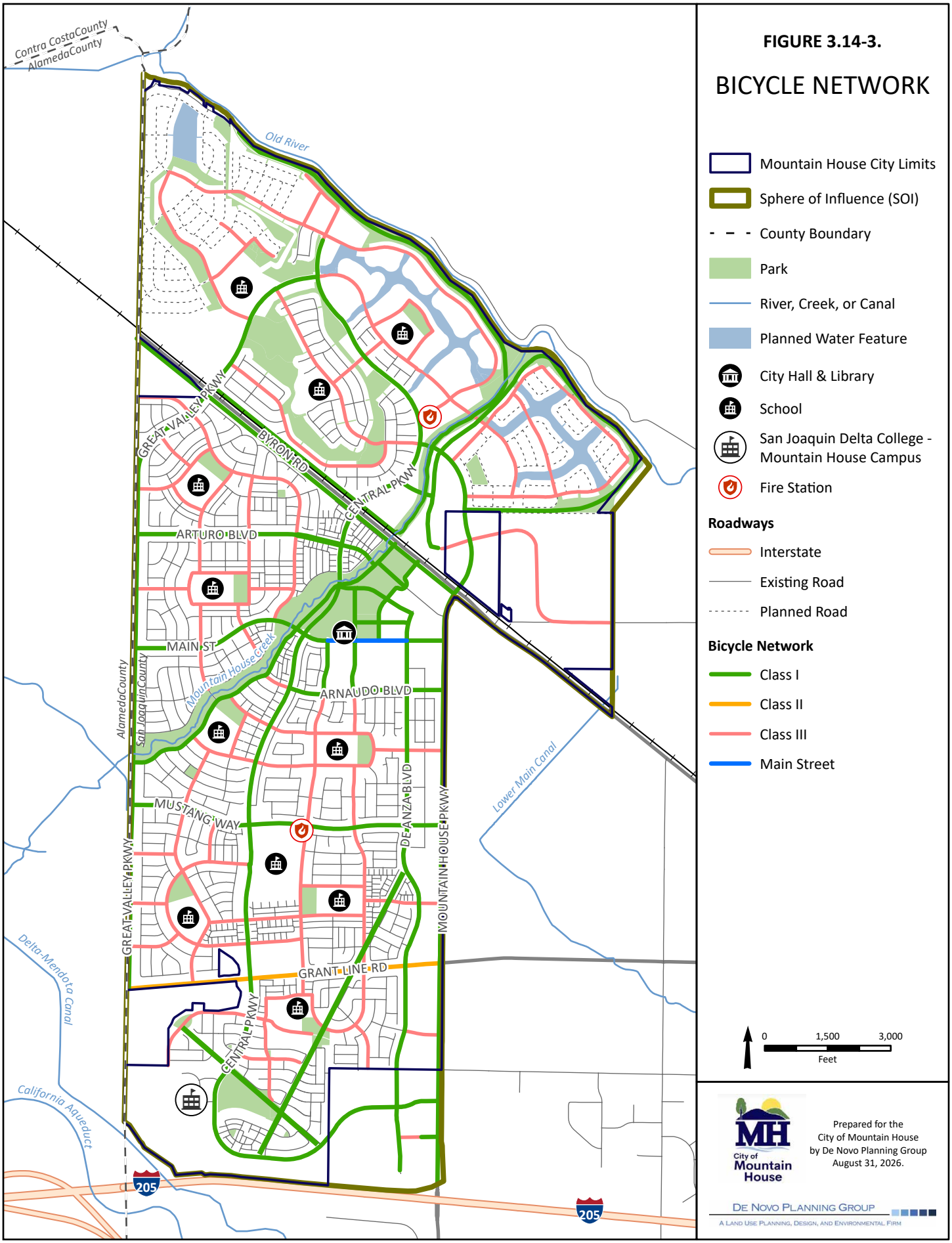

FIGURE 3.14-3.

BICYCLE NETWORK

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary
- Park
- River, Creek, or Canal
- Planned Water Feature
- City Hall & Library
- School
- San Joaquin Delta College - Mountain House Campus
- Fire Station

Roadways

- Interstate
- Existing Road
- Planned Road

Bicycle Network

- Class I
- Class II
- Class III
- Main Street

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
August 31, 2026.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset; AMG Advanced Mobility Group

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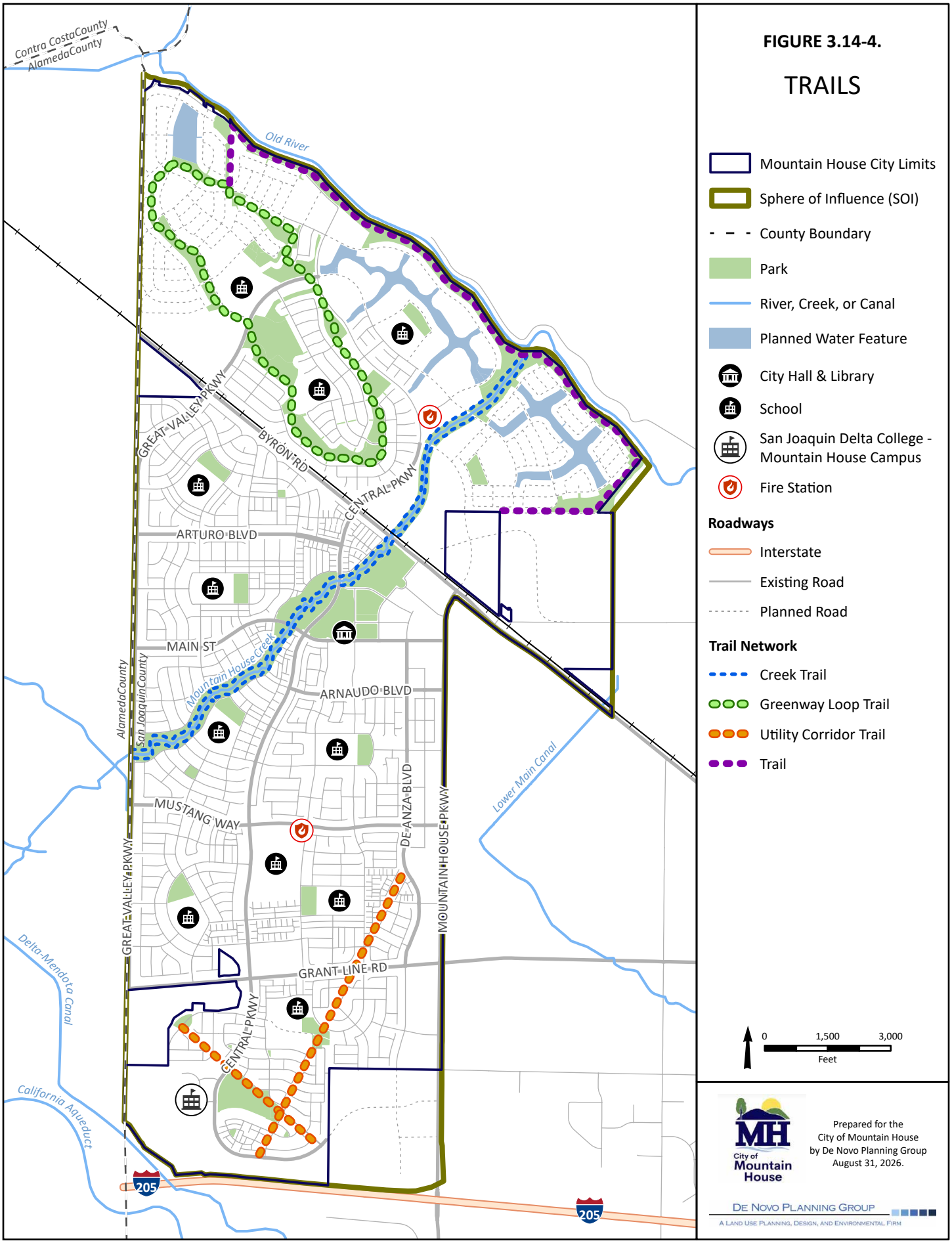

FIGURE 3.14-4.

TRAILS

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary
- Park
- River, Creek, or Canal
- Planned Water Feature
- City Hall & Library
- School
- San Joaquin Delta College - Mountain House Campus
- Fire Station

Roadways

- Interstate
- Existing Road
- Planned Road

Trail Network

- Creek Trail
- Greenway Loop Trail
- Utility Corridor Trail
- Trail

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
August 31, 2026.

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A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset; AMG Advanced Mobility Group

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Utilities are critical to providing safe drinking water, disposal and treatment of wastewater, stormwater drainage, and solid waste disposal. This section provides a background discussion of the utility systems in Mountain House including water, wastewater, stormwater, solid waste, and dry utilities (electric power, natural gas, and telecommunications). This section is organized with an existing setting, regulatory setting, and impact analysis.

One comment was received during the NOP comment period regarding this environmental topic; refer to Appendix A. The comment letter from Aldara Salinas of the San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department, dated May 19, 2026, recommends that projects under the General Plan provide written confirmation of adequate public sewer and water capacity prior to development.

3.15.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

WATER

KEY TERMS

Acre feet: The volume of one acre of water to a depth of one foot. Each acre-foot of water is equal to approximately 325,851.4 gallons.

GPD: Gallons per day.

Groundwater: Water that is underground and below the water table, as opposed to surface water, which flows across the ground surface. Water beneath the earth's surface fills the spaces in soil, gravel, or rock formations. Pockets of groundwater are often called "aquifers" and are the source of drinking water for a large percentage of the population in the United States. Groundwater is often extracted using wells which pump the water out of the ground and up to the surface. Groundwater is naturally replenished by surface water from precipitation, streams, and rivers when this recharge reaches the water table.

MG: Million gallons

MGD: Million gallons per day

Surface water: Water collected on the ground or from a stream, river, lake, wetland, or ocean. Surface water is replenished naturally through precipitation, but is lost naturally through evaporation and seepage into soil.

WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Water System

WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

The City is the water service provider for the Planning Area. The existing water distribution system includes distribution mains, treated water storage tanks and pump station located at the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) site, the Westside Booster Pump Station, and two College Park Storage Tanks and booster pump stations. The existing distribution system includes approximately 74 miles of pipelines ranging from 6 to 36 inches in diameter. Figure 3.15-1 shows the City's existing water facilities.

The City's current water supplies are purchased from the Byron Bethany Irrigation District (BBID). The BBID diversion to Mountain House is located approximately three miles northwest of the WTP. The WTP has a current treatment capacity of 15 MGD and is ultimately expected to be expanded to a capacity of approximately 18 MGD. Raw water is pumped to the WTP by BBID through a 30-inch diameter pipeline. The water is then treated, disinfected, and stored in four treated water storage tanks with 4.5 MG and 4.2 MG capacities at the water treatment plant and two 3.7 MG tanks at the College Park Booster Station.[1]

WATER SUPPLY

The City's water supply is derived from surface water purchased under an agreement from the BBID. Portion of lands included in Neighborhoods I, J, K, and L have a riparian right to use water from the Old River; however, the City does not currently divert under this water right. As shown in Table 3.15-1, total water demand in Mountain House in 2025 was 5,207 acre-feet (AF). A Riparian Rights Agency Agreement has been formed and an agreement to use this water is underway.

TABLE 3.15-1: EXISTING AND PROJECTED WATER SUPPLIES

Water Supply	2025 Actual Volume (AF)
Purchased or Imported Water from BBID	5,207

SOURCE: BLACK WATER CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC., CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE 2025 URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN, AUGUST 2026.

WATER SERVICE RELIABILITY

As shown in Table 3.15-2, the City's normal year water supplies are adequate to meet projected demands through 2045. It is anticipated that the City will solely purchase water from BBID until 2040, at which time the City anticipates supplementing its water supply with approximately 2,570 AFY from the beneficial use riparian water on properties adjacent to Old River.

[1] City of Mountain House, personal communication, Karen Morgan, September 15, 2026.

TABLE 3.15-2: NORMAL YEAR SUPPLY AND DEMAND COMPARISON

	2030	2035	2040	2045
Supply totals	9,813	9,813	12,383	12,383
Demand totals	5,764	6,381	7,063	7,063
Difference	**4,049**	**3,432**	**5,320**	**5,320**

SOURCE: BLACK WATER CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC., CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE 2025 URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN, AUGUST 2026.
NOTES: VOLUMES ARE IN AF

As shown in Table 3.15-3, the 2025 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) determined that the City's single-dry year supplies are insufficient to fully meet projected single-dry year demands through the year 2045. To address anticipated supply shortfalls during single-dry year conditions, the City may implement one or more water shortage response actions, including declaration of a water shortage stage (refer to Section 3.15.2, Regulatory Setting, for description). Additionally, BBID and the City are investigating additional supply and water management options, such as increased storage capacity, recycled water development, and emergency interties, to improve drought resilience.

TABLE 3.15-3: SINGLE DRY YEAR SUPPLY AND DEMAND COMPARISON

	2030	2035	2040	2045
Supply totals	1,647	1,647	4,217	4,217
Demand totals	5,764	6,381	7,063	7,063
Difference	**-4,117**	**-4,734**	**-2,846**	**-2,846**

SOURCE: BLACK WATER CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC., CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE 2025 URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN, AUGUST 2026.
NOTES: VOLUMES ARE IN AF.

As shown in Table 3.15-4, the City's multiple dry year supplies are sufficient to meet projected demands through 2045, with the exception of the fourth year of each five-year drought. Similar to the single-dry year plans, the City may implement one or more water shortage response actions, including declaration of a water shortage stage.

TABLE 3.15-4: MULTIPLE DRY YEARS SUPPLY AND DEMAND COMPARISON

		2030	2035	2040	2045
First Year	Supply totals	9,813	9,813	12,383	12,383
	Demand totals	5,764	6,381	7,063	7,063
	Difference	**4,049**	**3,432**	**5,320**	**5,320**
Second Year	Supply totals	9,813	9,813	12,383	12,383
	Demand totals	5,764	6,381	7,063	7,063
	Difference	**4,049**	**3,432**	**5,320**	**5,320**
Third Year	Supply totals	9,813	9,813	12,383	12,383

	Demand totals	5,764	6,381	7,063	7,063
	Difference	**4,049**	**3,432**	**5,320**	**5,320**
Fourth Year	Supply totals	1,647	1,647	4,217	4,217
	Demand totals	5,764	6,381	7,063	7,063
	Difference	**-4,117**	**-4,734**	**-2,846**	**-2,846**
Fifth Year	Supply totals	9,813	9,813	12,383	12,383
	Demand totals	5,764	6,381	7,063	7,063
	Difference	**4,049**	**3,432**	**5,320**	**5,320**

SOURCE: BLACK WATER CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC., CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE 2025 URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN, AUGUST 2026.
NOTES: VOLUMES ARE IN AF.

Water Supply Diversification Projects

To improve water supply reliability into the future, the City is pursuing several water supply diversification projects. These projects are at varying stages of development, and their timing and yields depend on future agreements, regulatory approvals, and technical studies.

Aquifer Storage and Recovery: An Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) system injects treated water into an aquifer during periods of lower demand and extracts it during periods of higher demand or supply constraint. The City intends the ASR system to serve primarily as an emergency potable water supply. The City's storage goal is 3,200 AF, with up to three ASR wells; the first well is anticipated in late 2028. Test bores and monitoring wells are complete, and the results will be documented in an ASR Feasibility Study expected in early 2027. Construction of production facilities would return to the City Council for consideration after predesign, environmental review, and confirmation of aquifer performance. Injection and recovery activities would be subject to permitting by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and other applicable agencies.

Raw Water Storage: Mountain House Developers is designing approximately 30 AF (9.8 MG) of raw water storage at the WTP to support emergency operations during supply interruptions. Construction is anticipated in 2028.

Riparian Water: As described above, portions of Neighborhoods I, J, K, and L hold riparian rights to divert water from Old River, which the Mountain House Master Plan reserves for project use. The City is negotiating an agreement with the Mountain House Mutual Water Company under which the City would serve as exclusive agent for exercising these rights. The agreement is anticipated in 2027 and would provide approximately 1,288 AFY.

Emergency Water Supply: The City is negotiating a ten-year emergency water supply agreement that would provide a minimum of 1,500 AFY, with up to 2,250 AF available in a calendar year. The agreement is anticipated in 2026–2027.

Wastewater Change Petition: The City is seeking SWRCB authorization to reuse treated effluent from the Mountain House Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). Under one option, effluent would

remain instream for re-diversion at the BBID diversion and delivery to the WTP. This source could provide approximately 2,000 AFY under current conditions and up to 6,049 AFY at buildout. Authorization is anticipated in 2028–2030.

Escalon Raw Water: The City is evaluating a ten-year lease of approximately 1,100 AFY of unused raw water from the City of Escalon. The water would remain in the Stanislaus River for conveyance toward the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta and diversion at the BBID diversion. The lease is anticipated in 2027–2029, subject to coordination with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR).

Sites Reservoir: The City is on the waitlist to participate in Sites Reservoir, which is anticipated to be operational in approximately 2035–2036. The City is also exploring a separate water purchase agreement with Colusa County. The volume available to the City and the conveyance arrangements are still being determined.

WASTEWATER

This section describes the City's wastewater infrastructure, wastewater flows, treatment plant permit requirements, and previous infrastructure planning. Figure 3.15-2 shows the existing sewer system within the Planning Area. Wastewater service is provided by the City via their network of collection infrastructure and the Mountain House Wastewater Treatment Plan (WWTP).

KEY TERMS

ADWF: Average Dry Weather Flow.

Effluent: Effluent is an outflowing of water from a natural body of water, or from a man-made structure. Effluent in the man-made sense is generally considered to be water pollution, such as the outflow from a sewage treatment facility or the wastewater discharge from industrial facilities. In the context of waste water treatment plants, effluent that has been treated is sometimes called secondary effluent, or treated effluent.

NPDES: Water pollution degrades surface waters making them unsafe for drinking, fishing, swimming, and other activities. As authorized by the Clean Water Act, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program controls water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. Point sources are discrete conveyances such as pipes or man-made ditches. Individual homes that are connected to a municipal system, use a septic system, or do not have a surface discharge do not need an NPDES permit; however, industrial, municipal, and other facilities must obtain permits if their discharges go directly to surface waters.

WWTP: Wastewater treatment plant. Treatment of wastewater may include the following processes: screening to remove large waste items; grit removal to allow sand, gravel, and sediment to settle out; primary sedimentation where sludge can settle out of the wastewater; secondary treatment to substantially degrade the biological content of the sewage; tertiary treatment to raise the quality of the effluent before it is discharged; and, discharge.

SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Wastewater Collection System

The City of Mountain House provides wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal systems for the entire community. Mountain House can be divided into two areas: the area South of Byron Road (SOBR) and the area North of Byron Road (NOBR).[2]

The area SOBR is served by gravity sewer and generally flows northeast toward the WWTP. The primary trunk main is in DeAnza Boulevard and flows north through the Town Center. Neighborhoods west of Central Parkway are conveyed up Central Parkway and route down Main Street before connecting to the DeAnza Blvd trunk main. Neighborhoods G and H route to Byron Road before converging with the remainder of the SOBR flows.

Since the NOBR area sits below the elevation of the WWTP, the combined use of gravity mains, force mains, and four pump/lift stations are required to service the area. The area NOBR is currently in the process of being constructed. Utilities have been installed in Central Parkway and Great Valley Parkway, Neighborhood J, and parts of Neighborhoods K and I. In addition, the Old River sanitary sewer pump station has been constructed.

The existing sewer trunk collection system begins with 8-inch pipes SOBR and increases in size heading north. Once the SOBR and NOBR systems merge, the pipe widens to 36 inches as it heads to the WWTP.

Wastewater Treatment Capacity

The WWTP facilities were originally constructed in 2004 with a design capacity of 3.0 million gallons per day (MGD).[3] The WWTP was expanded to 4.0 MGD average dry weather flow (ADWF) capacity as part of Phase III improvements completed in 2024 and is expandable to 5.4 MGD as necessary by adding additional membrane.[4] The WWTP discharges to Old River under NPDES Permit R5-2023-0033-01 (as amended by Order R5-2025-0050), which authorizes an ADWF of up to 5.4 MGD.[5] Mountain House currently discharges all its treated wastewater effluent to Old River. According to the 2025 UWMP, the WWTP treated approximately 1.71 MGD (1,916 AFY) in 2025, of which approximately 1.65 MGD (1,843 AFY) was received from the City.[6]

As part of the City's 2022 Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (SSMP) Update, daily measured WWTP influent flows were reviewed from 2014 through 2021 to develop per capita wastewater generation rates.[7]

[2] Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc, Mountain House Sanitary Sewer Master Plan Update, November 2022.
[3] Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc, Mountain House Sanitary Sewer Master Plan Update, November 2022.
[4] City of Mountain House, Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Plan 2025 Update, April 18, 2025.
[5] Black Water Consulting Engineers, Inc., City of Mountain House 2025 Urban Water Management Plan Draft, May 2026.
[6] The difference between the two numbers is due to the City's WWTP receiving additional water to treat from outside the City's service area.
[7] Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc, Mountain House Sanitary Sewer Master Plan Update, November 2022.

The calculated ADWFs and per capita ADWFs are presented in Table 3.15-5 in units of MGD and gallons per day per capita (GPDPC).

TABLE 3.15-5: RECENT WWTP INFLUENT ADWFS AND PER CAPITA ADWFS

Year	Estimated Population[1]	Total ADWF, MGD	Per Capita ADWF, GPDPC
2014	14,540	0.63	43
2015	15,469	0.62	40
2016	16,498	0.68	41
2017	17,602	0.81	46
2018	19,114	0.86	45
2019	21,604	0.91	42
2020	24,700	1.10	44

SOURCE: CARLSON, BARBEE & GIBSON, INC, MOUNTAIN HOUSE SANITARY SEWER MASTER PLAN UPDATE, NOVEMBER 2022.
NOTES: MGD = MILLION GALLONS PER DAY, GPCD = GALLONS PER DAY PER CAPITA
1. ESTIMATES PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE.

The results show per capita average flows to be between 40 and 46 GPDPC. Because these estimated values were found to be lower than typical per capita values, the SSMP uses a per capita flow of 50 GPDPC for residential uses, which the study concluded is a more appropriate value for the community. The SSMP also includes per acreage and per student wastewater generation rates for each of the non-residential land use categories. The 2022 SSMP used these wastewater generation rates to project wastewater flows for future buildout consistent with the Mountain House Master Plan. The SSMP estimates that buildout under the Master Plan would result in average daily sewer demand of approximately 4.32 MGD (4,320,000 GPD). The SSMP concludes that the WWTP would accommodate future buildout of the Master Plan. Further, while most of the City's wastewater pipes are sufficiently sized to handle contributing flows, the SSMP identifies two sections of installed gravity main in Central Parkway (from Great Valley Parkway and to the west) that will need to be upsized to accommodate projected future buildout under the Master Plan.

STORMWATER

The information in this section focuses on the potential for the General Plan to result in the demand for new or expanded stormwater drainage facilities. Section 3.9 (Hydrology) of this EIR includes an expanded analysis of water quality, flooding, and other stormwater related issues.

STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEM

The City of Mountain House maintains a gravity-based stormwater system consisting of street inlets, carbon filters located at the inlets, water quality storage ponds and treatment basins, an engineered Mountain House Creek (for further treatment), culverts, inlets, and approximately 78.14 miles of lines.[8] These detention basins and other stormwater best management practices (BMPs) provide

[8] City of Mountain House, Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Plan 2025 Update, April 18, 2025.

treatment by capturing and detaining stormwater runoff, controlling erosion, removing pollutants, and providing water quality treatment through sedimentation, absorption, filtration, and biological uptake before runoff is released to Mountain House Creek and ultimately Old River.[9]

The Mountain House Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) serves as a comprehensive regulatory framework designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants from the municipal storm sewer system into local water bodies. Developed to satisfy Federal Clean Water Act requirements under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), the plan outlines six minimum control measures: Public Education and Outreach; Public Involvement; Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination; Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control; Post-Construction Storm Water Management for New Development and Redevelopment; Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations. By establishing specific BMPs and measurable goals for both developers and city operations, the SWMP ensures that the City remains in compliance with State and federal water quality standards while mitigating the environmental impacts of urban runoff.

SOLID WASTE

KEY TERMS

Class I landfill: A landfill that accepts for disposal 20 tons or more of municipal solid waste daily (based on an annual average); or one that does not qualify as a Class II or Class III municipal solid waste landfill.

Class II landfill: A landfill that (1) accepts less than 20 tons daily of municipal solid waste (based on an annual average); (2) is located on a site where there is no evidence of groundwater pollution caused or contributed by the landfill; (3) is not connected by road to a Class I municipal solid waste landfill, or, if connected by road, is located more than 50 miles from a Class I municipal solid waste landfill; and (4) serves a community that experiences (for at least three months each year) an interruption in access to surface transportation, preventing access to a Class I landfill, or a community with no practicable waste management alternative.

Class III landfill: A landfill that is not connected by road to a Class I landfill or a landfill that is located at least 50 miles from a Class I landfill. Class III landfills can accept no more than an average of one ton daily of ash from incinerated municipal solid waste or less than five tons daily of municipal solid waste.

Transfer station: A facility for the temporary deposition of some wastes. Transfer stations are often used as places where local waste collection vehicles will deposit their waste cargo prior to loading into larger vehicles. These larger vehicles will transport the waste to the end point of disposal or treatment.

[9] Jacobs Carter Burgess. Mountain House Storm Water Management Program. August 2008. Available at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/swmp/mhcsd_swmp.pdf. Accessed May 6, 2026.

WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES

The City of Mountain House contracts with Tracy Delta Solid Waste Management Inc. (dba West Valley Disposal) to provide refuse collection and disposal services for residential and commercial collection. Services include scheduled curbside pickup, debris box rentals for cleanup or construction, and special handling for electronic waste. Residential services include waste, recycling, and organics collection. Weekly and bi-weekly pickup service and a variety of container options are offered to Mountain House residents and businesses. All collected waste is taken to the Tracy Material Recovery Facility and Transfer Station, which is 13 miles away from the City.[10] Large recyclables are separated, and the residual waste is transported to landfills, including the Foothill Sanitary Landfill.

SOLID WASTE GENERATION

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill (AB) 939), requires each city or county's source reduction and recycling element to include an implementation schedule showing that a city or county must divert 50 percent of solid waste from landfill disposal or transformation on and after January 1, 2000. Senate Bill (SB) 1016, passed in 2008, required the 50 percent diversion requirement to be calculated in a per capita disposal rate equivalent. AB 341, passed in 2012, requires that California increase its diversion rate to 75 percent by 2020.

The California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) tracks and monitors solid waste disposal at each destination disposal facility by quarter or report year, summed in tons. Solid waste disposed of in the City of Mountain House in 2025 is shown in Table 3.15-6 below.

TABLE 3.15-6: SOLID WASTE GENERATION FOR THE CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE IN 2025

Disposal Facility	Landfill Disposal (Tons)	Percent
Stanislaus County Fink Road Landfill	159.85	1.7%
North County Recycling Center & Sanitary Landfill	22.25	0.2%
Potrero Hills Landfill, Inc.	4.18	<0.1%
Foothill Sanitary Landfill	8,764.56	95.1%
Kirby Canyon Recycling & Disposal Facility	266.01	2.9%
Total	**9,216.85**	100%

SOURCE: CALRECYCLE, RDRS REPORT 2: JURISDICTION DISPOSAL AND BENEFICIAL REUSE BY DESTINATION, MOUNTAIN HOUSE, 2025. AVAILABLE AT: HTTPS://WWW2.CALRECYCLE.CA.GOV/RECYCLINGDISPOSALREPORTING/REPORTS/JURISDICTIONDISPOSALANDBENEFICIAL. ACCESSED JUNE 10, 2026.

Since the City of Mountain House is a newly incorporated city, solid waste generation data prior to 2025 was collected at the unincorporated County level. As shown in Table 3.15-7, San Joaquin County's per capita disposal rates have consistently satisfied the target rate established by CalRecycle of 8.8 pounds per person per day for residents and 24.6 pounds per person per day for

[10] West Valley Disposal, Tracy Material Recovery and Transfer Station, n.d. Available at: https://www.westvalleydisposal.com/material-recovery.shtml. Accessed May 15, 2026.

employees. The per capita disposal rate is used as one of several factors that CalRecycle considers in determining a jurisdiction's compliance with the intent of AB 939. It allows CalRecycle and jurisdictions to focus on successful implementation of diversion programs. CalRecycle data also shows that the San Joaquin County has increased landfill diversion programs for solid waste, from 29 diversion programs in 2008 to 50 in 2024.[11]

TABLE 3.15-7: SOLID WASTE GENERATION RATES IN SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY (UNINCORPORATED).

Year	Waste Generation Rate (pounds/person/day)		Landfill Total Disposal Tonnage (tons/year)
	Per Resident	Per Employee	
2018	6.60	18.10	192,765.66
2019	6.10	16.30	182,536.02
2020	5.60	14.30	161,183.97
2021	6.20	16.20	182,267.51
2022	6.90	17.60	200,809.04
2023	6.90	17.60	202,623.94
2024	6.50	16.50	190,836.37
Cal Recycle Target Rate	<8.8	<24.6	-

SOURCE: CALRECYCLE, JURISDICTION PER CAPITA DISPOSAL RATE TRENDS (POST 2006), SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY – UNINCORPORATED, 2018-2024. AVAILABLE AT: HTTPS://WWW2.CALRECYCLE.CA.GOV/LGCENTRAL/ANNUALREPORTING/REVIEWREPORTS. ACCESSED JUNE 12, 2026.
CALRECYCLE, JURISDICTION DIVERSION/DISPOSAL RATE SUMMARY, SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY – UNINCORPORATED, 2007-2024. AVAILABLE AT: HTTPS://WWW2.CALRECYCLE.CA.GOV/LGCENTRAL/DIVERSIONPROGRAM/JURISDICTIONDIVERSIONPOST2006. ACCESSED JUNE 12, 2026.

Waste Disposal Facilities

In 2025, the City of Mountain House disposed a total of 9,216.85 tons of solid waste. The majority of waste was disposed at the Foothill Sanitary Landfill (8,764.56 tons, or approximately, 95 percent of the total waste generated in the Planning Area). Other landfills that received a relatively small amount of waste from the Planning Area in 2025 include:

- Kirby Canyon Recycling & Disposal Facility (2.89 percent of total City waste)
- Stanislaus County Fink Road Landfill (1.73 percent of total City waste)

FOOTHILL SANITARY LANDFILL

The Foothill Sanitary Landfill is a Class III landfill in Linden, California. The landfill features 800 acres with 674 acres for waste disposal. The Foothill Sanitary Landfill has a projected capacity to serve

[11] California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle*). Jurisdiction Diversion/Disposal Rate Summary*. Available at: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/DiversionProgram/JurisdictionDiversionPost2006. Accessed March 2025.

residents and businesses until approximately 2082. The landfill has a daily permitted maximum of 1,500 tons per day (TPD) and a remaining capacity of 125,000,000 cubic yards as of 2010.

KIRBY CANYON RECYCLING & DISPOSAL FACILITY

The Kirby Canyon Recycling & Disposal Facility is a Class III landfill located in San Jose, California. The landfill features 743 acres, with 311 acres for waste disposal. The facility has a projected capacity to serve residents and businesses until approximately 2059. Kirby Canyon Recycling & Disposal Facility has a daily permitted maximum of 2,600 TPD and a remaining capacity of 10,400,000 cubic yards as of 2025.

STANISLAUS COUNTY FINK ROAD LANDFILL

The Fink Road Landfill is a Class II/III solid waste landfill located in Crows Landing, California. The landfill features 202.5 total acres, with 150.1 acres for waste disposal. The Fink Road Landfill has a projected capacity to serve residents and businesses until approximately 2050. The landfill has a daily permitted maximum of 2,400 TPD and a remaining capacity of 18,993,322 cubic yards as of 2019.

Hazardous Waste Disposal

Household hazardous waste (HHW) is any hazardous waste generated incidental to owning or maintaining a residence, including paints, solvents, varnishes, acids, flammables, acrylics, and resins. Electronic waste, such as televisions, tablets, cell phones and computers, can also be taken to a HHW collection center. San Joaquin County's Permanent Household Hazardous Waste Consolidation Facility is located on a two-acre parcel at 7850 R.A. Bridgeford Street, Stockton, California, adjacent to the Air Metro Business Park at the Stockton Metropolitan Airport. The facility handles approximately 6,000 residents and businesses annually. The facility is open to the public four days per week, Thursday through Sunday, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., excluding major holidays. West Valley Disposal also holds an annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event once per year in Tracy, California at the Tracy Municipal Airport.

ELECTRICITY, NATURAL GAS, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The infrastructure to deliver electricity and natural gas service throughout the Planning Area is currently in place and can generally provide these services to new development on request.

ELECTRIC POWER

Electricity service in the Planning Area is provided by the Modesto Irrigation District (MID). The MID provides services to the greater Modesto area (north of the Tuolumne River, Waterford, Salida, Mountain House, and parts of Ripon, Escalon, Oakdale, and Riverbank. Electricity is distributed to more than 1,800 miles of power lines throughout their 560-square-mile service area.[12]

[12] Modesto Irrigation District, Power Resources, n.d. Available at: https://www.mid.org/power/power-resources/. Accessed May 7, 2026.

NATURAL GAS

The Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) provides natural gas services for the Planning Area. PG&E provides natural gas and electric services to approximately 16 million people throughout a 70,000-square-mile service area in northern and central California.[13]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The Planning Area is served by multiple telecommunications providers. Telecommunication providers serving the Planning Area include, but not limited to, AT&T Fiber, Xfinity, EarthLink, T-Mobile, Verizon, Spectrum, Starlink, and Viasat.[14]

3.15.2 REGULATORY SETTING

WATER

Federal

FEDERAL SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT OF 1974

The Safe Drinking Water Act authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to set national health-based standards for drinking water to protect against both naturally-occurring and man-made contaminants that may be found in drinking water. The USEPA, states, and public water systems (or agencies) then work together to make sure that these standards are met. Originally, Safe Drinking Water Act focused primarily on treatment as the means of providing safe drinking water at the tap. The 1996 amendments greatly enhanced the existing law by recognizing source water protection, operator training, funding for water system improvements, and public information as important components of safe drinking water. This approach ensures the quality of drinking water by protecting it from source to tap. The Safe Drinking Water Act applies to every public water system in the United States.

State

STATE OF CALIFORNIA WATER RECYCLING ACT

Enacted in 1991, the Water Recycling Act established water recycling as a State priority. The Water Recycling Act encourages municipal wastewater treatment districts to implement recycling programs to reduce local water demands.

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 22, DIVISION 4, CHAPTER 3 WATER RECYCLING CRITERIA

California regulates the wastewater treatment process and use of recycled water pursuant to California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 22, Division 4, Chapter 3, Water Recycling Criteria.

[13] PG&E, Company Profile, n.d. Available at: https://www.pge.com/en/about/company-information/company-profile.html. Accessed May 7, 2026.

[14] Broadbandnow, Internet Providers in Mountain House, CA, n.d. Available at: https://broadbandnow.com/California/Mountain-House. Accessed May 7, 2026.

According to these regulations, recycled water to be used for irrigation of public areas must be filtered and disinfected to tertiary standards.

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 22, CHAPTER 15, ARTICLE 20, CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT

California requires all public water systems to prepare a Consumer Confidence Report for distribution to its customers and to the Department of Health Services. The Consumer Confidence Report provides information regarding the quality of potable water provided by the water system. It includes information on the sources of the water, any detected contaminants in the water, the maximum contaminants levels set by regulation, violations and actions taken to correct them, and opportunities for public participation in decisions that may affect the quality of the water provided.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

The State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water, oversees the Drinking Water Program. The Drinking Water Program regulates public water systems and certifies drinking water treatment and distribution operators. It provides support for small water systems and for improving their technical, managerial, and financial capacity. It provides subsidized funding for water system improvements under the State Revolving Fund (SRF) and Proposition 50 programs. The Drinking Water Program also oversees water recycling projects, permits water treatment devices, supports and promotes water system security, and oversees the Drinking Water Treatment and Research Fund for MTBE and other oxygenates.

CALIFORNIA URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLANNING ACT

The California Urban Water Management Planning Act (California Water Code [CWC] Division 6, Part 2.6, Sections 10610-10656) addresses several State policies regarding water conservation and the development of water management plans to ensure the efficient use of available supplies. The California Urban Water Management Planning Act also requires water suppliers to prepare an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) every five years to identify short-term and long-term water demand management measures to meet growing water demands during normal, dry, and multiple-dry years. Specifically, municipal water suppliers that serve more than 3,000 customers or provide more than 3,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) of water must adopt a UWMP.

SENATE BILL 610 AND ASSEMBLY BILL 901

The California State Legislature passed SB 610 and AB 901 in 2001. Both measures modified the Urban Water Management Planning Act.

SB 610 requires additional information in a UWMP if groundwater is identified as a source of water available to an urban water supplier. It also requires that the UWMP include a description of all water supply projects and programs that may be undertaken to meet total projected water use. SB 610 requires a city or county that determines a project is subject to CEQA to identify any public water system that may supply water to a project and to request identified public water systems to prepare a specified water supply assessment. The assessment must include, among other information, an identification of existing water supply entitlements, water rights, or water service

contracts relevant to the identified water supply for the proposed project, and water received in prior years pursuant to these entitlements, rights, and contracts.

AB 901 requires a UWMP to include information, to the extent practicable, relating to the quality of existing sources of water available to an urban water supplier over given time periods. AB 901 also requires information on the manner in which water quality affects water management strategies and supply reliability. AB 901 requires a plan to describe plans to supplement a water source that may not be available at a consistent level of use, to the extent practicable, and requiring additional findings and declarations relating to water quality.

SENATE BILL 221

SB 221 includes additional measures to Government Code Section 66455.3, requiring that the local water agency be sent a copy of any proposed residential subdivision of more than 500 dwelling units within five days of the subdivision application being accepted as complete for processing by the city or county. It also includes additional measures Government Code Section 66473.7, establishing detailed requirements for establishing whether a "sufficient water supply" exists to support any proposed residential subdivisions of more than 500 dwellings, including any such subdivision involving a development agreement. When approving a qualifying subdivision tentative map, the city or county must include a condition requiring availability of a sufficient water supply. The applicable public water system must provide proof of availability. If there is no public water system, the city or county must undertake the analysis described in Government Code Section 66473.7. The analysis must include consideration of effects on other users of water and groundwater.

WATER EFFICIENCY STANDARDS

The California Plumbing Code (Part 5 of CCR Title 24) promotes water conservation. In addition, a number of California laws listed below require water-efficient plumbing fixtures in structures:

- CCR Title 20 Section 1604(g) establishes efficiency standards that give the maximum flow rate of all new showerheads, lavatory faucets, sink faucets, and tub spout diverters.
- CCR Title 20 Section 1606 prohibits the sale of fixtures that do not comply with established efficiency regulations.
- CCR Title 24 Sections 25352(i) and (j) address pipe insulation requirements, which can reduce water used before hot water reaches equipment or fixtures. Insulation of water-heating systems is also required.
- Health and Safety Code Section 17921.3 requires low-flush toilets and urinals in virtually all buildings.

CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS CODE

The California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code sets standards for new buildings and development projects with the purpose of improving public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impact or positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable

construction practices in several categories, including a requirement for covered projects to divert at least 65 percent of non-hazardous construction and demolition (C&D) debris. The latest version of CALGreen is the 2025 CALGreen Code, which became effective on January 1, 2026. Between 2010 and 2025, continuous updates and additions have been made to CALGreen, including water conservation and recycling, electric vehicle infrastructure and charging, and changes intended to eliminate conflicts with the California Energy Code, which is Part 6 of Title 24.

Local

BYRON BETHANY IRRIGATION DISTRICT (BBID)

The Byron Bethany Irrigation District (BBID) is a multi-county special district that serves parts of the Alameda, Conta Costa, and San Joaquin counties. The district serves more than 20,000 residents of the Mountain House community and Tracy Hills. The BBID became a public district in December 1919. It was first formed in 1914 as a private company called the Byron-Bethany Irrigation Company.

The BBID diverts water for Mountain House from an intake on the California Aqueduct, located between Clifton Court Forebay and the State Water Project's Harvey O. Banks Pumping Plant. This water is delivered to the City through a dedicated pump station and transmission pipeline and is provided on a wholesale basis.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE 2025 URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN (UWMP) AND WATER SHORTAGE CONTINGENCY PLAN (WSCP)

The purpose of the Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) is to provide a planning tool for Mountain House to develop, manage, and deliver municipal water supplies to its water service area. UWMPs help water suppliers assess the availability of their water supplies with the current and projected water use to help ensure reliable water service under various conditions. The Urban Water Management Planning Act requires larger water suppliers that provide water to urban users to develop UWMPs every five years. The 2025 UWMP assesses the availability of supplies to meet forecast water uses during various hydrologic conditions (i.e., normal year, single dry year, and five consecutive dry years) through 2045.

As part of the 2025 UWMP, the City also prepared a Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) pursuant to California Water Code Section 10632. The WSCP establishes a comprehensive, actionable framework for evaluating water supply reliability and implementing response actions during varying levels of water shortage. While the WSCP is submitted as part of the 2025 UWMP, it is structured as a stand-alone document that may be updated or amended independently, as needed, without requiring amendment of the UWMP itself.

The WSCP establishes six water shortage levels, corresponding to supply shortages of up to 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 percent and greater than 50 percent, and requires the City to conduct an Annual Water Supply and Demand Assessment to determine whether a shortage level should be declared. Response actions escalate with each level. Demand reduction actions range from time-of-day irrigation restrictions and leak repair requirements at Level 1, to 3-day and 2-day watering schedules and limits on decorative water features at Levels 3 and 4, to a prohibition on all landscape irrigation at Level 6. The WSCP estimates that demand reduction actions at each level would reduce water use

by approximately 22 gallons per capita per day. At Levels 3 through 6, the City may also purchase supplemental water from other agencies to close any remaining gap between supply and demand.

POTABLE WATER SYSTEM MASTER PLAN

The 2020 Potable Water System Master Plan (PWSMP) Update documents the most recent information regarding the existing and planned water system infrastructure for the City. The PWSMP includes water system hydraulic computer model analyses to identify any existing water system deficiencies and to determine the water infrastructure needs at buildout of the Mountain House Master Plan.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE MUNICIPAL CODE

Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 4, *Public Works Tax*, provides for a special tax to fund the capital and operating costs of providing public works services, including, but not limited to, water services.

Title 5, Division 3, Chapter 1, *Water Services Regulations and Standards*, provides an overview of the Mountain House water system and its regulations, such as maintenance, violations, fees, etc.

Title 5, Division 3, Chapter 2, *Water Conservation*, includes restrictions on exterior irrigation during certain hours of the day and times in the year. Violations related to water conservation are detailed in this section as well.

Title 5, Division 3, Chapter 3, *Water Shortage Emergencies*, gives detailed guidelines regarding the stages of a water shortage emergency and what is prohibited at each stage.

Title 9, Division 11, *Infrastructure Standards and Requirements*, contains standards and requirements related to infrastructure, which are intended to ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure for new uses of property, expansion of existing uses, and replacement of previous uses of property.

WASTEWATER

Federal

FEDERAL CLEAN WATER ACT (33 USC SECTIONS 1251, ET SEQ.)

The Clean Water Act's (CWA) primary goals are to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters and to make all surface waters fishable and swimmable. The CWA forms the basic national framework for the management of water quality and the control of pollution discharges; it provides the legal framework for several water quality regulations, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), effluent limitations, water quality standards, pretreatment standards, antidegradation policy, nonpoint-source discharge programs, and wetlands protection. The USEPA has delegated the responsibility for administration of CWA portions to state and regional agencies. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) administers the NPDES permitting program and is responsible for developing NPDES permitting requirements. The SWRCB works in coordination with the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) to preserve, protect, enhance, and restore water quality.

State

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD/REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

In California, all wastewater treatment and disposal systems fall under the overall regulatory authority of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs), who are charged with the responsibility of protecting beneficial uses of State waters (ground and surface) from a variety of waste discharges, including wastewater from individual and municipal systems. The City of Mountain House falls within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 5).

The RWQCB's regulatory role often involves the formation and implementation of basic water protection policies. These are reflected in the individual RWQCB's Basin Plan, generally in the form of guidelines, criteria and/or prohibitions related to the siting, design, construction, and maintenance of on-site sewage disposal systems. The RWQCB's role has historically been one of providing overall direction, organizational and technical assistance, and a communications link to the State legislature.

The RWQCBs may waive or delegate regulatory authority for on-site sewage disposal systems to counties, cities or special districts. Although not mandatory, it is commonly done and has proven to be administratively efficient. In some cases, this is accomplished through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), whereby the local agency commits to enforcing the Basin Plan requirements or other specified standards that may be more restrictive. The RWQCBs generally elect to retain permitting authority over large and/or commercial or industrial on-site sewage disposal systems, depending on the volume and character of the wastewater.

PORTER-COLOGNE WATER QUALITY CONTROL ACT

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act is California's statutory authority for the protection of water quality. Under the Porter-Cologne Act, the State is required to adopt policies, plans, and objectives that will protect the State's waters for the use by and enjoyment of Californians. In California, the SWRCB has the authority and responsibility for establishing policy related to the State's water quality. Regional authority is delegated by the SWRCB to a RWQCB. The Porter-Cologne Act authorizes the SWRCB and RWQCB to issue NPDES permits.

Under the NPDES permit system, all existing and future municipal and industrial discharges to surface water within the city would be subject to regulation. NPDES permits are required for operators of municipal separate storm sewer systems, construction projects, and industrial facilities. These permits contain limits on the amount of pollutants that can be contained in each facility's discharge.

Local

MOUNTAIN HOUSE SANITARY SEWER MASTER PLAN UPDATE

The 2022 Mountain House Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (SSMP) Update evaluates the overall sanitary sewer system based on new generation rates to ensure that existing and future infrastructure is

sufficient. Evaluation of the WWTP ability and capacity to accept projected flow projections is also included in this document.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE MUNICIPAL CODE

Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 4, *Public Works Tax*, provides for a special tax to fund the capital and operating costs of providing public works services, including, but not limited to sewer services.

Title 5, Division 8, *Wastewater Discharge and Treatment*, ensures compliance with State and federal laws and regulations regarding wastewater systems and activities. Wastewater treatment rates, charges, and fees associated with monitoring, inspection, and processing are included in this section.

Title 9, Division 11, *Infrastructure Standards and Requirements*, contains standards and requirements related to infrastructure, which are intended to ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure for new uses of property, expansion of existing uses, and replacement of previous uses of property. Title 9, Division 11, Chapter 2, *Wastewater Disposal*, specifies the requirements for wastewater service and wastewater disposal for development projects. Requirements include mandatory connection to the City's sewer system for new or expanded uses that generate additional wastewater and when the sewer main is within 200 feet. Further, if the Director of Public Works determines that extension of the sewer main through a project or along a project parcel frontage is necessary for the orderly provision of wastewater disposal service to an area, the developer shall extend the sewer main in accordance with the serving agency's design standards.

STORMWATER

Also refer to Section 3.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, of this EIR for a discussion of the regulatory setting specific to stormwater.

Federal

CLEAN WATER ACT (CWA)

The Clean Water Act (CWA), initially passed in 1972, regulates the discharge of pollutants into watersheds throughout the nation. CWA Section 402(p) establishes a framework for regulating municipal and industrial stormwater discharges under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program. CWA Section 402(p) requires that stormwater associated with industrial activity that discharges either directly to surface waters or indirectly through municipal separate storm sewers must be regulated by an NPDES permit.

The CWA establishes the basic structure for regulating the increases of pollutants into the waters of the United States and gives the U.S. EPA the authority to implement pollution control programs. The CWA's goal is to regulate all discharges into the nation's waters and to restore, maintain, and preserve the integrity of those waters. The CWA sets water quality standards for all contaminants in surface waters and mandates permits for wastewater and stormwater discharges. In California, the EPA has designated the SWRCB and its nine RWQCBs with the authority to identify beneficial uses and adopt applicable water quality objectives. The SWRCB is responsible for implementing the CWA

and does so through issuing NPDES permits to cities and counties through RWQCBs. The Planning Area is in a watershed administered by the Central Valley RWQCB.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)

FEMA's primary mission is to reduce the loss of life and property and protect from all hazards, including flooding, among others. FEMA is mandated by the Flood Insurance Act of 1968 and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 to evaluate flood hazards and provide Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for local and regional planners to further promote safe floodplain development. Flood risk data presented on FIRMs are based on historic, hydrologic, hydraulic, and meteorological data, as well as flood control works, open-space conditions, and development. To prepare a FIRM that illustrates the extent of flood hazards in flood-prone communities, FEMA conducts an engineering study referred to as Flood Insurance Study. Using information collected in these studies, FEMA engineers and cartographers delineate Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) on FIRMs.

FEMA is responsible for administering the NFIP, which enables property owners in participating communities to purchase insurance as protection against flood losses in exchange for State and community floodplain management regulations that reduce future flood damages. In communities that participate in the NFIP, mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements apply to all Zones A, which are communities subject to a 100-year flood event. In addition to providing flood insurance and reducing flood damages through floodplain management regulations, the NFIP identifies and maps the nation's floodplains on FIRMs.

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES)

NPDES permits are required for discharges to navigable waters of the United States, which includes any discharge to surface waters, including lakes, rivers, streams, bays, oceans, dry stream beds, wetlands, and storm sewers that are tributary to any surface water body. NPDES permits are issued under the CWA, Title IV, Permits and Licenses, Section 402 (33 USC 466 et seq.)

The RWQCB issues these permits in lieu of direct issuance by the Environmental Protection Agency, subject to review and approval by the EPA Regional Administrator (EPA Region 9). The terms of these NPDES permits implement pertinent provisions of the CWA and implementing regulations, including pre-treatment, sludge management, effluent limitations for specific industries, and anti-degradation. In general, the discharge of pollutants is to be eliminated or reduced as much as practicable so as to achieve the CWA's goal of "fishable and swimmable" navigable (surface) waters. Technically, all NPDES permits issued by the RWQCB are also Waste Discharge Requirements issued under the authority of the CWA.

These NPDES permits regulate discharges from publicly owned treatment works, industrial discharges, stormwater runoff, dewatering operations, and groundwater cleanup discharges. NPDES permits are issued for five years or less, and are therefore to be updated regularly. Individual projects in the City that disturb more than one acre would be required to obtain NPDES coverage under the California General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit). The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)

describing BMPs the discharger would use to prevent and retain storm water runoff. The SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program; a chemical monitoring program for "non-visible" pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs; and a sediment monitoring plan if the site discharges directly to a waterbody listed on the 303(d) list for sediment.

A Phase II Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer (MS4) General Permit was adopted by the SWRCB on February 5, 2013 (Water Quality Order No. 2013-0001-DWQ, NPDES NO. CAS000004, as amended).

State

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD STORM WATER STRATEGY

The Storm Water Strategy is founded on the results of the Storm Water Strategic Initiative, which served to direct the State Water Board's role in storm water resources management and evolve the Storm Water Program by a) developing guiding principles to serve as the foundation of the storm water program, b) identifying issues that support or inhibit the program from aligning with the guiding principles, and c) proposing and prioritizing projects that the Water Boards could implement to address those issues.

The State Water Board staff created a strategy-based document called the Strategy to Optimize Management of Storm Water (STORMS). STORMS includes a program vision, missions, goals, objectives, projects, timelines, and consideration of the most effective integration of project outcomes into the Water Board's Storm Water Program.

Local

MOUNTAIN HOUSE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Mountain House has implemented a local Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) to comply with NPDES Phase II requirements for small municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). The SWMP was developed in August 2008. The goal of the SWMP is to reduce the discharge of stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, protect water quality, and satisfy the requirements of the Clean Water Act. The SWMP includes implementation of best management practices (BMPs), an implementation schedule, and measurable goals to help ensure that stormwater discharges are managed in accordance with applicable water quality requirements.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 4, *Public Works Tax*, provides for a special tax to fund the capital and operating costs of providing public works services, including, but not limited to, flood control and prevention and stormwater and drainage.

Municipal Code Title 5, Division 9, *Stormwater Management Requirements and Discharge Control*, contains the City's primary stormwater and urban runoff regulations. The Division is intended to establish minimum stormwater management requirements and discharge controls, comply with federal and State stormwater and urban runoff pollution control laws, prohibit illicit discharges into the storm drain system, reduce non-stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable,

minimize increases in stormwater runoff from development, reduce flooding, siltation, and streambank erosion, and minimize nonpoint source pollution and surface water runoff from development.

Municipal Code Section 5-9-400, *Requirement to Prevent, Control, and Reduce Stormwater Pollutants*, authorizes the City to adopt and impose BMP requirements for activities, operations, or facilities that may cause or contribute to pollution or contamination of stormwater, the storm drain system, or waters of the United States. The section also authorizes design standards and BMPs for new development and redevelopment to control the volume, rate, and pollutant load of stormwater runoff and requires permanent stormwater BMPs not controlled by the City to be covered by a Stormwater Treatment System Access and Maintenance Agreement.

SOLID WASTE

Federal

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RECOVERY ACT

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) was enacted in 1976 to address the huge volumes of municipal and industrial solid waste generated nationwide. After several amendments, the current Act governs the management of solid and hazardous waste and underground storage tanks (USTs). RCRA was an amendment to the Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965. RCRA has been amended several times, most significantly by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA) of 1984. RCRA is a combination of the first solid waste statutes and all subsequent amendments. RCRA authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate waste management activities. RCRA authorizes states to develop and enforce their own waste management programs, in lieu of the Federal program, if a state's waste management program is substantially equivalent to, consistent with, and no less stringent than the federal program.

State

CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1989 (AB 939)

The Integrated Solid Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) (California Public Resources Code Section 40050 et seq.) established an integrated waste management system that focuses on source reduction, recycling, composting, and land disposal of waste. AB 939 requires every city and county in California to divert 50 percent of its waste from landfills whether through waste reduction, recycling, or other means. Compliance with AB 939 is measured in part by comparing solid waste disposal rates for a jurisdiction with target disposal rates. Actual rates at or below target rates are consistent with AB 939. AB 939 also requires California counties to show 15 years of disposal capacity for all jurisdictions in the county or show a plan to transform or divert its waste.

ASSEMBLY BILL 341

AB 341, which took effect on July 1, 2012, was designed to help meet California's recycling goal of 75 percent by the year 2020. AB 341 made "…a legislative declaration that it is the policy goal of the state that not less than 75 percent of solid waste generated be source reduced, recycled, or

composted by the year 2020…" AB 341 requires a business, defined to include a commercial or public entity that generates more than 4 cubic yards (CY) of commercial solid waste per week or a multifamily residential dwelling of 5 units or more to arrange for recycling services. Such business/residential development must: 1) source separate recyclable materials from the solid waste they are discarding, and either self-haul or arrange for separate collection of the recyclables; and 2) subscribe to a service that includes mixed waste processing that yields diversion results comparable to source separation.

ASSEMBLY BILL 1826

AB 1826 (California Public Resources Code Sections 42649.8 et seq.) requires recycling of organic matter by businesses generating such wastes in amounts over certain thresholds. AB 1826 also requires that local jurisdictions implement an organic waste recycling program to divert organic waste generated by businesses and multi-family developments that consist of five or more units.

SENATE BILL 1383

SB 1383 is a State law that aims to drastically reduce organic waste, conserve landfill space, and address climate change. SB 1383 requires the reduction of organic waste disposed of in landfills and expands on existing commercial recycling mandates of AB 341 and AB 1826. SB 1383 establishes methane emission reduction targets by reducing statewide organic waste disposal 75 percent by 2025 (based on 2014 levels) and recovering at least 20 percent of currently disposed surplus edible food by 2025. Certain food generators, identified by business category as Tier 1 or 2, are required to donate all surplus edible food to a non-profit.

Hotels with on-site food facility and 200 rooms or more are identified under Tier 2 and required to comply by January 1, 2024.

Local

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE MUNICIPAL CODE

Title 5, Division 2, *Solid Waste, Green Waste, and Recyclables*, of the City of Mountain House Municipal Code establishes the minimum requirements for any person collecting solid waste, green waste, and/or recyclables within the City. Title 5, Division 2, Chapter 2, *Construction, Demolition and Landscaping Debris Recycling and Diversion*, establishes the City's regulatory structure related to construction, demolition, and landscaping debris recycling and diversion.

Section 8-1-118*, Compliance with CALGreen Recycling Requirements*, specifies that applicants for new construction and building additions and alterations must comply with CalGreen recycling requirements.

Title 9, Division 11, Chapter 7, *Solid Waste Recycling*, specifies the minimum regulations regarding recyclable material enclosures for new buildings and expansions in the City of Mountain House. The regulations are required for any construction for which a building permit is required for a commercial, industrial, institutional, or public building, where solid waste is collected for transport. It also includes any construction for which a building permit is required for a residential building with five or more living units.

ELECTRICITY, NATURAL GAS, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Federal

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATION COMMISSION

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission duties include the regulation of the transmission and sale of electricity and natural gas in interstate commerce, licensing of hydroelectric projects, and oversight of related environmental matters.

State

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Established in 1911, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regulates privately owned electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water, railroad, rail transit, and passenger transportation companies. The commission is organized into several advisory units, an enforcement division, and a strategic planning group.

Local

CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE MUNICIPAL CODE

Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 4, *Public Works Tax*, provides for a special tax to fund the capital and operating costs of providing public works services, including, but not limited to, utility undergrounding and telecommunications services.

Title 9, Division 10, Chapter 15, *Wireless Telecommunication Facilities*, provides the City's design, siting, and locational requirements for support structures of wireless telecommunication antennas and supporting equipment.

Title 9, Division 11, *Infrastructure Standards and Requirements*, contains standards and requirements related to infrastructure, which are intended to ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure for new uses of property, expansion of existing uses, and replacement of previous uses of property. Title 9, Division 11, Chapter 6, *Underground Utilities*, specifies the requirements for underground utilities, such as location, utility distribution, and timing of installation. It also includes information on where overhead utilities should be located.

3.15.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the Project will have a significant impact on the environment associated with Utilities and Service Systems if it will:

- Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications

facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects;
- Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years;
- Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments;
- Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals; and/or
- Not comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.15-1: The Project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects (Less Than Significant)

WATER

Based on the anticipated growth, as described in Section 2.0 of this EIR, buildout of the proposed General Plan land use map could yield up to 18,163 dwelling units, 54,258 persons, 7,869,878 square feet of non-residential development, and 8,199 jobs within Mountain House. This represents net development over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs. Compared to buildout of the existing Master Plan, buildout of the proposed General Plan represents a net increase of 1,566 dwelling units and 11,230 persons, and a net decrease of 96,186 square feet of non-residential development and 1,615 jobs. This growth is expected to result in an overall increase in demand for water supply, which could necessitate construction of future water supply infrastructure.

Under existing conditions, the City is primarily urbanized in the area south of Byron Road and north of Grant Line Road, with the exception of some remaining vacant parcels and the Mountain House Creek corridor. The areas north of Byron Road and south of Grant Line Road are generally still under development and contain a mixture of urban uses and vacant land planned for urban uses. The increased demand for water and potential new or expanded water infrastructure associated with General Plan buildout would be located within areas that are either already developed and serviced by the City or that have been planned for urban uses through the Mountain House Master Plan, adopted in 1994, and Specific Plan I (1994), Specific Plan II (2005), and Specific Plan III (2005).

As discussed under Impact 3.15-2, future water supplies are not projected to be adequate to meet the demand that would be generated by General Plan buildout for single-dry and multiple-dry years.

As such, implementation and buildout of the General Plan has the potential to result in the need to construct or expand water treatment facilities that have not already been described and accounted for in the City's relevant water master plans, which include the UWMP and PWSMP. Further, implementation of future development projects consistent with the General Plan could require construction of new water infrastructure, including upsizing of on- and off-site water lines where existing water lines are not sufficient to accommodate the increased water demand. These determinations would be made on a project-by-project basis.

The City receives funding for the capital and operating costs of providing public works services, including water service, through a special tax assessment (Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 4, *Public Works Tax*). Future development in the Planning Area would be required to connect to existing water distribution infrastructure in the vicinity of each site and pay all applicable water rates, fees, and charges. Future projects may be required to implement site specific and limited off-site improvements to the water distribution system in order to connect new project sites to the existing water infrastructure network. As future development and infrastructure projects are considered by the City, each project will be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and other applicable regulations. Future development projects would also be analyzed for potential environmental impacts as applicable, consistent with the requirements of CEQA. Since no specific development projects are proposed as part of the General Plan, the environmental effects from constructing or expanding facilities are unknown at this time. All water infrastructure construction activities associated with future development would be subject to compliance with existing local, State, and federal laws, ordinances, and regulations, which would ensure impacts are reduced to less than significant levels.

Furthermore, these future water facilities would be subject to the proposed General Plan policies and actions included below. Any future improvements to the existing water distribution infrastructure would be primarily provided on sites with land use designations that allow for urbanized land uses, and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the new water distribution infrastructure are anticipated to be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the proposed General Plan, as discussed in Chapters 3.1 through 3.14, 3.16, and 4.0 of this Draft EIR. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in

a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-3: Water Resources. A community that conserves and protects water resources to support long-term sustainability.

Policy RM-3.1: Water Supply. Coordinate with the Byron Bethany Irrigation District and other regional agencies to support a reliable long-term water supply through water conservation measures, education, innovation, and incentives that target all aspects of water supply and consumption.

Policy RM-3.2: Integrated Water Management. Support integrated planning and management of all water resources, including but not limited to potable water, wastewater, recycled water, groundwater, and stormwater resources.

Policy RM-3.6: Groundwater and Soil Protection. Protect groundwater and soils from contamination through appropriate land use planning, hazardous materials management, and coordination with responsible agencies.

Policy RM-3.7: Water Efficient Landscaping. The City shall require water-efficient landscape design and high-efficiency irrigation for parks, public landscaping, and new development projects consistent with the State's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) and California's water conservation requirements.

Policy RM-3.8: Drought Resilience. Support water conservation and demand reduction strategies during drought conditions in coordination with local water agencies and applicable State requirements.

Policy RM-3.10: Education. Collaborate with community partners to promote water conservation and provide insight into best practices and resources.

Action RM-3b: Coordinate with the Byron Bethany Irrigation District and other regional water agencies during development review and long-range planning efforts to ensure adequate water supply, infrastructure capacity, and compliance with applicable Urban Water Management Plans and regional water planning requirements.

Action RM-3c: Evaluate opportunities to improve water supply reliability, storage capacity, and system redundancy by augmenting the City's water supply portfolio through the use of additional sources (such as riparian water from Old River, groundwater, stormwater reuse, and recycled water), implementing local storage solutions (such as an Aquifer Storage and Recovery Well System), and establishing additional interties.

Action RM-3d: Develop and maintain a list of drought resistant native plants and trees to use for landscaping.

Public Services Element

Goal PSF-4: Water and Wastewater Management. A community with water and wastewater systems designed to deliver reliable service and accommodate planned growth.

Policy PSF-4.1: Water System Management. Continue to manage the City's water and wastewater system to ensure that these services are optimized to meet the needs of existing and future development.

Policy PSF-4.2: Safe Drinking Water Standards. Maintain compliance with applicable drinking water standards to protect public health.

Policy PSF-4.4: New Development. Require new development to provide and fund its fair share of water and wastewater infrastructure, including treatment capacity and delivery systems.

Policy PSF-4.6: Reduced Demand. Reduce water and wastewater system demand by encouraging water conserving designs and equipment, encouraging water-conserving devices, and designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration.

Policy PSF-4.7: Recycled Water. Explore opportunities to expand the use of recycled water for irrigation, landscaping, and other appropriate uses.

Action PSF-4a: Periodically review and update the City's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), Potable Water System Master Plan, and Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (SSMP) in order to meet regulatory requirements and to ensure the documents address existing and projected demand.

Action PSF-4b: Regularly monitor water quality of the water system and implement necessary measures to remain in compliance with local, state, and federal safe drinking water standards.

Action PSF-4c: Regularly review and update the City's water conservation measures to be consistent with State law and current best management practices for water conservation.

Action PSF-4d: Promote reduced water and wastewater system demand through efficient water use by:

1. Requiring water conserving design and equipment in new construction;
2. Encouraging retrofitting with water conserving devices;
3. Designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration to the extent economically feasible; and

4. Maintaining a Citywide map of all water distribution and wastewater collection system components by monitoring the condition of the systems on a regular basis.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Pollution Exposure & Air Quality. Improved air quality and reduced pollution exposure for all.

Policy EJ-1.6: Water Quality and Hazardous Sites. Ensure drinking water, groundwater, and surface water quality, including conditions affecting Mountain House Creek and Old River, are protected, and coordinate with responsible agencies to identify and address hazardous materials sites, leaking underground storage tanks, and other contamination risks that may affect public health.

Action EJ-1d: Annually review drinking water quality reports and available groundwater and surface water monitoring information for Mountain House and coordinate with water providers and regulatory agencies to address and communicate any identified public health concerns.

Goal EJ-6: Unique Or Compounded Health Risks. A healthier and more resilient community with reduced exposure to environmental hazards.

Policy EJ-6.5: Water Quality. Coordinate with Byron-Bethany Irrigation District, the State Water Resources Control Board, and other responsible agencies to provide high quality drinking water.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

WASTEWATER

With respect to wastewater, subsequent development with buildout of the proposed General Plan is expected to result in increased population and employment growth within the Planning Area, and thus, an overall increase in demand on the existing sewer system associated with increased sewage flows.

The City's 2022 SSMP estimates that the City's total sewage generation at buildout would be 4,320,000 gpd or 4.32 MGD, assuming a population of 51,638. Using the estimated buildout population from the proposed General Plan (54,258 persons) and the baseline wastewater generation rate of 83.66 gpcd calculated from the 2022 SSMP, the City's total wastewater flow under the proposed General Plan would be approximately 4.5 MGD. While this represents a minor increase of approximately 0.18 MGD over the 2022 SSMP projections, which were based on buildout of the Master Plan, it remains approximately 1.0 MGD less than the 5.4 MGD maximum capacity of the

WWTP and authorized discharge under NPDES Permit R5-2023-0033-01 (as amended by Order R5-2025-0050). Further, similar to existing conditions, the City would continue to monitor and adjust its projected wastewater flows and expand treatment capacity as needed based on these updates. Therefore, the WWTP is expected to be able to accommodate the projected population growth associated with General Plan implementation.

The proposed General Plan does not include specific development proposals; therefore, the environmental effects of future wastewater collection system improvements are unknown at this time. Future development projects would be reviewed by the City in order to determine if sufficient sewer capacity exists to serve the specific development. Pursuant to Mountain House Municipal Code Title 9, Division 11, Chapter 2, *Wastewater Disposal*, future projects would be required to connect to the City's sewer system for new or expanded uses that generate additional wastewater and when the sewer main is within 200 feet. Further, if the Director of Public Works determines that extension of the sewer main through a project or along a project parcel frontage is necessary for the orderly provision of wastewater disposal service to an area, the developer shall extend the sewer main in accordance with the serving agency's design standards. All sewer collection systems within the City shall be designed, constructed, and connected consistent with City standards.

The City receives funding for the capital and operating costs of providing public works services, including wastewater service, through a special tax assessment (Title 3, Division 3, Chapter 4, *Public Works Tax*). Future development in the Planning Area would be required to connect to existing wastewater distribution infrastructure in the vicinity of each site and pay all applicable wastewater rates, fees, and charges. Future projects may be required to implement site specific and limited off-site improvements to the wastewater distribution system in order to connect new project sites to the existing wastewater infrastructure network. As future development and infrastructure projects are considered by the City, each project will be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and other applicable regulations. Future development projects would also be analyzed for potential environmental impacts as applicable, consistent with the requirements of CEQA. Since no specific development projects are proposed as part of the General Plan, the environmental effects from constructing or expanding facilities are unknown at this time. All wastewater infrastructure construction activities associated with future development would be subject to compliance with existing local, State, and federal laws, ordinances, and regulations, which would ensure impacts are reduced to less than significant levels.

The proposed General Plan policies and actions included below help to ensure adequate wastewater services and facilities are provided to the community and that potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of new or expanded infrastructure would be reduced. Any future improvements to the existing wastewater distribution infrastructure would be primarily provided on sites with land use designations that allow for urbanized land uses, and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the new water distribution infrastructure are anticipated to be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the proposed General Plan, as discussed in Chapters 3.1 through 3.14, 3.16, and 4.0 of this Draft EIR. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-3: Water Resources. A community that conserves and protects water resources to support long-term sustainability.

Policy RM-3.2: Integrated Water Management. Support integrated planning and management of all water resources, including but not limited to potable water, wastewater, recycled water, groundwater, and stormwater resources.

Policy RM-3.9: Wastewater Systems. Manage the placement and operation of wastewater systems to prevent contamination of surface water and groundwater.

Public Services Element

Goal PSF-4: Water and Wastewater Management. A community with water and wastewater systems designed to deliver reliable service and accommodate planned growth.

Policy PSF-4.1: Water System Management. Continue to manage the City's water and wastewater system to ensure that these services are optimized to meet the needs of existing and future development.

Policy PSF-4.3: Wastewater Collection and Treatment Infrastructure. Ensure safe and reliable wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure to serve existing and future development.

Policy PSF-4.4: New Development. Require new development to provide and fund its fair share of water and wastewater infrastructure, including treatment capacity and delivery systems.

Policy PSF-4.5: Sewer Disposal Best Practices. Identify and implement best practices and feasible technologies for wastewater collection and treatment, including those that reduce the amount of wastewater requiring treatment, prevent contamination, maintain

the highest possible energy efficiency, and reduce costs and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Policy PSF-4.6: Reduced Demand. Reduce water and wastewater system demand by encouraging water conserving designs and equipment, encouraging water-conserving devices, and designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration.

Action PSF-4a: Periodically review and update the City's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), Potable Water System Master Plan, and Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (SSMP) in order to meet regulatory requirements and to ensure the documents address existing and projected demand.

Action PSF-4d: Promote reduced water and wastewater system demand through efficient water use by:

1. Requiring water conserving design and equipment in new construction;
2. Encouraging retrofitting with water conserving devices;
3. Designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration to the extent economically feasible; and
4. Maintaining a Citywide map of all water distribution and wastewater collection system components by monitoring the condition of the systems on a regular basis.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

STORMWATER

Development under the proposed General Plan would result in increased areas of impervious surfaces throughout the Planning Area, resulting in the need for additional or expanded stormwater drainage, conveyance, and retention infrastructure. In the Planning Area, stormwater is generally conveyed through local storm drain facilities, detention/treatment facilities, and drainage corridors before ultimately discharging to Mountain House Creek and Old River. The infrastructure and facilities necessary to serve new growth would involve development of some facilities on-site within new development projects, some facilities off-site on appropriately designated land, and may also involve improvements to existing facilities and disturbance of existing rights-of-way. The specific impacts of providing new and expanded drainage facilities cannot be determined at this time, as the proposed General Plan does not propose or approve any specific development project nor does it designate specific sites for new or expanded public facilities.

Stormwater drainage and conveyance facilities would be evaluated at the project level in association with subsequent development projects. However, the facilities would be primarily provided on sites with land use designations that allow such uses and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the facilities would likely be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the proposed General Plan. As future development and infrastructure projects are considered by the City, each project will be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and other applicable regulations. Subsequent development and infrastructure projects would also be analyzed for potential environmental impacts, consistent with the requirements of CEQA.

The proposed General Plan policies and actions included below would further ensure that there is adequate stormwater drainage and flood control infrastructure to serve future development and would ensure that future drainage and flood control infrastructure projects do not result in adverse environmental impacts. As such, this is a ***less than significant*** impact and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Land Use Element

Goal LU-2: Managed Growth. Growth is effectively managed to ensure future development is economically and environmentally sustainable, improves quality of life, and is complementary to our existing community.

Policy LU-2.2: Adequate Public Facilities and Services. The City shall require, as a condition of development approval, that adequate public facilities and services—including water, wastewater, drainage, roads, parks, schools, fire, and police protection—are available concurrent with the impacts of development, consistent with adopted Level of Service standards. Development shall not be approved if it would result in a deficiency in any adopted Level of Service standard unless mitigation is provided concurrent with development.

Resource Management Element

Goal RM-3: Water Resources. A community that conserves and protects water resources to support long-term sustainability.

Policy RM-3.2: Integrated Water Management. Support integrated planning and management of all water resources, including but not limited to potable water, wastewater, recycled water, groundwater, and stormwater resources.

Policy RM-3.3: Stormwater Quality. Protect water quality by minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff and requiring effective stormwater treatment and best management practices.

Policy RM-3.4: Low Impact Development. The City shall require low impact development (LID) site design measures in new development and significant redevelopment consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program and applicable National Pollutant

Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. LID measures shall include on-site stormwater retention, infiltration where appropriate, bioretention, permeable paving, and other techniques that reduce runoff and protect downstream waterways.

Policy RM-3.5: Waterway Buffering and Erosion Control. Maintain and enhance buffers along waterways and drainage corridors to protect water quality, support habitat, reduce erosion, and provide compatible trail and open space connections.

Action RM-3a: Require new development and redevelopment projects to implement stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) consistent with applicable stormwater permits and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and protect downstream water quality. During project review, ensure that development proposals incorporate stormwater treatment, runoff control measures, and low impact development (LID) techniques. Coordinate with responsible agencies, including the Regional Water Quality Control Board and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

Public Services Element

Goal PSF-5 Stormwater Management. Protect people, property, and natural resources through reliable stormwater infrastructure that reduces flooding and improves water quality.

Policy PSF-5.1: Facility Maintenance. Maintain the City's storm drainage facilities to ensure effective runoff conveyance and reduce localized flooding.

Policy PSF-5.2: Multi-Purpose Stormwater Facilities. Promote natural and multi-purpose stormwater facilities that integrate flood control with community amenities, such as ecological preserves and groundwater replenishment sites.

Policy PSF-5.3: Minimize Sediment Discharge. Minimize the discharge of pollutants and sediment into creeks, drainage channels, and other waterways to protect water quality and reduce erosion.

Policy PSF-5.4: Best Management Practices. Applicable projects shall incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Low Impact Development measures (LID) to treat stormwater before discharge from the site. The facilities shall be sized to meet regulatory requirements.

Policy PSF-5.5: Future Development. Require all future development projects to analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows, or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts.

Action PSF-5a: Regularly review and update the City's Storm Water Master Plan.

Action PSF-5b: Identify stormwater drainage facilities in need of improvement or repairs and address these needs through the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Action PSF-5c: As part of the development review process, continue to require all new development and significant redevelopment projects to:

1. Demonstrate how storm water runoff will be detained or retained on-site and/or conveyed to the nearest drainage facility as required by the City's Stormwater Management Program and Phase II Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit; and

2. Analyze their drainage and stormwater conveyance impacts and either demonstrate that the City's existing infrastructure can accommodate increased stormwater flows or make the necessary improvements to mitigate all potential impacts.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-6: Unique Or Compounded Health Risks. A healthier and more resilient community with reduced exposure to environmental hazards.

Policy EJ-6.4: Flooding and Storm Resilience. Improve resilience to flooding and severe storm events through drainage planning, maintenance programs, green infrastructure, emergency access considerations, and coordination with responsible flood management and water agencies.

Action EJ-6e: Review storm drainage maintenance needs, flooding complaints, and infrastructure performance following major storm events and incorporate priority improvements into the City's maintenance programs and Capital Improvement Program.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

ELECTRICITY, NATURAL GAS, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

In regard to electrical, natural gas, and telecommunication services, the Planning Area is within the service areas of the MID, PG&E, and various telecommunication providers. New growth anticipated by the proposed General Plan would require increased electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications services, potentially resulting in the new construction or relocation of facilities. The environmental effects of future expansions of electrical, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities would be evaluated with each development proposal and would require a separate environmental review related to the construction and operation of new electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications infrastructure. Future implementing projects under the proposed General Plan would have to coordinate with each utility provider to establish service, provide any necessary

extensions of facilities, and comply with regulations in existence at that time. As future development and infrastructure projects are considered by the City, each project will be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and other applicable regulations. Furthermore, these future facilities would be subject to the following proposed General Plan goals and policies intended to protect the environment.

The implementation of existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies and actions would reduce impacts associated with the relocation or construction of new or expanded electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities to a level that is ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Public Services Element

GOAL PSF-6 ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS. A community with modern, well-designed, energy and telecommunications infrastructure.

Policy PSF-6.1: Telecommunications. Drive the advancement of local telecommunications infrastructure by working with local service providers and other industry partners to deliver world-class connectivity and innovative service solutions citywide.

Policy PSF-6.4: Best Management Practices. Support and encourage the implementation of innovative green building Best Management Practices (BMPs) including, but not limited to, sustainable site planning, localized renewable energy opportunities, LEED certification, and exceeding the most current green building standards, as feasible.

Policy PSF-6.5: Efficient Permitting Processes and Incentives. Streamline permitting processes and provide education regarding incentives, rebates, and financing options to encourage residents, businesses, and municipal facilities to invest in renewable energy installations.

Policy PSF-6.6: Energy Upgrades. Encourage property owners to participate in solar retrofit and other energy-efficient home improvement projects to reduce reliance on traditional energy sources.

Policy PSF-6.7: Energy Facilities. Collaborate with applicable stakeholders in the placement and design of energy utility facilities for new developments to minimize their environmental, aesthetic, and safety impacts.

Policy PSF-6.8: Development Review. Collaborate with energy utility providers to ensure sufficient capacity and service availability for new developments. Additionally, ensure that these projects plan and implement necessary infrastructure improvements to support their future energy demands.

Policy PSF-6.9: Visual Clutter. Minimize the visual impact of essential energy and telecommunications infrastructure by requiring the undergrounding of all new

utility lines and through the siting of wireless communication facilities, promoting techniques such as co-location and incorporating stealth design whenever possible.

Action PSF-6a: Periodically review and revise existing City ordinances regulating the placement, maintenance, and operation of cellular and other telecommunications facilities to streamline development and address potential aesthetics issues.

Action PSF-6b: Develop a citywide telecommunications strategy that ensures access to high-quality telecommunications service throughout the City and ensures new development provides the appropriate infrastructure to connect to existing and desired telecommunications networks.

Action PSF-6c: Review development projects to ensure that all new residential and nonresidential development complies with local and State regulations regarding energy efficiency.

Action PSF-6d: During the development review process, encourage innovative building design, layout, and orientation techniques to minimize energy use by taking advantage of sun/shade patterns, prevailing winds, landscaping and building materials that control energy usage, and solar design.

Action PSF-6e: Conduct outreach events with the MID to inform residents and businesses about existing programs and incentives that are offered for energy efficiency.

Action PSF-6f: Organize and conduct educational workshops with utility companies informing the public of the benefits of home energy audits and energy saving practices.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.15-2: General Plan implementation would not result in sufficient water supplies available to serve the City and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years (Significant and Unavoidable)

As discussed in Impact 3.15-1, the proposed General Plan is expected to result in increased population and employment growth within the Planning Area, and a corresponding increase in the demand for additional water supplies. Buildout of the proposed General Plan land use map could yield up to 18,163 dwelling units, 54,258 persons, 7,869,878 square feet of non-residential development, and 8,199 jobs within Mountain House. This represents net development over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs. Compared to buildout of the existing Master Plan, buildout of the proposed General Plan represents a net increase of 1,566 dwelling units and 11,230 persons, and a net decrease of 96,186 square feet of non-residential development and 1,615 jobs.

As shown in Tables 3.15-2, 3.15-3, and 3.15-4, the City's normal year water supplies are adequate to meet projected demands through 2045; however, the City's single-dry year supplies are insufficient to fully meet projected single-dry year demands through the year 2045. Additionally, the City's multiple dry year supplies are sufficient to meet projected demands through 2045, with the exception of the fourth year of each five-year drought. To address anticipated supply shortfalls during single- and multiple dry year conditions, the City may implement one or more water shortage response actions, including declaration of a water shortage stage. Additionally, BBID and the City are investigating additional supply and water management options, such as increased storage capacity, recycled water development, and emergency interties, to improve drought resilience.

The 2025 UWMP's water supply and demand projections are based on information developed in the 2020 PWSMP and the City's Specific Plans, which reflect land use designations and dwelling unit projections from the Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plans I, II, and III with a buildout year of 2040. The 2025 UWMP does not account for buildout of the land uses proposed in the General Plan Project. The UWMP projects demand in proportion to population growth, resulting in approximately 0.181 AF per resident (water demands of 7,063 AFY for a projected water service area buildout population of 39,062 residents). Applying this factor to the proposed General Plan buildout population of 54,258 in 2045 results in a water demand of approximately 9,811 AFY, or approximately 2,748 AFY more than projected in the UWMP. The UWMP's projected 2045 normal-year supplies (12,383 AFY) would be sufficient to meet this demand. Under single-dry-year conditions and in the fourth year of a multiple-dry-year period, the projected water supply shortfall would increase from approximately 2,846 AFY projected in the UWMP to approximately 5,594 AFY under buildout of the proposed General Plan. This estimate is approximate, as the UWMP's demand factor reflects the City's current mix of residential and non-residential water use. Additionally, UWMPs are required to be updated every five years and the future UWMP update will account for the additional residential and/or non-residential growth opportunities provided by Project implementation and would identify short-term and long-term water demand management measures to meet growing water demands during normal, dry, and multiple dry water years. Additionally, the City has adopted a WSCP that provides actions for managing water supply and demands during a declared water shortage to better ensure there will be an adequate water supply in the future.

For future qualifying projects, a Water Supply Assessment would be required pursuant to SB 610 for inclusion in the project's CEQA analysis. The Water Supply Assessment discerns whether the expected demand from the development being proposed has been accounted for in the forecasted demands in the most recent UWMP. A Written Verification of Supply per SB 221 is prepared as a condition of approval for a subdivision map of 500 units or more. Considered a fail-safe mechanism to provide sufficient evidence that adequate water supplies are available before construction begins, the Written Verification of Supply is also prepared/adopted by the water supplier and approved by the land use authority. Depending on the project, one or both of these analyses may be required. Development proposals that may not warrant a Water Supply Assessment and/or Written Verification of Supply, but meet the definition of a project under CEQA, would still require an analysis of sufficient water supplies in the CEQA process.

The proposed General Plan policies and actions included below would further ensure that adequate water supply, treatment, and distribution capacity is available to meet the needs of the proposed development without negatively impacting the existing community. Nevertheless, given that the 2025 UWMP anticipates water supply shortfalls during single- and multiple dry years, coupled with the inherent uncertainty surrounding future supply augmentations that rely on factors outside the City's direct control, a sufficient water supply cannot be guaranteed throughout the General Plan planning horizon. Therefore, impacts associated with sufficient water supplies are considered to be ***significant and unavoidable***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Refer to the goals, policies, and actions in Impact 3.15-1.

MITIGATION MEASURES

There is no feasible mitigation for this impact.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significant and Unavoidable.

Impact 3.15-3: The Project would not result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments (Less Than Significant)

As discussed in Impact 3.15-1, the total amount of projected wastewater flow to the Mountain House WWTP, where Mountain House sewer water is treated and/or disposed of, under the proposed General Plan would be approximately 4.5 MGD. The WWTP currently has 4.0 MGD capacity and is expandable to 5.4 MGD as necessary by adding additional membrane. Additionally, the applicable NPDES permit for the WWTP (NPDES Permit R5-2023-0033-01, as amended by Order R5-2025-0050) authorizes an ADWF of up to 5.4 MGD. Therefore, the ultimate capacity of the facility would be able to meet the projected wastewater production from Mountain House.

As noted above, the proposed General Plan enables additional development but does not include specific development proposals. At the time future projects are proposed, they would require a separate environmental review, site plan review, and compliance with regulations in existence at that time to ensure adequate wastewater treatment and trunk sewer capacity exists. The proposed General Plan policies and actions included below would further ensure that adequate wastewater facilities capacity to serve the Project's projected demand. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Refer to the goals, policies, and actions in Impact 3.15-1.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.15-4: The Project would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals (Less Than Significant)

As discussed, buildout of the proposed General Plan land use map could yield up to 18,163 dwelling units, 54,258 persons, 7,869,878 square feet of non-residential development, and 8,199 jobs within Mountain House. This represents net development over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs. Compared to buildout of the existing Master Plan, buildout of the proposed General Plan represents a net increase of 1,566 dwelling units and 11,230 persons, and a net decrease of 96,186 square feet of non-residential development and 1,615 jobs.

Since the City of Mountain House is newly incorporated, CalRecycle has not yet established jurisdiction-specific per capita target disposal rates. Therefore, this analysis utilizes the per capita disposal rates for the San Joaquin County unincorporated area, which was 6.5 pounds per resident per day and 16.5 pounds per employee per day in 2024. Assuming the unincorporated County 2024 disposal rate of 6.5 pounds per resident per day and 16.5 pounds per employee per day remains constant throughout the life of the General Plan, the new growth under General Plan buildout (25,463 persons and 7,107 jobs) would result in a net increase of approximately 282,775 pounds per day of solid waste over existing conditions, which equals approximately 141.39 net tons per day (TPD) or 51,606.44 net tons of solid waste per year.

The City's projected increase in solid waste generation associated with buildout of the General Plan is within the permitted capacity of the Foothill Sanitary Landfill, where the vast majority of waste from the City was disposed of in 2025. Foothill Sanitary Landfill has a remaining capacity of approximately 125,000,000 cubic yards as of 2010, a maximum permitted throughput of 1,500 TPD, and has a projected capacity to serve residents and businesses until approximately 2082, well beyond the planning horizon of the General Plan. In addition, the City disposes of solid waste to a number of other landfills. Conservatively assuming the Foothill Sanitary Landfill is unable to accept solid waste, the Kirby Canyon Recycling & Disposal Facility, Stanislaus County Fink Road Landfill, and/or any number of regional facilities would have adequate capacity to accommodate the City's projected solid waste generation through the planning horizon. Further, it is more likely that future solid waste would be distributed to the other landfills serving the City.

The proposed General Plan policies and actions included below would responsibly manage and reduce solid waste, further ensuring compliance with solid waste reduction goals and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, the General Plan would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals and impacts would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Public Services and Facilities Element

Goal PSF-7: Waste Management and Recycling. A community that integrates solid waste management and recycling practices to protect the environment and promote sustainability.

Policy PSF-7.1: Regulation Compliance. Ensure compliance with local, regional, and State regulations on waste diversion, source reduction, recycling, and composting through regular monitoring and updates to City practices.

Policy PSF-7.2: Solid Waste Collection. Ensure adequate solid waste disposal, recycling, and refuse services for current and future residents and businesses.

Policy PSF-7.3: Recycling. Encourage the use of reusable and recyclable materials through educational initiatives and sustainable purchasing policies and practices.

Policy PSF-7.4: Organic Waste. The City shall comply with the requirements of SB 1383 (Short-Lived Climate Pollutants Act) by implementing organic waste collection, recovery, and edible food recovery programs consistent with State mandates. The City shall work with its designated solid waste and recycling service contractor and other partners to ensure that organic waste collection, composting, and recovery programs achieve State-mandated diversion targets. Green waste and compost shall be distributed to the public and for use in parks, medians, and other municipal areas where feasible.

Policy PSF-7.5: Hazardous Waste. Promote the proper disposal of hazardous waste through education, monitoring, and enforcement of proper use, storage, handling, and disposal.

Policy PSF-7.6: Fees and Funding. Work with appropriate service providers to periodically review collection, recycling, and disposal fees to achieve state and federal mandates, meet community expectations, and reflect cost efficiencies or increases for service delivery.

Policy PSF-7.7: Construction and Demolition Waste Reduction. Ensure applicable development projects divert construction and demolition (C&D) waste debris consistent with the requirements of State law.

Policy PSF-7.8: Education. Collaborate with community partners to promote waste reduction strategies to the community.

Action PSF-7a: Regularly monitor the level of service provided by garbage and recycling collection contractors to ensure that service levels are adequate.

Action PSF-7b: Encourage the expansion of recycling, reuse, and appropriate disposal of household hazardous materials, including the following:

1. Increased participation in single family and multifamily residential curbside recycling and organics collection programs;

2. Increased participation in commercial and industrial recycling and organics collection programs;

3. Reduce yard and landscaping waste through methods such as composting, grass recycling, and using resource efficient landscaping techniques; and

4. Encourage local businesses to provide electronic waste (e-waste) drop-off services and encourage residents and businesses to properly dispose of, or recycle, e-waste.

Action PSF-7c: Use educational flyers and workshops to inform residents of the proper method to dispose household hazardous waste that includes paint, tires, medications, medical sharps, infectious waste, asbestos waste, construction waste, and electronic waste.

Action PSF-7d: Coordinate with developers and contractors to identify opportunities for waste diversion and recycling during the project construction phase.

Action PSF-7e: Work with the school district, community organizations, and businesses to develop educational programs on waste reduction strategies.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

Impact 3.15-5: The Project would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste (Less Than Significant)

The General Plan itself would establish a long-term land use and policy framework for the Planning Area and would not directly approve any specific development or infrastructure project. Future projects implemented under the General Plan would comply with all applicable federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Mountain House Municipal Code Title 5, Division 2, *Solid Waste, Green Waste, and Recyclables*, establishes the minimum requirements for any person collecting solid waste, green waste, and/or recyclables within the City. Title 9, Division 11, Chapter 7, *Solid Waste Recycling*, specifies the minimum regulations regarding recyclable material enclosures for new buildings and expansions in the City. As permitted by AB 939, the City authorizes a private solid waste franchisee (i.e., West Valley Disposal) to handle the City's solid waste. As the City's waste hauler, West Valley Disposal is required to cooperate in the preparation of solid waste disposal characterization studies and the preparation of waste stream audits. West Valley Disposal and the City would work together to submit information to meet the reporting requirements of AB 939, local diversion requirements, or any other law or regulation, to reach the solid waste and recycling goals mandated by AB 939. Furthermore, as discussed in Impact 3.15-4, the additional volume of solid waste associated with the proposed Project would not cause current landfill capacities to be exceeded.

The proposed General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions to responsibly manage and reduce solid waste, further ensuring compliance with solid waste reduction goals and regulations; refer to the proposed General Plan Update goals, policies, and actions cited above in Impact 3.15-1.

Therefore, the proposed Project would not impair existing federal, State and local solid waste reduction regulations, and this impact would be ***less than significant***.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Refer to the goals, policies, and actions in Impact 3.15-4.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than Significant.

3.15.4 REFERENCES

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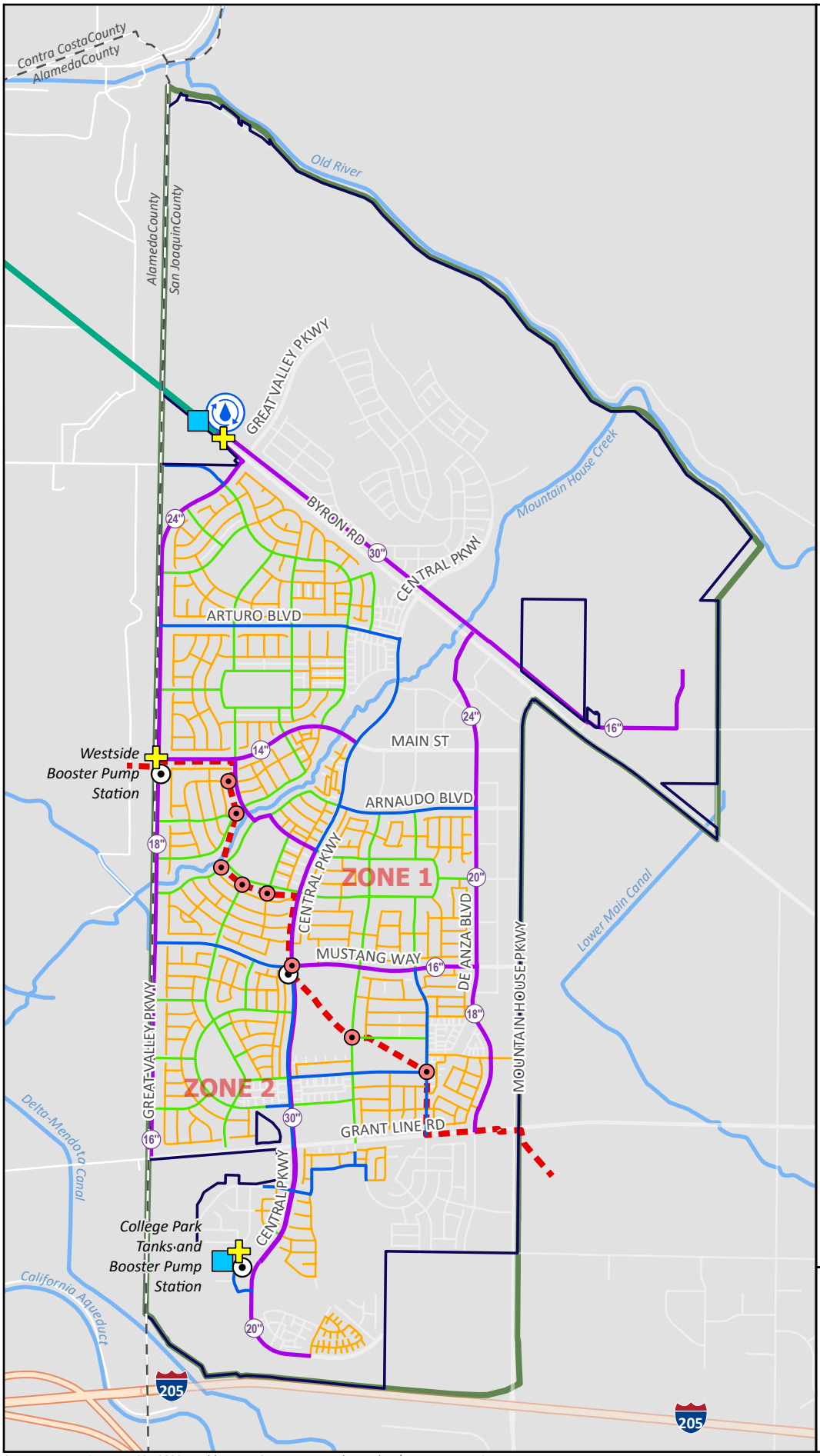

FIGURE 3.15-1.

EXISTING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

- Mountain House City Limits
- Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- County Boundary

Existing Potable Water Pipeline Diameter

- 6" and 8"
- 10"
- 12"
- 14" and Larger

Other Pipeline

- Raw Water Pipeline

Zone Boundary

- Pressure Zone Boundary (Delineates Zones 1 and 2)

Water System Features

- Interzonal Valve
- Pressure-Reducing Valve
- Pumping Facility
- Storage Facility
- Water Treatement Plant

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group August 8, 2025.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

Sources: Mountain House CSD 2020 Potable Water System Master Plan Update/West Yost Associates; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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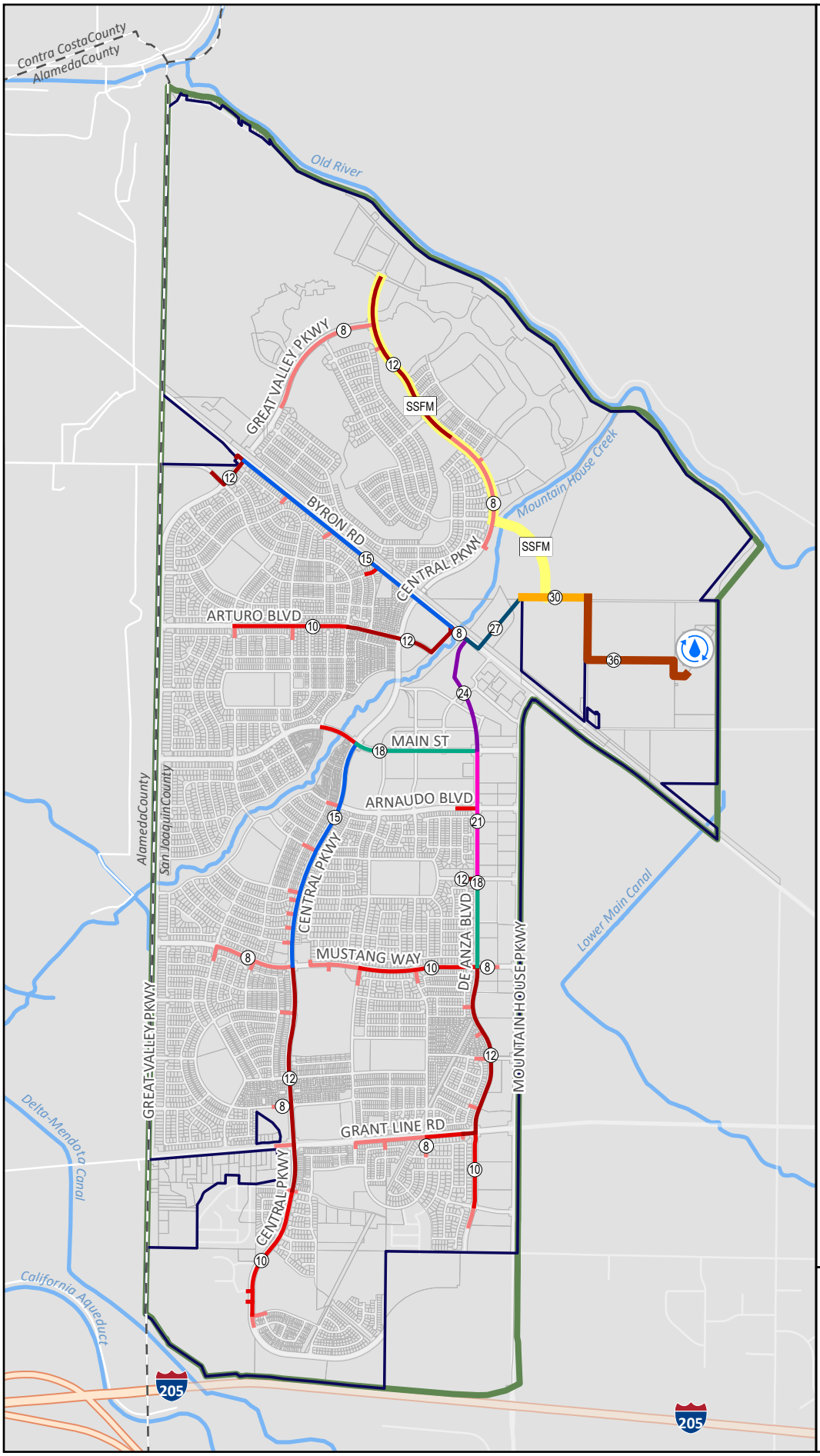

FIGURE 3.15-2.

EXISTING SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

Mountain House City Limits

Sphere of Influence (SOI)

County Boundary

Mountain House Waste Water Treatment Plant

Existing Sanitary Sewer Main

Sanitary Sewer Force Main (SSFM)

Existing Sanitary Sewer Trunks

- 8"
- 10"
- 12"
- 15"
- 18"
- 21"
- 24"
- 27"
- 30"
- 36"

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Prepared for the City of Mountain House by De Novo Planning Group August 7, 2025.

DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP
A LAND USE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FIRM

Sources: Mountain House Sewer System Master Plan, cbg Civil Engineers, 11-8-2022. San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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This section provides a background discussion of the hazards associated with wildfires in the Planning Area. Additional information related to fire hazards including the discussion of fire suppression resources is located within Chapter 3.13, Public Services and Recreation, of this report.

No comments were received during the NOP comment period regarding this environmental topic.

3.16.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

WILDFIRE HAZARDS

Wildfires are fires that burn in largely undeveloped and natural areas and are a regular feature of ecosystems throughout California. While low intensity wildfires can have a beneficial role for ecosystems, wildfires pose a risk to human health and safety, structures (e.g., homes, schools, hospitals, businesses, etc.), infrastructure (roadways, electrical poles, other utility facilities, etc.), air quality, recreation areas, water quality, wildlife habitat and ecosystem health, and forest resources at risk.

Threat from wildfire hazards is determined based on several factors, including fuel loading (vegetation); topography; climatic conditions, such as wind, humidity, and temperature; and the proximity of structures and urban development to fire hazards. Wildland fire hazards are most pronounced in the buffer zone between urbanized and undeveloped areas, known as the wildland-urban interface (WUI). In many parts of California, the WUIs have become developed, albeit at lower densities than fully urbanized areas. However, this development activity has brought more people into wildfire-prone areas. WUI areas typically contain higher amounts of vegetation that can serve as fuel for fires. The availability of fuel and increasing encroachment into the WUI, together with a changing climate, have made wildfires among California's most common and dangerous natural hazards. Generally, the periods of greatest risk for wildfire are the late summer and early fall when vegetation is at its driest. However, wildfires have occurred outside of these time periods especially following longer periods of drought or dry seasons.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is responsible for mapping Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs) within State Responsibility Areas (SRA). FHSZs are classified as moderate, high, and very high. In addition, CAL FIRE must recommend Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) identified within any Local Responsibility Areas (LRA). These zone classifications do not correspond to a specific risk or intensity of the fire; rather, they reflect a hazard score based on the factors that influence fire likelihood and fire behavior, such as fire history, fuel (e.g., flammable vegetation), terrain, and typical fire weather. The FHSZ maps are used by the State Fire Marshall as a basis for the adoption of applicable building code standards and are meant to help limit wildfire damage to structures through planning, prevention, and the application of risk reduction measures. Figure 3.16-1 shows FHSZ for Local and State Responsibility Areas in the Planning Area and vicinity. As shown in the figure, Mountain House is within an LRA and contains areas with “Moderate” and “High” FHSZs.

Local Responsibility Areas

The Planning Area is located within an LRA. CAL FIRE has not identified any Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) within the Planning Area. As shown, there are limited areas designated as Moderate and High FHSZs within the southwestern portion of the Planning Area, generally located south of Grant Line Road and west of Central Parkway.

State Responsibility Areas

There are no SRAs within the Planning Area. Moderate to High FHSZs in SRAs are located along the southwestern SOI boundary and expand into Alameda County.

3.16.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

FY 2001 Appropriations Act

Title IV of the Fiscal Year 2001 Appropriations Act for the US Department of the Interior and Related Agencies (Public Law 06-291), the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior have consulted with states and tribes to develop a list of WUI communities within the vicinity of federal lands that are at high risk from wildfire.

Disaster Mitigation Act (2000)

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires that state mitigation plans, as a condition of disaster assistance, add incentives for increased coordination and integration of mitigation activities at the state level through the establishment of requirements for two different levels of state plans: "Standard" and "Enhanced." The Disaster Mitigation Act also established a new requirement for local mitigation plans.

Department of the Interior Department Manual Part 620

Wildland Fire Management Part 620 of the Department of the Interior Departmental Manual pertains to wildland fire management policies, with the goal of providing an integrated approach to wildland fire management. The guiding principles of the plan emphasize the need for public health and safety considerations, risk management protocols, inter-agency collaboration, and economic feasibility of wildfire management practices, as well as the ecological role of wildfires.

STATE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

Under Title 14 of the Natural Resources of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), CAL FIRE has the primary responsibility for implementing wildfire planning and protection for SRA lands. CAL FIRE develops fire safe regulations and issues fire safe clearances for land within the SRA. The CAL FIRE Resource Management Program manages more than 31 million acres of California's privately-owned

wildlands and provides emergency services in 36 of the State's 58 counties, via contracts with local governments.

Under CCR Title 24, Regulations Development, the Office of the State Fire Marshal is responsible for promulgating regulations that promote fire and life safety for inclusion into the State Building Codes, including the California Building Code, California Fire Code, California Electrical Code, California Mechanical Code, California Plumbing Code, and California Historical Building Code. The process incorporates a great deal of public participation and is guided by the State Building Standards Law.

Strategic Fire Plan for California

CAL FIRE has adopted Strategic Fire Plans for California since the 1930s and periodically updates them to reflect current and anticipated needs of California. The Strategic Plan is the State's road map for reducing the risk of wildfire through planning and prevention to reduce firefighting costs and property losses, increase firefighter safety, and contribute to ecosystem health. The Strategic Plan is adopted to better respond to the changes of the environmental, social, and economic landscape of California's wildlands and to provide CAL FIRE with appropriate guidance for adequate statewide fire protection of state responsibility areas. The latest Strategic Fire Plan is the CAL FIRE Strategic Plan 2024.

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code (CCR Title 24, Part 9) establishes regulations to safeguard against the hazards of fire, explosion, or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures, and premises. The Fire Code also establishes requirements intended to provide safety for and assistance to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. The provisions of the Fire Code apply to the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal, and demolition of every building or structure throughout California. The Fire Code includes regulations regarding fire-resistance-rated construction, fire protection systems such as alarm and sprinkler systems, fire services features such as fire apparatus access roads, means of egress, fire safety during construction and demolition, and wildland-urban interface areas.

California State Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

The purpose of the State Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) is to significantly reduce deaths, injuries, and other losses attributed to natural- and human-caused hazards in California. As California's primary hazard mitigation guidance plan, the SHMP represents a comprehensive mitigation strategy centered on the reduction or elimination of hazard risks and the impacts of disasters, as well as providing guidance for hazard mitigation activities emphasizing partnerships among local, state, and federal agencies as well as the private sector.

California Government Code

California Government Code Section 65302.5 requires the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection to provide recommendations to a local jurisdiction's General Plan fire safety element at the time that the General Plan is amended. While not a direct and binding fire prevention

requirement for individuals, General Plans that adopt the Board's recommendations will include goals and policies that provide for contemporary fire prevention standards for the jurisdiction.

California Government Code Section 51175 defines Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) and designates lands considered by the State to be susceptible to a very high fire hazard. California Government Code Section 51182 specifically requires people who own, lease, control, operate, or maintain a building or structure on or adjoining land within a VHFHSZ, to do all of the following: (A) Maintain defensible space of 100 feet from each side and from the front and rear of the structure, (B) Remove that portion of a tree that extends within 10 feet of the outlet of a chimney or stovepipe, (C) Maintain a tree, shrub, or other plant adjacent to or overhanging a building free of dead or dying wood, (D) Maintain the roof of a structure free of leaves, needles, or other vegetative materials, and (E) Prior to constructing a new dwelling or structure that will be occupied or rebuilding an occupied dwelling or occupied structure damaged by a fire in that zone, the construction or rebuilding of which requires a building permit, the owner shall obtain a certification from the local building official that the dwelling or structure, as proposed to be built, complies with all applicable state and local building standards. California Government Code Section 51189 directs the Office of the State Fire Marshal to create building standards for wildland fire resistance. The code includes measures that increase the likelihood of a structure withstanding intrusion by fire (such as building design and construction requirements that use fire-resistant building materials) and provides protection of structure projections (such as porches, decks, balconies, and eaves), and structure openings (such as attics, eave vents, and windows).

California Public Resource Code

The State's Fire Safe Regulations are set forth in Public Resources Code Section 4290, which include the establishment of SRAs.

Public Resources Code Section 4291 sets forth defensible space requirements, which are applicable to anyone that owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, grass-covered lands, or land that is covered with flammable material (§4291(a)).

Public Resources Code Sections 4292-4296 and 14 CCR 1256, Fire Prevention for Electrical Utilities, address the vegetation clearance standards for electrical utilities. They include the standards for clearing around energy lines and conductors such as power-line hardware and power poles. These regulations are critical to wildland fire safety because of the substantial number of power lines in wildlands, the historic source of fire ignitions associated with power lines, and the extensive damage that results from power line caused wildfires in severe wind conditions.

Assembly Bill 337

Per Assembly Bill 337, local fire prevention authorities and CAL FIRE are required to identify VHFHSZs in LRAs. Standards related to brush clearance and the use of fire resistant materials in fire hazard severity zones are also established.

California Code of Regulations

In accordance with CCR Title 8, Sections 1270 and 6773 (Fire Prevention and Fire Protection and Fire Equipment), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal OSHA) establishes fire suppression service standards. The standards range from fire hose size requirements to the design of emergency access roads.

Title 14, Division 1.5 (Department of Forestry and Fire Protection) of the CCR establishes a variety of wildfire preparedness, prevention, and response regulations.

Title 19 (Public Safety) of the CCR establishes a variety of emergency fire response, fire prevention, and construction materials standards.

California Building Code (California Code of Regulations Title 24)

The California Building Code (CBC) contains general building design and construction requirements relating to fire and life safety, structural safety, and access compliance. CBC provisions provide minimum standards to safeguard life or limb, health, property, and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all buildings and structures and certain equipment.

Senate Bill 99

Senate Bill (SB) 99 requires cities and counties, upon the next revision of the housing element on or after January 1, 2020, to review and update the safety element to include information identifying residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes (California Government Code Section 65302(g)(5)).

California Senate Bill (SB) 1241

SB 1241 requires that the Safety Element component of city or county general plans incorporate fire risk related to SRAs and VHFHSZs.

LOCAL

San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The San Joaquin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) was last updated in January 2023 in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000. It is a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan that covers the County's geographical area and was developed with input from various San Joaquin County departments, four cities within the County, and other agencies. The LHMP is intended to guide hazard mitigation planning to reduce the effects of hazard events, including wildfires.

San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services

The San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services (OES) provides emergency management services in cooperation with local cities and special districts. The OES is the key disaster preparedness office of the County and has direct responsibility to support and coordinate the efforts

of County departments carrying out their functions in the field. To ensure a coordinated response to their disaster needs, OES also provides disaster information, logistical support, facilitates mutual aid requests, and facilitates inter-jurisdictional coordination with agencies from eight cities, 120 special districts, and locally based State and federal agencies.

San Joaquin County Emergency Operations Plan

The San Joaquin County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) was developed by the San Joaquin County OES and adopted on February 17, 2022. The EOP establishes the County's emergency management structure, overall operational concepts, and provides the guidelines needed for emergency response planning, preparation, training and execution throughout unincorporated San Joaquin County. The EOP also facilitates and/or coordinates information, resources, and decisions regarding priorities among local governments within the Operational Area, which includes the City of Mountain House.

Mountain House Municipal Emergency Management Plan

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) addresses the City's planned response to emergency situations. It outlines the City's protocols related to emergency operations and preparedness and conforms with the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Mountain House Municipal Code

Title 4, Division 1, *Fire Prevention*, of the Mountain House Municipal Code adopts and establishes the California Fire Code as adopted by the California Building Standards Commission in the California Building Standards Code Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

3.16.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact related to wildfire will occur if the Project is located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones and will:

- Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan;
- Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire;
- Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment; and/or
- Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.16-1: General Plan implementation could substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan (Less Than Significant)

The Planning Area is not within an SRA and does not contain any VHFHSZs. However, there are Moderate and High FHSZ areas within an SRA near Mountain House's southwestern boundary. These SRAs are located approximately 500 feet southwest of Mountain House's southwestern boundary, south of the Delta-Mendota Canal in unincorporated Alameda and San Joaquin Counties. In addition, there are designated Moderate and High FHSZs within a LRA in the southwestern portion of the Planning Area, generally located south of Grant Line Road and west of Central Parkway.

The General Plan would allow a variety of new development, including residential, commercial, industrial, and public service projects, which would result in an increase to the City's population and jobs. Local road and infrastructure improvements would occur to accommodate the new growth as further discussed in Chapter 3.14, Transportation, of this EIR. Future projects are not anticipated to remove or impede evacuation routes, and the General Plan does not include land uses, policies, or other components that conflict with adopted emergency response or evacuation plans.

The proposed General Plan is a policy document that does not include any site-specific designs or proposals and does not propose any entitlements for development that would have the potential to impair or conflict with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Any future development projects that would implement the General Plan, including buildout of uses contemplated under the proposed Land Use Map, would be subject to all applicable City regulations, reviews, and requirements pertaining to emergency response, emergency access, and maintaining emergency evacuation routes, as well as further analysis of project-specific impacts. The Project does not propose any revisions to the City's MEMP or the County EOP.

The General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions to further support preparedness and response to wildfire hazards, including emergency response and evacuation. Proposed Safety Element Goal SAF-5 contains policies and actions related to emergency preparedness and response. For example, Policy SAF-5.1 directs the City to regularly update the MEMP. Policy SAF-5.3 directs the City to work with fire and police protections service providers to define minimum standards for evacuation of residential areas and to maintain, update, and regularly exercise emergency access, protocols, and evacuation routes to assess their effectiveness under a range of emergency scenarios. If areas with inadequate evacuation routes are identified, the City will develop appropriate mitigation measures, improvement plans, or education programs to ensure safe evacuation. Policy SAF-4.7 directs the City to require adequate fire protection plans and emergency vehicle access for new development in VHFHSZ. Additionally, the applicant of any proposed development would be required to submit appropriate plans for plan review to ensure compliance with zoning, building, and fire codes prior to the issuance of a building permit. The proposed development would be required to comply with all applicable building and fire code requirements and would be required to obtain approval prior to issuance of any building permit. Project approval would ensure that construction and operation of

future projects associated with General Plan implementation would not impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. As such, implementation of the General Plan would have a ***less than significant*** impact with regard to this issue.

GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Policy SAF-4.7: Fire Protection Plans. Require adequate fire protection plans and emergency vehicle access for new development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Policy SAF-4.12: Fire Hazards Agency Coordination. Coordinate with federal, State, and regional fire protection agencies on fire suppression, rescue, training, education and to update emergency evacuation and hazard mitigation plans, as necessary.

Goal SAF-5: Emergency Preparedness and Response. A community that is well-prepared for emergency response and disaster management to mitigate impacts on all people, property, and the environment.

Policy SAF-5.1: Emergency Operations Plan. Update the Mountain House Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) on a regular basis to reflect changing conditions, best practices, regulatory environment, and to maintain eligibility for public assistance grants.

Policy SAF-5.2: Critical Facilities. Coordinate with service providers to ensure the resilience of critical facilities, lifeline services, and infrastructure, and plan for the use of critical facilities during post-disaster response and recovery.

Policy SAF-5.3: Emergency Evacuation. Work with the French Camp Mckinley Fire District and San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office to define minimum standards for evacuation of residential areas, particularly in Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, and to maintain, update, and regularly exercise emergency access, protocols, and evacuation routes to assess their effectiveness under a range of emergency scenarios. If areas with inadequate evacuation routes are identified, develop appropriate mitigation measures, improvement plans, or education programs to ensure safe evacuation.

Policy SAF-5.4: Multi-Agency Emergency Collaboration. Coordinate with the French Camp McKinley Fire District, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, special districts, local utility providers, and local businesses to ensure effective preparation, response, and recovery services are available throughout the community before, during, and after an emergency event.

Policy SAF-5.5: Automatic and Mutual Aid. Participate in agreements for automatic and mutual aid with other local, State, federal, and non-governmental emergency service providers to improve emergency response throughout the region.

Policy SAF-5.6: Volunteer Programs. Support and promote volunteer service programs for emergency preparedness and disaster relief such as French Camp Mckinley Fire District's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Action SAF-5a: Regularly practice implementation of the City's Municipal Emergency Management Plan and update the plan regularly.

Action SAF-5b: Regularly review County and State emergency response procedures that must be coordinated with City procedures.

Action SAF-5c: Periodically review, maintain, and repair City roadways and emergency access routes, and provide signage, where necessary, to clearly identify emergency access routes.

Action SAF-5d: Conduct regular emergency response training exercises and/or participate in regional exercises to ensure that emergency response personnel are adequately trained and prepared for emergency situations. Critical facilities within the city should also be annually assessed to ensure they are properly supplied.

Action SAF-5e: As part of the development review process, consult with the police and fire departments in order to ensure that the project provides adequate emergency access.

Action SAF-5f: Develop and adopt a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for Mountain House and update it at least every five years to maintain eligibility for federal hazard mitigation funding and to reflect changing conditions, best practices, and regulatory requirements.

Action SAF-5g: Develop and adopt a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to ensure that essential City functions are able to continue during and after an emergency event.

Impact 3.16-2: Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, General Plan implementation could exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire (Less Than Significant)

As previously discussed, the Planning Area is not within an SRA and does not contain any VHFHSZs. However, there are Moderate and High FHSZ areas within SRA near Mountain House's southwestern boundary. These SRAs are located approximately 500 feet southwest of Mountain House's southwestern boundary, south of the Delta-Mendota Canal in unincorporated Alameda and San Joaquin Counties. In addition, there are designated Moderate and High FHSZs within LRA in the southwestern portion of the Planning Area, generally located south of Grant Line Road and west of Central Parkway.

Implementation of the proposed Project would not directly approve or construct any specific development or infrastructure project. However, buildout of the General Plan would accommodate future development of residential and non-residential uses within the Planning Area, resulting in increased jobs and population. These future uses could increase the number of people and structures subject to fire hazards originating within or outside the Planning Area. Implementation of the General Plan would allow for new or higher density development within mapped FHSZs in the southwestern portion of the Planning Area, which could exacerbate wildfire risks and increase exposure to City residents, employees, or visitors to increased pollutant concentrations from wildfire or result in the uncontrollable spread of a wildfire. As discussed in the State Office of the

Attorney General's *Best Practices for Analyzing and Mitigating Wildfire Impacts of Development Projects Under the California Environmental Quality Act*,[1] variables influencing a project's impact on wildfire risk includes:

- Project density. Fire spread and structure loss are more likely to occur in low- to intermediate developments because there are more people present to ignite a fire (as compared to undeveloped land), and the development is not concentrated enough (as compared to high-density developments) to disrupt fire spread by removing or substantially fragmenting wildland vegetation.
- Project location in the landscape. How a development project is planned within the landscape determines to what extent it will influence fire risk. For instance, siting structures in rugged terrain or on the top of steep hills may increase wildfire risk.
- Water supply and infrastructure. The adequacy of water supplies and infrastructure to address fire fighting, including supply and pressure and the potential loss of power.

The General Plan Land Use Map designates the mapped FHSZs in the southwestern portion of the Planning Area for a mix of public facility, low to moderate density residential, and parks and open space uses. This area consists of both existing development and vacant land planned for development. The topography of the area is relatively flat, which is less susceptible to wildfire than steep slopes. Any future development under the General Plan would be required to comply with the provisions of federal, State, and local requirements related to wildland fire hazards, including State fire safety regulations associated with WUIs, fire-safe building standards, and defensible space requirements as part of the project's approval process. This includes Mountain House Municipal Code Title 4, Division 1, *Fire Prevention*, which adopts and establishes the California Fire Code. As development and infrastructure projects are considered by the City, each project would be evaluated for potential impacts, specific to that project, associated with wildland fire hazards as required under CEQA, as well as all applicable City regulations, reviews, and requirements pertaining to emergency access, as well as being subject to all applicable building code and fire code requirements. Project applications would also undergo review to determine the on-site and off-site improvements required, if any, to ensure proper delivery of domestic and fire flows to the project site. Compliance with applicable proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions related to preparedness and response to wildfire hazards would further minimize potential impacts. As such, implementation of the General Plan would have a ***less than significant*** impact with regard to this issue.

GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-4: Fire Hazards. A community with reduced exposure to urban and wildland fire hazards.

[1] State of California Office of the Attorney General, *Best Practices for Analyzing and Mitigating Wildfire Impacts of Development Projects Under the California Environmental Quality Act*, 2022.

Policy SAF-4.1: Wildfire Hazard Mapping. Maintain accurate and current geographic information system mapping of the City's Fire Hazard Severity Zones and update consistent with changes in hazard designations by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Policy SAF-4.2: Fire and Building Codes. Require that all new developments in the City comply with local, State, and federal regulatory standards such as the California Fire and Building Codes as well as other applicable fire safety standards.

Policy SAF-4.3: Subdivision Map Act. Ensure compliance with the Subdivision Map Act requirements for structural fire protection and suppression services, subdivision requirements for on/offsite improvements, ingress and egress, street standards, and other concerns.

Policy SAF-4.5: Water Supply and Fire Flow. Coordinate with the City's water purveyor to ensure necessary water supply systems and fire flow for structural fire suppression are provided and maintained.

Policy SAF-4.6: Fire Safe Design. Consider fire safe design (i.e., fire-resistant building and site design, materials, and landscaping) for development within Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as part of the development review process.

Policy SAF-4.7: Fire Protection Plans. Require adequate fire protection plans and emergency vehicle access for new development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Policy SAF-4.8: Standards for New Development. Require ongoing brush management, fuel management/modification, defensible space, fire-resistant landscaping, visible home and street addressing and signage, and other project design features for new development located in Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as part of the review process.

Policy SAF-4.9: Development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Avoid or minimize new residential development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as feasible.

Action SAF-4a: Maintain and regularly update the City's Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map for changes in fire hazard severity zones consistent with changes in hazard designations by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Action SAF-4b: Locate, design, and construct development to provide adequate defensibility against wildland fires and minimize the risk of structural loss from wildland fires.

Action SAF-4c: Maintain an ongoing fire inspection program to reduce fire hazards associated with multifamily development, critical facilities, public assembly facilities, industrial buildings, and nonresidential buildings.

Action SAF-4d: Require that all new habitable structures be designed in accordance with the most recent California Building and Fire Codes with local amendments adopted by the City, including the use of fire sprinklers in residential structures.

Action SAF-4e: During the development review process, require that all new development projects have an adequate water supply (e.g., sprinklers, fire hose terminals, and fire suppression systems) and fire flow to meet the fire protection needs of project occupants.

Action SAF-4f: Mitigate, as feasible, existing nonconforming development to contemporary fire safety standards, including road standards and vegetative hazards.

Impact 3.16-3: General Plan implementation could require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment (Less Than Significant)

Implementation of the proposed Project would not directly approve or construct any specific development or infrastructure project. However, buildout of the General Plan would accommodate future development of residential and non-residential uses within the Planning Area, resulting in increased jobs and population. While there is the potential that future development in or near FHSZs could require the installation of infrastructure to serve the specific development being proposed, the Planning Area is generally developed and infrastructure occurs within and adjacent to most development sites within the Planning Area, including in the southwestern portion of the City.

Maintenance of existing infrastructure and the potential installation of new infrastructure for future projects in the Planning Area would be required to comply with fire and building code requirements. Applicable building code and fire code requirements include provisions for fire-resistant building materials, the clearance of debris, and fire safety requirements during demolition and construction activities. The potential for future projects to impact environmental resources to meet compliance with fire development standards, such as fuel breaks and clearance requirements, would require environmental evaluation under CEQA to identify any site-specific impacts. In addition, any development in the City would need to comply with applicable requirements to ensure that new developments have access to necessary utilities, and any additional utility construction complies with all code requirements. Additionally, the General Plan includes policies to protect structures and utility infrastructure against potential wildfire risk. As such, implementation of the General Plan would have a ***less than significant*** impact with regard to this issue.

GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-4: Fire Hazards. A community with reduced exposure to urban and wildland fire hazards.

Policy SAF-4.1: Wildfire Hazard Mapping. Maintain accurate and current geographic information system mapping of the City's Fire Hazard Severity Zones and update consistent with changes in hazard designations by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Policy SAF-4.2: Fire and Building Codes. Require that all new developments in the City comply with local, State, and federal regulatory standards such as the California Fire and Building Codes as well as other applicable fire safety standards.

Policy SAF-4.3: Subdivision Map Act. Ensure compliance with the Subdivision Map Act requirements for structural fire protection and suppression services, subdivision requirements for on/offsite improvements, ingress and egress, street standards, and other concerns.

Policy SAF-4.5: Water Supply and Fire Flow. Coordinate with the City's water purveyor to ensure necessary water supply systems and fire flow for structural fire suppression are provided and maintained.

Policy SAF-4.6: Fire Safe Design. Consider fire safe design (i.e., fire-resistant building and site design, materials, and landscaping) for development within Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as part of the development review process.

Policy SAF-4.7: Fire Protection Plans. Require adequate fire protection plans and emergency vehicle access for new development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Policy SAF-4.8: Standards for New Development. Require ongoing brush management, fuel management/modification, defensible space, fire-resistant landscaping, visible home and street addressing and signage, and other project design features for new development located in Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as part of the review process.

Policy SAF-4.9: Development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Avoid or minimize new residential development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as feasible.

Action SAF-4a: Maintain and regularly update the City's Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map for changes in fire hazard severity zones consistent with changes in hazard designations by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Action SAF-4b: Locate, design, and construct development to provide adequate defensibility against wildland fires and minimize the risk of structural loss from wildland fires.

Action SAF-4c: Maintain an ongoing fire inspection program to reduce fire hazards associated with multifamily development, critical facilities, public assembly facilities, industrial buildings, and nonresidential buildings.

Action SAF-4d: Require that all new habitable structures be designed in accordance with the most recent California Building and Fire Codes with local amendments adopted by the City, including the use of fire sprinklers in residential structures.

Action SAF-4e: During the development review process, require that all new development projects have an adequate water supply (e.g., sprinklers, fire hose terminals, and fire suppression systems) and fire flow to meet the fire protection needs of project occupants.

Impact 3.16-4: General Plan implementation could expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes (Less Than Significant)

Wildfire can alter the hydrologic response of a watershed to the extent that even modest rainstorms can produce dangerous flash floods and debris flows.[2] A number of factors affect the likelihood of downstream flooding or landslide after a fire, including basin morphometry, burn severity, soil properties, and rainfall characteristics. Burned landscapes are particularly susceptible to debris flows because wildfire removes vegetation and alters soil properties, reducing the ability of the soil surface to absorb rainwater. These changes can result in increased runoff that may include large amounts of debris.

As discussed in Section 3.6, Geology, of this EIR, the Planning Area is relatively flat and the potential for landslides is considered to be low. As discussed in Section 3.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, future development anticipated under General Plan buildout could lead to potential flooding in a number of ways. New development projects have the potential to increase storm water velocity leading to off-site flooding, impede or redirect flood flows, or create or contribute to runoff which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. However, as discussed, all future projects would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local regulations related to flooding, which would reduce potential impacts. Additionally, the General Plan includes policies and actions to address fire and flooding. Through implementation of General Plan policies, and compliance with local, State, and federal regulations, the potential for exacerbated impacts related to flooding and landslides would be **less than significant**.

GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT MINIMIZE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Safety Element

Goal SAF-2: Flooding. Flood hazard and inundation risk reduction to safeguard residents, property, and the natural environment.

Policy SAF-2.3: Regional Coordination. Continue to work cooperatively with the San Joaquin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, County Office of Emergency Services, San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency, local reclamation districts and other agencies to:

A. Consider the need to expand the capacity of flood control facilities based on changing flood conditions associated with climate change and extreme weather;

B. Address storm drainage issues; and

[2] United States Geologic Survey (USGS), *Emergency Assessment of Post-Fire Debris-Flow Hazards*. Available at: https://landslides.usgs.gov/hazards/postfire_debrisflow/. Accessed March 2025.

C. Preplan for flood disaster response, such as required evacuation in the event of a serious breach of an upstream dam capable of flooding the community.

Policy SAF-2.5: Areas Susceptible to Flooding. Reduce flood hazards in developed areas susceptible to flooding (i.e. Special Flood Hazard Zones and areas known to the City to flood during intense or prolonged rainfall events) and require new development in these areas to incorporate measures designed to mitigate flood hazards.

Policy SAF-2.6: Adequate Stormwater Infrastructure. Maintain and regularly assess the status of local storm drainage infrastructure to ensure that the system is functioning properly.

Policy SAF-2.9: New Development. Ensure that adequate drainage and erosion control measures are provided during construction of all new development.

Goal SAF-4: Fire Hazards. A community with reduced exposure to urban and wildland fire hazards.

Policy SAF-4.1: Wildfire Hazard Mapping. Maintain accurate and current geographic information system mapping of the City's Fire Hazard Severity Zones and update consistent with changes in hazard designations by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Policy SAF-4.2: Fire and Building Codes. Require that all new developments in the City comply with local, State, and federal regulatory standards such as the California Fire and Building Codes as well as other applicable fire safety standards.

Policy SAF-4.3: Subdivision Map Act. Ensure compliance with the Subdivision Map Act requirements for structural fire protection and suppression services, subdivision requirements for on/offsite improvements, ingress and egress, street standards, and other concerns.

Policy SAF-4.5: Water Supply and Fire Flow. Coordinate with the City's water purveyor to ensure necessary water supply systems and fire flow for structural fire suppression are provided and maintained.

Policy SAF-4.6: Fire Safe Design. Consider fire safe design (i.e., fire-resistant building and site design, materials, and landscaping) for development within Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as part of the development review process.

Policy SAF-4.7: Fire Protection Plans. Require adequate fire protection plans and emergency vehicle access for new development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Policy SAF-4.8: Standards for New Development. Require ongoing brush management, fuel management/modification, defensible space, fire-resistant landscaping, visible home and street addressing and signage, and other project design features for new development located in Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as part of the review process.

Policy SAF-4.9: Development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Avoid or minimize new residential development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as feasible.

Action SAF-4a: Maintain and regularly update the City's Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map for changes in fire hazard severity zones consistent with changes in hazard designations by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Action SAF-4b: Locate, design, and construct development to provide adequate defensibility against wildland fires and minimize the risk of structural loss from wildland fires.

Action SAF-4c: Maintain an ongoing fire inspection program to reduce fire hazards associated with multifamily development, critical facilities, public assembly facilities, industrial buildings, and nonresidential buildings.

Action SAF-4d: Require that all new habitable structures be designed in accordance with the most recent California Building and Fire Codes with local amendments adopted by the City, including the use of fire sprinklers in residential structures.

Action SAF-4e: During the development review process, require that all new development projects have an adequate water supply (e.g., sprinklers, fire hose terminals, and fire suppression systems) and fire flow to meet the fire protection needs of project occupants.

3.16.4 REFERENCES

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Available at https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/fire-hazard-severity-zones. Accessed June 2026.

State of California Office of the Attorney General, *Best Practices for Analyzing and Mitigating Wildfire Impacts of Development Projects Under the California Environmental Quality Act*, 2022.

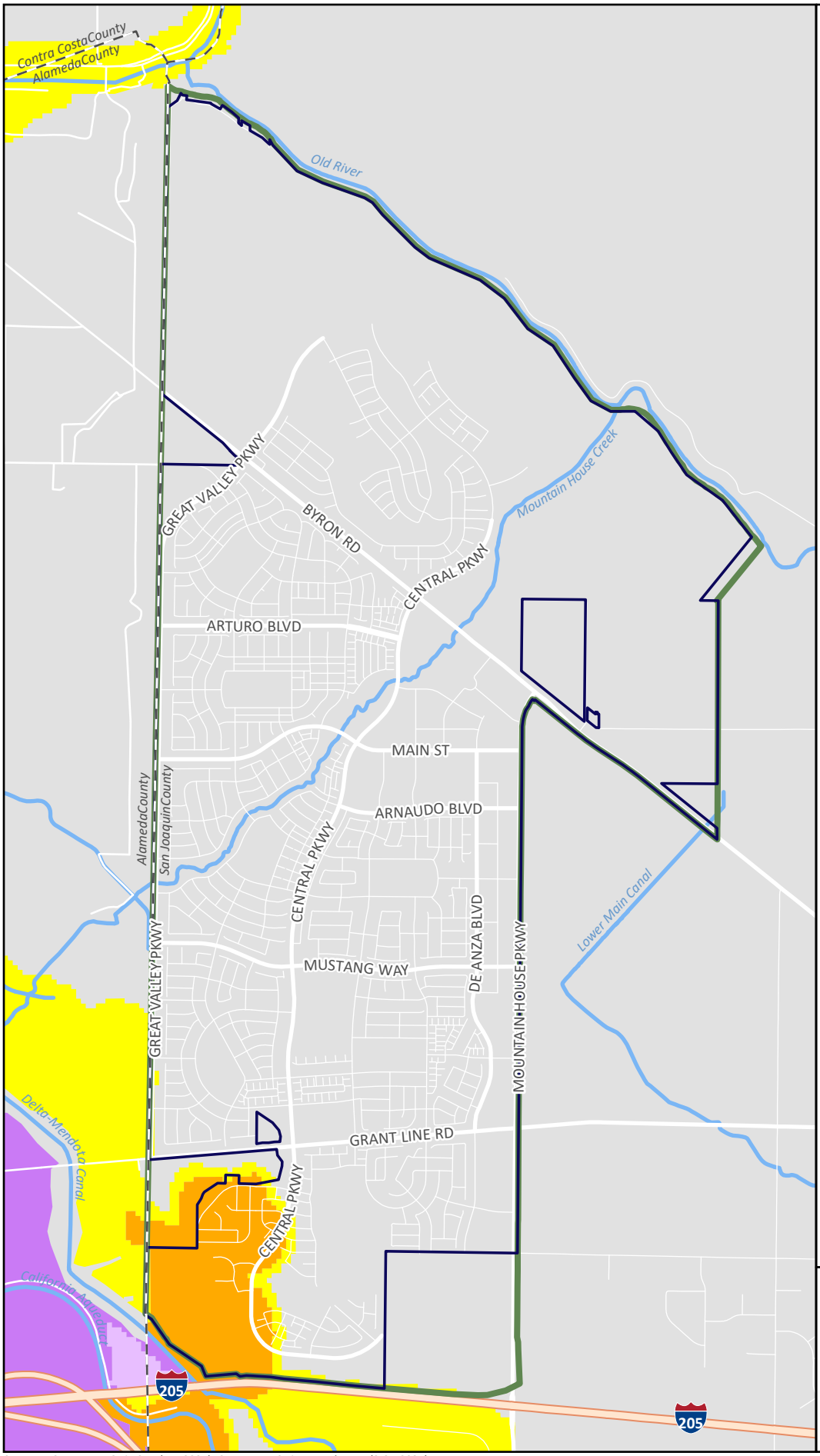

FIGURE 3.16-1.

FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES

Mountain House City Limits

Sphere of Influence (SOI)

County Boundary

Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Areas

Moderate

High

Very High*

NonWildland

Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Areas

Moderate

High

Very High*

* There are no areas with this designation within the mapped extent.

0 1,500 3,000

Feet

Prepared for the
City of Mountain House
by De Novo Planning Group
September 10, 2025.

DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP
A LAND USE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FIRM

Sources: CAL FIRE FHSZ in SRA (4-1-2024); CAL FIRE FHSZ in LRA, Phase II (2-24-2025);
City of Mountain House General Plan; San Joaquin County GIS; USGS National Hydrography Dataset

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CEQA requires an EIR to evaluate a Project's effects in relationship to broader changes that are occurring or that may foreseeably occur, in the surrounding environment. Accordingly, this chapter presents discussion of CEQA-mandated analysis for cumulative impacts, irreversible impacts, and growth inducement associated with the proposed General Plan.

4.1 CUMULATIVE SETTING AND IMPACT ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

CEQA requires that an EIR contain an assessment of the cumulative impacts that could be associated with the General Plan. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a), "an EIR shall discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable." "Cumulatively considerable," as defined in Section 15065(a)(3), means that "the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects" (as defined by Section 15130). As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15355, a cumulative impact consists of an impact that is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts. A cumulative impact occurs from:

> *…the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.*

In addition, Section 15130(b) identifies the following three elements as being necessary for an adequate cumulative analysis:

1) Either:

> (A) A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency; or,
>
> (B) A summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect. Such plans may include: a general plan, regional transportation plan, or plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. A summary of projections may also be contained in an adopted or certified prior environmental document for such a plan. Such projections may be supplemented with additional information such as a regional modeling program. Any such planning document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.

2) A summary of the expected environmental effects to be produced by those projects with specific reference to additional information stating where that information is available; and

3) A reasonable analysis of the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects. An EIR shall examine reasonable, feasible options for mitigating or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects.

Where a lead agency is examining a project with an incremental effect that is not "cumulatively considerable," a lead agency need not consider that effect significant, but shall briefly describe its basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable.

CUMULATIVE SETTING

Under CEQA, the discussion of cumulative impacts should focus on the severity of the impacts and the likelihood of their occurrence. The geographic scope for the cumulative analysis covers the Planning Area, which for the purposes of the General Plan includes the geographic area for which the General Plan provides a framework for long-term plans for growth, resource conservation, and the provision of public services. State law requires the Plan to include all territory within Mountain House's incorporated area as well as "any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning" (California Government Code Section 65300). The General Plan Planning Area includes all incorporated lands within the Mountain House City Limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI). The Planning Area encompasses approximately 4,792 acres, comprising 4,419 acres in the city limits and 373 acres in the SOI. Figure 2.0-2 shows the General Plan Planning Area. For some environmental topics, the geographic scope for the cumulative analysis also covers the boundaries of San Joaquin County, the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin, and/or other jurisdictional boundaries that are relevant to the particular environmental topic.

In most cases in this EIR, the buildout analysis utilizes a 20-year horizon, and 2045 is assumed to be the buildout year of the General Plan. The year 2045 is used as the benchmark year for the cumulative analysis contained in this EIR. This year was chosen based on the fact that the General Plan was developed to guide development in Mountain House over an approximate 20-year horizon. For each environmental issue addressed in this EIR, the analysis is based on various assumptions regarding existing and future conditions in Mountain House. Unless otherwise stated, the assumptions are as specified in Table 2.0-2, which includes a comparison overview of existing conditions, existing Master Plan, and proposed General Plan buildout projections in terms of population, housing units, non-residential development square footage, and jobs.

As shown in Table 2.0-2, buildout of the proposed General Plan land use map could yield up to 18,163 dwelling units, 54,258 persons, 7,869,878 square feet of non-residential development, and 8,199 jobs within Mountain House. This represents net development over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs. Compared to the existing Master Plan, the proposed General Plan represents a net increase of 1,566 dwelling units and 11,230 persons, and a net decrease of 96,186 square feet of non-residential development, and 1,615 jobs.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

Method of Analysis

Although the environmental effects of an individual project may not be significant when that project is considered separately, the combined effects of several projects may be significant when considered collectively. Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines requires a reasonable analysis of a project's cumulative impacts, which are defined as "two or more individual effects which, when considered together are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." The cumulative impact that results from several closely related projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time (State CEQA Guidelines 15355[b]). A cumulative impact analysis may be less detailed than the analysis of the project's individual effects (State CEQA Guidelines 15130[b]).

In order to assess cumulative impacts, an EIR must analyze either a list of past, present, and probable future projects (referred to as the "list approach") or a summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document (referred to as the "projection method"). Because of the programmatic nature of the Mountain House General Plan, this Draft EIR uses the **projection method** for the cumulative analysis and considers buildout of the proposed General Plan in addition to buildout of the other General Plans within San Joaquin County, as summarized and addressed in the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). Development of the 2022 RTP/SCS included review of land use plans for each jurisdiction within San Joaquin County, including:

- County of San Joaquin[1]
- City of Manteca
- City of Stockton
- City of Tracy
- City of Lodi
- City of Lathrop
- City of Escalon
- City of Ripon

The 2022 RTP/SCS projects that growth Countywide would result in 302,540 households, 411,748 employees, and a population of 987,241 in 2045 (see Figure 1.1 of the 2022 RTP/SCS). Appendix Q

[1] While the community of Mountain House was unincorporated at the time of the 2022 RTP/SCS, the city level local area forecasts developed as part of the 2022 RTP/SCS include the Mountain House Census Designated Place (CDP) separate from the County unincorporated area not including Mountain House. This is because the RTP/SCS recognizes that Mountain House is a fast growing urbanized area within the County that had taken initial steps towards incorporation and could become a city within the range of the forecast.

of the 2022 RTP/SCS provides more detailed projections of regional growth. Table 4.0-1 shows the population and housing forecasts between 2025 and 2045 in San Joaquin County.

TABLE 4.0-1: POPULATION AND HOUSING PROJECTIONS

	2025	***2030***	***2035***	***2040***	***2045***
POPULATION					
City of Escalon	8,158	8,452	8,599	8,718	8,831
City of Lathrop	33,203	40,955	48,472	56,164	64,142
City of Lodi	72,277	75,445	77,357	79,058	80,763
City of Manteca	92,810	100,537	107,115	113,904	121,234
City of Ripon	17,994	19,244	20,219	21,176	22,172
City of Stockton	335,798	348,258	354,700	359,991	365,114
City of Tracy	104,938	113,446	120,361	127,165	134,179
Mountain House CDP	24,381	29,223	34,029	39,153	44,707
Unincorporated	143,494	146,602	146,959	146,656	146,099
County Total	**833,053**	**882,163**	**917,811**	**951,985**	**987,241**
HOUSEHOLDS					
City of Escalon	2,823	2,912	2,962	3,006	3,046
City of Lathrop	9,291	11,561	13,794	16,098	18,459
City of Lodi	25,113	26,085	26,712	27,313	27,881
City of Manteca	28,708	30,899	32,829	34,871	37,027
City of Ripon	5,943	6,311	6,608	6,909	7,212
City of Stockton	102,073	105,132	106,722	108,140	109,358
City of Tracy	30,476	32,779	34,722	36,686	38,658
Mountain House CDP	6,966	8,378	9,806	11,343	12,990
Unincorporated	46,954	47,752	47,829	47,780	47,596
County Total	**258,347**	**271,810**	**281,984**	**292,147**	**302,229**

SOURCE: SJCOG 2022 RTP/SCS, APPENDIX Q, TABLES 8 AND 11.

The Projection Method serves as a guide to determine if the Mountain House General Plan is consistent with the long-term population, employment, and household projections of the region. If the proposed General Plan is generally consistent with regional projections, then it would also generally be consistent with regional efforts to address environmental problems such as air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG).

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts for most issue areas are not quantifiable and are therefore discussed in general qualitative terms as they pertain to development patterns in the surrounding region. An exception to this is a topic like GHG, which may be quantified by estimating GHG emissions resulting from future construction activities, mobile sources, etc., and determining the combined effects that may result. In consideration of the cumulative scenario described above, the proposed Project may result in the following cumulative impacts.

AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Impact 4.1: Cumulative degradation of the existing visual character of the region (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

While the Planning Area contains areas and viewsheds with scenic characteristics, such as views of open space and agricultural land, there are no officially designated scenic vista points in the Planning Area. Additionally, there are no officially designated scenic highways located in the vicinity of Mountain House. The most significant scenic resources within or adjacent to the Planning Area are views of natural resources, including: Old River, located along the northern boundary of the Planning Area; Mountain House Creek corridor, which runs in a southwesterly direction from northern to central Mountain House; open space and wetland areas, particularly those located in the Mountain House Creek corridor and in the northeast and northwest portions of the Planning Area; and the Altamont Hills, which are part of the Diablo Range, located west of the Planning Area in Alameda County. Other features that contribute to the visual character include the built environment (e.g., buildings, landscaping, and infrastructure) and surrounding agricultural lands. In addition, while there are no eligible or designated State Scenic Highways within the Planning Area, a portion of I-580 just south of the Planning Area (from I-205 to I-5) is designated as a State Scenic Highway. Additionally, the portion I-580 located west-southwest of the Planning Area that runs from I-5 (south of Vernalis) to I-80 is an eligible State Scenic Highway.

While the Project does not include any specific development proposals, implementation of the proposed General Plan would allow for new and expanded urban and suburban development throughout the Planning Area. The Land Use Map has been developed to preserve areas of open space and to ensure that new development is located in and around existing and planned urbanized areas, thus ensuring that new development is primarily an extension of the existing urban landscape, and minimizes interruption of views of nearby visual features. The proposed General Plan also includes policies designed to preserve and protect the City's scenic resources and scenic quality. Further, the City's Development Code and/or applicable Specific Plans would regulate maximum building height, building setbacks, building type and intensity, and other development characteristics in place in each zoning district to protect scenic resources that are within or visible from the Planning Area. Future development projects would be reviewed by the City to ensure that the project is consistent with applicable development standards and design guidelines. Additionally, applicable future land use changes and development projects would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis prior to consideration by the decision-making authority.

In addition to the development anticipated by the Project, it is anticipated that regional growth would continue to occur within the Project vicinity and other areas of San Joaquin County. Development of land uses and associated infrastructure is planned to occur in the future to accommodate growth envisioned in the general plans that are effective within the cumulative analysis area, including unincorporated San Joaquin County and the cities of Manteca, Stockton, Tracy, Lodi, Lathrop, Escalon, and Ripon. Similar to the General Plan Land Use Map, the majority of regional growth is anticipated to occur in and around existing urban development. However, regional growth has and will continue to result in cumulative aesthetic changes by converting undeveloped land into developed and occupied areas and increasing overall levels of lighting and

glare. Cumulative development entails grading/landform alteration, the development of structures, and the installation of roadways and other infrastructure that has altered and will continue to permanently alter the region's existing visual character. Subsequent projects implemented under the proposed General Plan would be required to be consistent with the policies and actions of the proposed General Plan and adopted regulations pertaining to aesthetics and lighting. With implementation of adopted policies and regulations provided in Section 3.1 (Aesthetics), the proposed General Plan would not considerably contribute to aesthetics impacts, including obstruction of scenic views, conversion of existing visual character, and increased lighting. The polices and actions included within the General Plan would reduce the cumulative aesthetics impacts of the General Plan. Therefore, the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to this cumulative impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Impact 4.2: Cumulative impacts to agricultural and forest resources (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

There are no forest lands or timberlands within the Mountain House Planning Area, and the proposed General Plan does not propose uses that would convert existing forest land to non-forest use. The Planning Area does not contain parcels zoned for forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production. Consequently, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not contribute to a cumulative conflict with forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production zoning or contribute to the cumulative loss or conversion of forest or timber resources.

Cumulative development anticipated through 2045 under the general plans of jurisdictions throughout San Joaquin County could result in the continued conversion of Important Farmland and other agricultural land to urban and other non-agricultural uses. Agricultural land is a finite resource, and permanent farmland conversion associated with regional growth would contribute to the incremental loss of agricultural resources. As shown in Table 3.2-1 and Figure 3.2-1, the Planning Area contains approximately 94.6 acres of Prime Farmland and 1.4 acres of Unique Farmland but does not contain any Farmland of Statewide Importance. Although future development associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan would likely result in the conversion of areas currently mapped as Prime Farmland or Unique Farmland to urban uses, the proposed General Plan would not expand the Planning Area, extend urban growth beyond the existing City limits and SOI, redesignate any agricultural use parcels to non-agricultural uses, or approve any specific development project. The proposed General Plan would therefore not create a substantial new farmland conversion impact beyond the long-established urban development pattern for Mountain House. In addition, Action LU-1e requires the City to work with San Joaquin County and SJCOG to address agricultural mitigation obligations associated with the conversion of prime agricultural soils and requires applicable development projects to participate in the County agricultural mitigation fee program and the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP), when applicable.

The City's Agriculture-Urban Reserve (AU) Zone is intended to retain in agriculture areas planned for future urban development until urban services and utilities can be provided in an orderly manner.

Existing agricultural operations on parcels zoned AU-20 are anticipated to remain in agricultural operation as an interim use until development is proposed. The proposed General Plan does not include any zone changes at this time, and parcels zoned AU-20 are designated for industrial uses under both existing and proposed conditions. Accordingly, the proposed General Plan would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning. There are also no Williamson Act contracts within the City or Planning Area, and the proposed General Plan would not alter Williamson Act contracts located outside the Planning Area.

Regional growth and infrastructure improvements could create development pressure or land use incompatibilities that indirectly result in the conversion of farmland within the vicinity of the Planning Area. Although continued regional growth could result in a significant cumulative loss of agricultural land within the County, the proposed General Plan would maintain Mountain House's long-established urban development pattern, would not extend growth beyond the existing City limits and SOI, and would address applicable agricultural mitigation obligations through Action LU-1e. The proposed General Plan would not conflict with agricultural or forest zoning or Williamson Act contracts and would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land. Therefore, the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts on agricultural and forestry resources would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

AIR QUALITY

Impact 4.3: Cumulative impact on the region's air quality (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)

Construction and operation of future development projects implemented under the General Plan, in addition to cumulative projects, would contribute to regional air quality impacts. Construction of the growth anticipated by the proposed General Plan has the potential to temporarily emit criteria air pollutant emissions through the use of heavy-duty construction equipment, and through vehicle trips generated by workers and haul trucks. In addition, fugitive dust emissions would result from demolition and various soil-handling activities. Mobile source emissions, primarily NOx and PM emissions (i.e., PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), would result from the use of diesel-powered on- and off-road vehicles and equipment. Construction emissions can vary substantially from day-to-day, depending on the level of activity and the specific type of construction activity. Operation of the future development accommodated by the General Plan would generate criteria air pollutant emissions from Project-generated vehicle trips traveling within the City, energy sources such as natural gas combustion, and area sources such as landscaping equipment and consumer products usage.

Table 3.3-6 in Section 3.3 compares the combined population and jobs growth (i.e. service population) anticipated under buildout of the existing Master Plan and the proposed Project. Table 3.3-7 shows the future baseline scenario vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and projected VMT following buildout of the proposed Project. As shown in the two tables, implementation of the proposed Project would result in an approximately 47.8 percent increase in VMT, which is greater than the projected 18.2 percent increase in combined population and jobs, relative to the two scenarios. Because the growth rate associated with the proposed General Plan is anticipated to be slower than

the VMT increase associated with it, the proposed Project is anticipated to result in VMT increases on a per service population basis.

The policies and actions included in the proposed General Plan cover the full breadth of air quality issues as recommended in the applicable air quality plans, and would further the fundamental goals of the SJVAPCD in reducing emissions of criteria pollutants associated with VMT, reducing building energy usage, and increasing opportunities for transit ridership in Mountain House and the surrounding areas. In addition, future development under the proposed General Plan would be required to comply with Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), State Implementation Plan (SIP), California Air Resources Board (CARB), San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) regulations, Title 24 energy efficiency standards, and the proposed General Plan policies and actions. However, as there is no way to determine the extent to which these regulations would be, or need to be, implemented, it is impossible to determine if potential impacts would be reduced to below regulatory thresholds. As project-specific information is not currently known, there are no known feasible mitigation measures that can be identified at this time, beyond the policies and actions listed in Section 3.3. Based on these impacts, the General Plan would contribute to a cumulative impact with regard to air quality in the region and within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB) as a whole; this is considered a **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable** impact.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Impact 4.4: Cumulative loss of biological resources, including habitats and special status species (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

Cumulative development anticipated throughout the greater San Joaquin County region would result in impacts to biological resources, including the permanent loss of habitat for special status species, corridor fragmentation, direct and indirect impacts to special status species, and reduction and degradation of sensitive habitat. Growth pressure from Mountain House and other surrounding cities and County areas would contribute to potential sprawl and conversion of undeveloped lands into developed areas. Biological resources are a limited resource, and the cumulative loss is considered significant.

While the Project does not include any specific development proposals, subsequent projects implemented under the proposed General Plan would be required to be consistent with the policies and actions of the proposed General Plan. The implementation of an individual project would require a detailed and site-specific review of the site to determine the presence or absence of movement corridors, special-status species, and sensitive habitat on a given project site. If movement corridors, special-status species, or sensitive habitat are present and disturbance is required, federal and State laws require measures to reduce, avoid, or compensate for impacts to these resources. Additionally, implementation of the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP) for future implementing projects at a project-specific level would minimize direct, indirect, and cumulative biological impacts.

Implementation of the General Plan would not conflict with the provisions of the SJMSCP, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. The SJMSCP, in accordance with ESA

Section 10(a)(1)(B) and CESA Section 2081(b) Incidental Take Permits, provides compensation for the Conversion of Open Space to non-Open Space uses which affect the plant, fish and wildlife species covered by the Plan (i.e., covered species). The 97 SJMSCP covered species include 25 State and/or federally listed species. The San Joaquin Council of Governments uses the collected SJMSCP fees to preserve open space land of comparable types throughout the County, often coordinating with other private or public land trusts to purchase conservation easements or buy land outright for preservation. An impact is not considered cumulatively considerable if a project is required to implement or fund its fair share of mitigation measures designed to alleviate a cumulative impact (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 (a)(3)). Compliance with the SJMSCP addresses impacts to biological resources, including special-status species, on a local and regional level. Therefore, the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to this cumulative impact would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

CULTURAL AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Impact 4.5: Cumulative impacts on historical resources, archaeological resources, human remains, and tribal cultural resources (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

Cultural resource impacts are site specific and generally do not combine to result in cumulative impacts. Construction of individual development projects may result in the discovery and removal of cultural resources, including historic and archaeological resources, tribal cultural resources, and the inadvertent discovery of human remains. Future development projects would be required to comply with federal, State, and local regulations, which would reduce the risk to such resources. Site-specific development consistent with the General Plan that has the potential to impact known or unknown historic and/or archaeological resources would require a resource assessment to determine the significance of potential resources and if potential impacts are identified, to incorporate mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to the identified resources. In the event of inadvertent discovery of human remains, Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e), and PRC Section 5097.98 would dictate the proper identification and handling. Adherence to the General Plan policies and actions, and existing federal, State, and local regulations would avoid and/or minimize a cumulative loss of these important resources if they are identified during project-specific surveys or construction activities. Therefore, the General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative cultural and tribal cultural resource impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Impact 4.6: Cumulative impacts related to geology and soils (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

Geologic impacts are site-specific and not additive in character. Seismic, geologic, and soil conditions within the Planning Area and larger San Joaquin County region would vary by location and site-specific suitability for development would not be uniform. Future development within the region, including the City, would contribute to the exposure of people and structures to geologic and seismic hazards. However, as concluded in Section 3.6 (Geology and Soils), geologic and seismic hazards would be reduced to less than significant levels following conformance with the established

regulatory framework (e.g., CBSC and Municipal Code requirements) and implementation of the proposed General Plan policies and actions. If determined necessary, project-specific mitigation would be incorporated to reduce cumulative seismic, geologic, and soil impacts to a less than significant level. If a specific site were determined to create a significant impact that could not be feasibly mitigated, the site would not be appropriate for development. These processes, along with compliance with federal and State laws, local building codes, and public safety standards, would result in less than significant cumulative impacts related to potential seismic, geologic, and soil hazards.

Cumulative grading and excavation throughout San Joaquin County could disturb or destroy unique paleontological resources contained within subsurface geologic deposits; however, these impacts are site specific and generally do not combine to result in cumulative impacts. Subsequent project-level environmental review and implementation of General Plan policies and actions would reduce the proposed General Plan's contribution to the cumulative loss of paleontological resources. As a result, the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative geologic and soil impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND ENERGY

Impact 4.7: Cumulative impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions and energy (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)

Implementation of the General Plan would not directly result in the creation of GHG emissions; however, subsequent development anticipated under General Plan buildout would result in new projects that would increase short- and long-term GHG emissions in the Planning Area. As with the Project, related cumulative development within the region would result in GHG emissions.

GHG emissions are cumulative by nature, given that they spread throughout the atmosphere on a global scale. In determining the significance of a project's contribution to anticipated adverse future conditions, a lead agency should generally undertake a two-step analysis. The first question is whether the *combined* effects from *both* the proposed project *and* other projects would be cumulatively significant. If the agency answers this inquiry in the affirmative, the second question is whether "the project's *incremental* effects are cumulatively considerable" and thus significant in and of themselves. The cumulative project list for this issue (climate change) comprises anthropogenic (i.e., human-made) GHG emissions sources across the globe and no project alone would reasonably be expected to contribute to a noticeable incremental change to the global climate. However, legislation and executive orders on the subject of climate change in California have established a statewide context and process for developing an enforceable statewide cap on GHG emissions. Given the nature of environmental consequences from GHGs and global climate change, CEQA requires that lead agencies consider evaluating the cumulative impacts of GHGs. Small contributions to this cumulative impact (from which significant effects are occurring and are expected to worsen over time) may be potentially considerable and, therefore, significant.

The "per service population" metric, which accounts for both population and employment, is a common way to analyze the GHG efficiency of new development in comparison to an existing

baseline. As discussed in Section 3.7 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy), implementation of the proposed Project would result in an approximately 47.8 percent increase in VMT which is greater than the projected 18.2 percent increase in combined population and jobs, relative to the two scenarios. Because the growth rate associated with the proposed General Plan is anticipated to be slower than the VMT increase associated with it, the proposed Project is anticipated to result in VMT increases on a per service population basis.

As future development projects are received and reviewed by the City in subsequent years, those projects will be reviewed for consistency with the General Plan and all relevant State-level programs and requirements. All future projects must implement the most current version of the Title 24 energy efficiency requirements, as required by State law. Consistency with the General Plan and other mandatory State-level programs would ensure that future project-level contributions to global climate change would be less than significant. Moreover, as identified in Section 3.7, buildout of the General Plan would not be expected to cause an inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary use of energy resources nor conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

The General Plan includes policies and actions that would minimize potential impacts associated with GHG emissions in the Planning Area from future development and improvement projects, and would comply with State requirements under AB 32, SB 375, and SB 32. Subsequent development projects will be required to comply with the General Plan and adopted federal, State, and local regulations, which would reduce GHG emissions at the project level. While compliance with relevant plans, policies, and regulations would reduce GHG emissions, the associated reductions of GHG emissions are not quantifiable, especially at the programmatic level. As such, even with implementation of the goals, policies, and actions contained in the proposed General Plan, there is no guarantee that the General Plan alone would be sufficient to limit GHGs to the extent required by AB 32, SB 375, SB 32, and other federal and State regulations. Therefore, out of an abundance of caution, General Plan implementation is considered to have the potential to generate GHG emissions that could have a significant impact on the environment and/or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. This impact is considered a ***cumulatively considerable*** and ***significant and unavoidable*** impact.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Impact 4.8: Cumulative impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

Cumulative development anticipated through 2045 within San Joaquin County and the surrounding region may involve the routine transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, which may involve the use of equipment that contains hazardous materials (e.g., solvents and fuels or diesel-fueled equipment) or the transportation of excavated soil and/or groundwater containing contaminants. Furthermore, because of the regional nature of development, some future land uses could transport or use hazardous materials within one-quarter mile of a school, or other sensitive receptors such as hospitals and residences. Regional development and infrastructure projects could also increase the potential for accidental spills, leaks, fires, explosions, improper disposal, or

disturbance of contaminated soil or groundwater; occur on properties included on hazardous materials databases or on sites subsequently added to a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5; and increase the number of people and structures exposed to wildland fire hazard.

As with specific projects resulting from implementation of the General Plan, cumulative development would be required to evaluate individual hazards and hazardous materials impacts at the project-level. Hazardous materials incidents are typically site-specific, with associated health and safety risks generally limited to those individuals using the materials or to persons in the immediate vicinity of the materials. While some cumulative impacts would potentially occur in the region as individual projects are constructed, the proposed General Plan policies and actions, as well as local, State, and federal regulations, would reduce the risk to people associated with hazards and hazardous materials in the region. Considering the protection granted by local, State, and federal agencies and their requirements for the use of hazardous materials and other potential hazards in the region, as described in Section 3.8 (Hazards and Hazardous Materials), the overall cumulative impact for hazards impacts would not be significant. As a result, the General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative hazards and hazardous materials impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Impact 4.9: Cumulative impacts related to hydrology and water quality. (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

Cumulative hydrology and water quality impacts associated with implementation of the General Plan are analyzed based on development within the Planning Area, San Joaquin River Hydrologic Region, and San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin. While the General Plan does not propose site-specific development, construction of future development projects allowed under the land use designations of the proposed General Plan has the potential to result in construction-related water quality impacts, impacts to groundwater recharge, and cause flooding, erosion, or siltation from the alteration of drainage patterns. Further, impacts resulting from buildout of the General Plan and potential development of the Planning Area would include substantial grading, site preparation, and an increase in urbanized development. Increased development in the County, including the Planning Area, would contribute to cumulative water quality impacts.

Subsequent development projects under the General Plan would result in new impervious surfaces and could reduce rainwater infiltration and groundwater recharge; however, the General Plan would not appreciably add to the volume of impervious surfaces in the Planning Area. As individual projects are constructed, the General Plan policies and actions, as well as federal, State, and local regulations, would substantially reduce potential cumulative impacts. Considering the protection granted by local, State, and federal agencies and their permit and monitoring requirements, as discussed in Section 3.9 (Hydrology and Water Quality), and with implementation of the policies and actions included within the General Plan, the overall cumulative impact would not be significant. As a result, the General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative hydrology impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

LAND USE, POPULATION, AND HOUSING

Impact 4.10: Cumulative impacts related to local land use, population, and housing (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

Development of cumulative projects in the City and region would be reviewed on a project-by-project basis and, if found to be potentially significant, required to mitigate land use impacts. Each project would be evaluated for consistency with the project site's applicable general plan land use designation and zoning, adopted general plan goals, policies, and actions, and other applicable regional land use plans. As analyzed in Section 3.10 (Land Use, Population, and Housing), the proposed General Plan would result in less than significant impact related to land use and relevant planning. Therefore, the incremental impact of the proposed Project, when considered in combination with development within the region, would not result in cumulatively considerable land use impacts.

The land uses allowed under the proposed General Plan provide opportunities for cohesive new growth at infill locations within existing urbanized areas, as well as new growth adjacent to existing urbanized areas within the Planning Area, but would not create physical division within existing communities. New development and redevelopment projects would be designed to complement the character of existing neighborhoods and provide connectivity between existing development and new development within the cumulative analysis area. The proposed General Plan would not modify any existing roadways or allow for any specific circulation system projects or improvements, including the addition of new roadways, with the potential to divide an established community. Moreover, with implementation of General Plan policies and actions intended to guide growth to appropriate areas and provide services necessary to accommodate growth, the land uses allowed under the proposed General Plan, the infrastructure anticipated to accommodate proposed land uses, and the goal and policy framework would not induce growth that would exceed adopted thresholds. Therefore, the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative land use, population, and housing impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Impact 4.11: Cumulative impacts related to mineral resources (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

Implementation of the Project would establish the City of Mountain House General Plan as the long-term policy framework for future land use and development within the Planning Area; however, it does not itself approve any specific mining operation or mineral extraction activity. No known mineral resource of regional or statewide value has been identified within the Planning Area. Mineral lands in Mountain House have not been classified or designated under the Mineral Resource Zone classification system, and there are no active mining operations in the City. Although four plugged and abandoned oil wells are located in the northern part of the City, those wells are subject to oversight by the California Department of Conservation's Geologic Energy Management Division for construction safety purposes and do not indicate the presence of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State. Therefore, the proposed General Plan's

incremental contribution to cumulative mineral resources impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

NOISE

Impact 4.12: Cumulative impacts related to noise (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)

The geographic setting for noise is typically localized and considers development within the Planning Area adjacent to neighboring jurisdictions.

Table 3.12-7 shows the future noise levels and the increase in noise levels associated with traffic on the local roadway network under the proposed General Plan, versus the existing (Baseline 2025) conditions. As indicated in Table 3.12-7, the related traffic noise level increases with a 20-year circulation system buildout of the proposed General Plan are predicted to increase between 0.0 to 2.7 dB versus the existing Baseline (2025) conditions. As shown, buildout of the General Plan may contribute to an exceedance of the City's transportation noise standards and/or result in significant increases in traffic noise levels at existing sensitive receptors

The General Plan includes policies and actions that would minimize exposure to excessive noise, including noise associated with traffic; refer to Section 3.12 (Noise). Implementation of these General Plan noise policies and actions will reduce noise and land use compatibility impacts from vehicular traffic noise sources and would ensure that new development consistent with the General Plan prepares noise studies and/or is designed to include noise-attenuating features as appropriate, consistent with the future traffic noise levels identified in Table 3.12-7 for important roadways at community buildout. These measures would involve appropriate noise attenuation to meet the City's exterior and interior noise standards for new development. While implementation of the proposed policies and actions of the General Plan will reduce noise and land use compatibility impacts from vehicular traffic noise sources and would ensure that new development is designed to include noise-attenuating features, the traffic noise increases associated with the proposed General Plan exceed the applicable noise exposure criteria. Specifically, as described under Impact 3.12-1, General Plan buildout may contribute to an exceedance of the City's transportation noise standards and/or result in significant increases in traffic noise levels at existing sensitive receptors at Grant Line Road e/o Mountain House Parkway. As such, the General Plan's contribution to cumulative traffic noise along this roadway segment would also be considered **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Impact 4.13: Cumulative impacts to public services and recreation (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

Development accommodated under the proposed General Plan would result in additional residents and businesses in the City. As shown in Table 2.0-2, buildout of the proposed General Plan land use map could yield up to 18,163 dwelling units, 54,258 persons, 7,869,878 square feet of non-residential development, and 8,199 jobs within Mountain House. This represents net development

over existing conditions of 9,723 dwelling units, 25,463 persons, 7,209,575 square feet of non-residential development, and 7,107 jobs.

Development anticipated through 2045 under the proposed General Plan would result in increased demand for public services, including fire protection, law enforcement, schools, parks, libraries, and other public and governmental services. The General Plan includes policies and actions to ensure that public services are provided at acceptable levels and that the City will maintain and implement public facility master plans, in collaboration with appropriate outside service providers and other agencies, to ensure compliance with appropriate regional, state, and federal laws and to provide efficient public facilities and services to Mountain House.

Cumulative growth that would occur within San Joaquin County and the region over the life of the proposed General Plan will result in increased demand for public services, including fire protection, law enforcement, schools, parks, libraries, and parks and recreation. As the demand for public services and recreation increases, there will likely be a need to address acceptable service ratios, response times, and other performance standards. New or expanded service structures (e.g., offices, maintenance and administrative buildings, schools, parks, fire facilities, libraries, etc.) will be needed to provide for adequate staffing, equipment, and appropriate facilities to serve growth within the cumulative analysis area.

The environmental effect of providing public services and recreation is associated with the physical impacts of providing new and expanded facilities. The specific impacts of providing new and expanded facilities cannot be determined at this time, as the General Plan does not propose or authorize development nor does it designate specific sites for new or expanded public facilities. However, the facilities would be primarily provided on sites with land use designations that allow such uses and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the governmental facilities would likely be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the General Plan. These impacts are described in the relevant chapters (Chapters 3.1 through 3.16, and 4.0) of this Draft EIR. Any future development under the General Plan would be required to comply with regulations, policies, and standards included in the General Plan, and would be subject to CEQA review as appropriate. The General Plan includes a range of policies and actions to ensure that public services are provided in a timely fashion, are adequately funded, are coordinated between the City and appropriate service agency, that new development funds its fair share of services, and that the effects of new development of parks, schools, and other public service facilities are appropriately considered. Payment of applicable impact fees, and ongoing revenues that would come from property taxes, sales taxes, and other revenues generated by the future projects, would ensure that the City maintains acceptable service ratios and that the expansion of public service facilities are adequately funded. Therefore, the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative public services and recreation impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable*.**

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

Impact 4.14: Cumulative impacts on the transportation network (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)

Overall, the Project is a programmatic land use plan. Any future development within the City would be assessed for consistency with local policies and ordinances, including the Municipal Code and General Plan goals and policies, as appropriate. Therefore, the Project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts related to transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities would not be cumulatively considerable. In addition, the types of land uses included as part of the General Plan are generally similar to existing and surrounding uses and are intended to be compatible with the existing and planned land uses in the Planning Area and in the surrounding area. Additionally, the City would review site-specific developments to ensure the provision of adequate ingress and egress and that other emergency requirements would be implemented. Implementation of the Project would therefore not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact relative to an increase in hazards due to a geometric design feature.

Table 3.14-9 compares the VMT per dwelling unit and VMT per employee associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan with the threshold. As shown in the table, the proposed General Plan would exceed the VMT threshold for residential projects but would not exceed the threshold for employment-related land uses.

The General Plan includes policies designed to increase non-vehicular travel and reduce VMT. Specifically, the proposed Circulation Element directs the City to provide additional pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities and opportunities, promote non-vehicle travel modes, and coordinate on trip and VMT reduction efforts. The proposed Environmental Justice Element also contains policies and actions to encourage active transportation and increase connectivity in the City. General Plan policies and actions that would contribute to reductions in VMT are identified below. These policies and actions would help to reduce the severity of VMT impacts to the greatest extent feasible

While the General Plan goals, policies, and actions listed below are anticipated to achieve meaningful reductions in VMT generated by land uses within the City, reductions in VMT per capita from 29.5 to 25.5 percent would be required to achieve thresholds as shown in Table 3.14-9. The City cannot demonstrate at this time that the General Plan policies and actions would reduce VMT to the degree required to meet these thresholds. VMT reduction depends on factors such as demographic change, household preferences for housing types and locations, the cost of fuel, and the competitiveness of regional transit relative to driving, which relates to congestion along vehicular commute routes that are not under the City's jurisdiction, as well as transit provided by agencies other than the City. Additionally, future development projects under the General Plan would be required to complete project-specific VMT analyses, including Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures designed to reduce VMT, if required. While such measures are likely to result in less than significant VMT impacts when considered at an individual project level, they cannot be guaranteed and are not possible to fully quantify or mitigate at a citywide level as part of this programmatic analysis. Hence, it cannot be demonstrated that additional TDM measures could reduce VMT per capita or per employee by the amounts needed to meet the impact thresholds. Therefore, this is considered a **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable** impact.

UTILITIES

Impact 4.15: Cumulative impacts related to utilities (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)

Cumulative development that is anticipated through 2045 within the service areas for the Byron Bethany Irrigation District's (BBID) and the City utilities divisions will result in increased demand for water, sewer, solid waste disposal, electrical, natural gas, and telecommunication services.

In general, expanded and new utility infrastructure will be needed to serve growth contemplated in the General Plan. The environmental effect of providing the utility services is associated with the physical impacts of providing new and expanded facilities. The specific impacts of providing new and expanded facilities cannot be determined at this time, as the General Plan does not propose or authorize development nor does it designate specific sites for new or expanded facilities and infrastructure associated with utilities. However, the facilities would be primarily provided on sites with land use designations that allow such uses and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the governmental facilities would likely be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the General Plan. These impacts are described in the relevant chapters (Chapters 3.1 through 3.16, and 4.0) of this Draft EIR. Any future development under the General Plan would be required to comply with regulations, policies, and standards included in the General Plan, and would be subject to CEQA review as appropriate.

Water. As discussed under Impact 3.15-2, future water supplies are not projected to be adequate to meet the demand that would be generated by General Plan buildout for single-dry and multiple-dry years. Further, implementation of future development projects consistent with the General Plan could require construction of new water infrastructure, including upsizing of on- and off-site water lines where existing water lines are not sufficient to accommodate the increased water demand. These determinations would be made on a project-by-project basis. To address anticipated supply shortfalls during single- and multiple dry year conditions, the City may implement one or more water shortage response actions, including declaration of a water shortage stage. Additionally, BBID and the City are investigating additional supply and water management options, such as increased storage capacity, recycled water development, and emergency interties, to improve drought resilience. Because the water supply diversification projects and other measures depend on future agreements, regulatory approvals, and environmental review, it is uncertain whether they would be implemented in time, or would provide sufficient supply, to meet projected single- and multiple dry-year demand. Therefore, impacts associated with sufficient water supplies are considered to be ***cumulatively considerable*** and ***significant and unavoidable*****.**

Wastewater. As discussed in Impact 3.15-1 and 3.15-3, the ultimate capacity of the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) would be able to meet the projected wastewater production from Mountain House through 2045. The total amount of projected wastewater flow to the Mountain House WWTP under the proposed General Plan would be approximately 4.5 MGD. The WWTP currently has 4.0 MGD capacity and is expandable to 5.4 MGD as necessary by adding additional membrane. Additionally, the applicable NPDES permit for the WWTP (NPDES Permit R5-2023-0033-01, as amended by Order R5-2025-0050) authorizes an ADWF of up to 5.4 MGD. Additionally,

wastewater treatment and conveyance facilities would be evaluated at the project-level in association with subsequent development projects. However, the facilities would be primarily provided on sites with land use designations that allow such uses and the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the facilities would likely be similar to those associated with new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure projects under the General Plan. As future development and infrastructure projects are considered by the City, each project will be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and other applicable regulations. Subsequent development and infrastructure projects would also be analyzed for potential environmental impacts, consistent with the requirements of CEQA. Therefore, cumulative wastewater impacts are considered to be less than significant and the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative wastewater impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

Stormwater. Development under the proposed General Plan would result in increased areas of impervious surfaces throughout the Planning Area, resulting in the need for additional or expanded stormwater drainage, conveyance, and retention infrastructure. The specific impacts of providing new and expanded drainage facilities cannot be determined at this time, as the General Plan does not propose or approve any specific development project nor does it designate specific sites for new or expanded public facilities. Stormwater drainage and conveyance facilities would be evaluated at the project-level in association with subsequent development projects. As future development and infrastructure projects are considered by the City, each project will be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and other applicable regulations. Subsequent development and infrastructure projects would also be analyzed for potential environmental impacts, consistent with the requirements of CEQA. As such, this is a less than significant impact and the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative stormwater impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

The policies and actions listed in DEIR Chapters 3.9 (Hydrology), and 3.15 (Utilities) would further ensure that there is adequate stormwater drainage and flood control infrastructure to serve future development under the General Plan, and would ensure that future drainage and flood control infrastructure projects do not result in adverse environmental impacts.

Solid Waste. The development of future land uses under the proposed General Plan would increase solid waste disposal needs and could have the potential to require the construction of new landfill facilities, or expansion of existing facilities. The City's projected increase in solid waste generation associated with buildout of the General Plan is within the permitted capacity of the Foothill Sanitary Landfill, which has a remaining capacity of approximately 125,000,000 cubic yards as of 2010, a maximum permitted throughput of 1,500 TPD, and has a projected capacity to serve residents and businesses until approximately 2082, well beyond the planning horizon of the General Plan. In addition, the City disposes of solid waste to a number of other landfills. Conservatively assuming the Foothill Sanitary Landfill is unable to accept solid waste, the Kirby Canyon Recycling & Disposal Facility, Stanislaus County Fink Road Landfill, and/or any number of regional facilities would have adequate capacity to accommodate the City's projected solid waste generation through the

planning horizon. The proposed General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions to further reduce the project's impact on solid waste services, as identified in Section 3.15 (Utilities). With the implementation of these policies, potential solid waste impacts would be reduced to less than significant impact and the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative solid waste impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

WILDFIRE

Impact 4.16: Cumulative impact related to wildfire (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

The Planning Area is not within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) and does not contain any Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs). However, there are Moderate and High FHSZ areas within SRA near Mountain House's southwestern boundary. The City has programs and regulations in place and works in accordance with regional services to provide adequate emergency response to wildfire threats. The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions to ensure adequate evacuation routes and services, and that up to date information is available to the City and the public in the event of an emergency. Important new and expanded critical facilities would also be located in a way to ensure resiliency and functionality in the event of a natural disaster.

No specific aspect as a result of implementation of the General Plan will substantially alter the slope, prevailing winds, or other factors that would increase exposure to residents, employees or visitors to increased pollutant concentrations from wildfire or result in the uncontrollable spread of a wildfire. In addition, while it cannot be stated with certainty that future risks associated with post-fire flooding and debris flow would not occur in the Planning Area, implementation of the General Plan would not exacerbate this risk. The proposed General Plan is a long-range policy document that does not include site-specific designs or plans, and does not propose any entitlements for specific developments. The potential for future projects to impact environmental resources are minimized through compliance with fire development standards and would require site-specific environmental analysis as required under CEQA. Implementation of the various policies and actions contained in the General Plan would further reduce potential impacts associated with the construction and expansion of infrastructure. Overall, implementation of the proposed General Plan goals and policies, as well as compliance with applicable State and local requirements, would ensure that the proposed General Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative wildfire impacts would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

4.2 GROWTH-INDUCING EFFECTS

INTRODUCTION

Section 15126.2(e) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed action. A growth-inducing impact is defined by the CEQA Guidelines as:

> *The way in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove*

> *obstacles to population growth…It is not assumed that growth in an area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.*

Based on the CEQA Guidelines, growth inducement is any growth that exceeds planned growth of an area and results in new development that would not have taken place without implementation of the project. A project can have direct and/or indirect growth inducement potential. Direct growth inducement would result if a project, for example, involved construction of new housing. A project would have indirect growth inducement potential if it established substantial new permanent employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial, or governmental enterprises) or if it would involve a construction effort with substantial short-term employment opportunities that would indirectly stimulate the need for additional housing and services to support the new employment demand *(Napa Citizens for Honest Government v. Napa County Board of Supervisors)*. Similarly, a project would indirectly induce growth if it would remove an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service. A project providing an increased water supply in an area where water service historically limited growth could be considered growth-inducing.

The CEQA Guidelines further explain that the environmental effects of induced growth are considered indirect impacts of the proposed action. These indirect impacts or secondary effects of growth may result in significant, adverse environmental impacts. Potential secondary effects of growth include increased demand on other community and public services and infrastructure, increased traffic and noise, and adverse environmental impacts such as degradation of air and water quality, degradation or loss of plant and animal habitat, and conversion of agricultural and open space land to developed uses.

Growth inducement may constitute an adverse impact if the growth is not consistent with or accommodated by the land use plans and growth management plans and policies for the area affected. Local land use plans provide for land use development patterns and growth policies that allow for the orderly expansion of urban development supported by adequate urban public services, such as water supply, roadway infrastructure, sewer service, and solid waste service.

The General Plan is a long-term plan intended to accommodate projected population, housing, and employment growth, including the appropriate balance among these factors with the necessary public services and infrastructure. The proposed General Plan would serve as a comprehensive, long-term plan for the physical development of Mountain House. Projected growth is described in Sections 2.0 (Project Description) and 3.10 (Land Use, Population, and Housing), and the environmental consequences related to the potential growth are fully assessed in each topical section. By definition, the proposed General Plan is intended to provide for and address future growth in the City.

Because the proposed General Plan provides a framework for development through its Land Use Map, land use designations, goals, policies, and actions, it would directly induce population and employment growth in the Planning Area by designating land for development that is more intense, in some instances, than current designations allow. The analysis of the indirect growth-inducing

impacts for the proposed General Plan focuses on the following factors: inducement of unanticipated population growth; encouragement of economic growth that leads to jobs and housing growth; elimination of obstacles to population growth; and resulting service, facility, or infrastructure demands in excess of existing and planned growth.

The proposed General Plan accommodates future growth in Mountain House, including new businesses, expansion of existing businesses, and new residential uses. Infrastructure and services would need to accommodate future growth. The General Plan would encourage development of a broader array of businesses, increasing local employment opportunities, and providing residential development as necessary. Based on the anticipated growth, as described in Section 2.0 of this EIR, buildout of the proposed General Plan land use map could yield up to 18,163 dwelling units, 54,258 persons, 7,869,878 square feet of non-residential development, and 8,199 jobs within Mountain House. It is important to note that growth projections should not be considered a prediction for growth, as the actual amount of development that will occur throughout the planning horizon of the General Plan is based on many factors outside of the City's control. Actual future development would depend on future real estate and labor market conditions, property owner preferences and decisions, site-specific constraints, and other factors. As such, it is not realistic to assume that all parcels would develop to their maximum potential under the implementation time frame projected for the General Plan.

Given the historical and current population, housing, and employment trends, growth in Mountain House and throughout California is inevitable. The primary factors that account for population growth are natural increase and net migration. Other factors that affect growth include the cost of housing, the location of jobs, the economy, the climate, and transportation. Residential growth within the Planning Area would continue to occur based primarily on the demand of the housing market. Existing roads, transit, infrastructure, and public services serve existing development within the Planning Area. Projected growth is expected to result in a need to extend infrastructure and services to accommodate future growth, particularly within the areas north of Byron Road and south of Grand Line Road which contain a mixture of urban uses and vacant land planned for urban uses. However, growth under the proposed General Plan would remain within the general growth levels projected Statewide and would not be anticipated to exceed any applicable growth projections or limitations that have been adopted to avoid an environmental effect.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that minimize environmental impacts associated with growth, such as air quality, noise, transportation, and water supply. Additionally, this Draft EIR identifies General Plan policies and actions, where appropriate, that would serve to reduce or eliminate potentially significant impacts associated with specific environmental issues associated with growth. Chapters 3.1 through 3.16 and 4.0 of this Draft EIR provide a discussion of environmental effects associated with development allowed under the proposed General Plan. Each of these EIR chapters include relevant policies and action items that would minimize potential environmental impacts associated with growth, to the greatest extent feasible.

With implementation of General Plan policies and actions intended to guide growth to appropriate areas and provide services necessary to accommodate growth, the land uses allowed under the

proposed General Plan, the infrastructure anticipated to accommodate proposed land uses, and the goal and policy framework would not induce growth that would exceed adopted thresholds. Therefore, population and housing growth associated with the proposed General Plan would result in a ***less than significant*** impact.

4.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE AND ADVERSE EFFECTS

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15126(c) and 15126.2(d), an EIR is required to address any significant irreversible environmental changes that would occur should the proposed Project be implemented. As stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d):

> *"Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified."*

Determining whether the proposed project would result in significant irreversible effects requires a determination of whether key resources would be degraded or destroyed such that there would be little possibility of restoring them. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Consumption of Nonrenewable Resources

Future development would consume limited, slowly renewable and non-renewable resources. This consumption would occur during each individual project's construction phase and would continue throughout its operational lifetime.

Construction associated with future development would require a commitment of resources that would include: (1) building materials; (2) fuel and operational materials/resources; and (3) the transportation of goods and persons to and from individual development sites. Construction would require the consumption of resources that are not renewable or which may renew so slowly as to be considered non-renewable. These resources would include the following construction supplies: lumber and other forest products; aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt; metals; and water. Fossil fuels such as gasoline and oil would also be consumed to power construction vehicles and equipment.

The operational activities of new development accommodated through implementation of the General Plan would consume resources which would be similar to those currently consumed within the Planning Area (i.e., energy resources such as electricity and natural gas, petroleum-based fuels required for vehicle-trips, fossil fuels, land, and water). Fossil fuels would represent the primary energy source associated with both construction and ongoing operation, and the existing, finite

supplies of these natural resources would reduce incrementally. Future development operations would occur in accordance with California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 6, which sets forth conservation practices that would limit energy consumption. Nonetheless, the proposed Project's energy requirements would represent a long-term commitment of essentially non-renewable resources.

Construction activities associated with implementation of the General Plan could release hazardous materials into the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions; refer to Section 3.8. All potential demolition, grading, and excavation activities would be subject to the established regulatory framework to ensure that hazardous materials are not released into the environment. Compliance with the established regulatory framework and project-specific mitigation measures would protect against a significant and irreversible environmental change resulting from the accidental release of hazardous materials. In addition, there is the potential that individual future development projects would use and store limited amounts of typical potentially hazardous materials. All future development activities requiring the routine use, storage, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials would be subject to all applicable federal, State, and local regulations and standards in place for hazardous materials. Compliance with these regulations and standards would protect against significant and irreversible environmental changes due to the accidental release of hazardous materials.

In conclusion, future construction and operations would result in the irretrievable commitment of limited, slowly renewable, and nonrenewable resources, which would limit the availability of these resource quantities for future generations or for other uses during the life of the individual developments. It is noted that the continued use of such resources would be on a relatively small scale in a regional context.

Irretrievable Commitments/Irreversible Physical Changes

Implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in a commitment of land uses designated for the foreseeable future. Land use and development consistent with the General Plan would result in irretrievable commitments by introducing development onto sites that are presently undeveloped or by designating land for development that is more intense, in some instances, than current designations allow. Development would physically change the environment in terms of aesthetics, air emissions, noise, traffic, open space, and natural resources. These physical changes are irreversible after development occurs. Therefore, the Project would result in changes in land use within the Planning Area that would commit future generations to these uses.

A variety of resources, including land, energy, water, construction materials, and human resources would be irretrievably committed for development and infrastructure installation associated with uses envisioned by the proposed General Plan. Buildout of the proposed General Plan would require the commitment of a variety of other non-renewable or slowly renewable natural resources such as lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, petrochemicals, and metals. Additionally, a variety of resources would be committed to the ongoing operation and life of the uses accommodated by the proposed General Plan. The introduction of new residential,

commercial, industrial, recreational, and other uses to the Planning Area will result in an increase energy demand associated with building operations, vehicle travel, equipment operation, and other activities. Fossil fuels are the principal source of energy and the Project will increase consumption of available supplies, including gasoline and diesel fuel, and natural gas. These energy resource demands relate to initial construction, operation, maintenance and the transport of people and goods to and from the Planning Area that would occur with implementation of the proposed General Plan. However, the Planning Area is an urbanized area and already uses such resources. Additionally, the continued use of such resources would be on a relatively small scale in a regional context. As such, although irreversible environmental changes would result from the Project, such changes would not be considered significant.

Irreversible Damage

The General Plan does not involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with future buildout of the Planning Area. Future development, infrastructure, and other projects allowed under the General Plan may involve the transportation, use, and/or disposal of hazardous materials. However, potential environmental accidents would not result in irreversible damage because the future uses in the Planning Area would be subject to applicable requirements of federal, State, and local regulations and policies.

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

CEQA Guidelines Section 15065 states that a lead agency shall find that a project may have a significant effect on the environment where there is substantial evidence that the project has potential environmental effects that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a)(3), cumulatively considerable means "that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects." Cumulative impacts are addressed previously in Section 4.1 for each of the environmental topics.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a)(1) states that a lead agency shall find that a project may have a significant effect on the environment where there is substantial evidence that the project has the potential to substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species; cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community; substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species; or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. These impacts are discussed below.

Additionally, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a)(4), a lead agency shall find that a project may have a significant effect on the environment where there is substantial evidence that the project has the potential to cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. These impacts are discussed below.

Substantial Adverse Effects on Fish, Wildlife, and Plant Species

Section 3.4 (Biological Resources) of this Draft EIR fully addresses any impacts that might relate to the reduction of the fish or wildlife habitat, the reduction of fish or wildlife populations, the elimination of a plant or animal community, and the reduction or restriction of the range of special-status species as a result of project implementation. As described throughout the analysis in this Draft EIR, the proposed General Plan would not result in any significant impacts that would substantially reduce the habitat of fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal to the environment. As described in greater detail in Section 3.4, any potentially significant impacts related to plant and animal species would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of goals, policies, and actions provided in the proposed General Plan as well as through adherence to State and federal regulations. Therefore, this is considered a **less than significant** impact.

Substantial Adverse Effects on California History or Prehistory

Section 3.5 (Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources) of this Draft EIR fully addresses any impacts that might relate to the elimination of important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory as a result of project implementation. As described throughout the analysis in this Draft EIR, the proposed General Plan would not result in any significant impacts to historical, cultural, or tribal cultural resources, or human remains. As described in greater detail in Section 3.5, any potentially significant impacts related to cultural and tribal cultural resources would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of goals, policies, and actions provided in the proposed General Plan as well as through adherence to State and federal regulations. Therefore, this is considered a **less than significant** impact.

Substantial Adverse Effects on Human Beings

While changes to the environment that could indirectly affect human beings would be represented by all of the designated CEQA issue areas, those that could directly affect human beings include air quality, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, population and housing, public services and recreation, transportation, utilities, and climate change, which are addressed in Section 3.3 (Air Quality), Section 3.6 (Geology and Soils), Section 3.8 (Hazards and Hazardous Materials), Section 3.9 (Hydrology and Water Quality), Section 3.12 (Noise), Section 3.10 (Land Use, Population and Housing), Section 3.13 (Public Services and Recreation), Section 3.14 (Transportation and Circulation), Section 3.15 (Utilities), and Section 3.7 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy). As described throughout the analysis of this Draft EIR, the proposed General Plan reduces environmental effects including effects that directly and indirectly impact humans through implementation of goals, policies, and actions provided in the proposed General Plan. However, several environmental impacts would still be considered significant and unavoidable (listed below in Section 4.4). These impacts include increases in localized noise, considerable increases of criteria pollutants and reduced air quality, which may cause substantial adverse effects on humans and the way humans interact with their environment. Therefore, this is considered a **significant and unavoidable** impact.

Impact 4.17: Irreversible and adverse effects (Significant and Unavoidable)
In summary, the proposed General Plan includes an extensive policy framework that is designed to address land use and environmental issues to the greatest extent feasible, while allowing growth and economic prosperity for the City. However, even with the policies and actions that will serve to reduce potential significant impacts, the proposed General Plan will result in significant irreversible changes and has the potential to result in adverse effects as described above. This impact is considered a ***significant and unavoidable*** impact under CEQA.

4.4 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires an EIR to discuss unavoidable significant environmental effects, including those that can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. The following significant and unavoidable impacts of the General Plan are discussed in Sections 3.3, 3.7, 3.12, 3.14, 3.15, and previously in this chapter (cumulative-level). Refer to those discussions for further details and analysis of the significant and unavoidable impacts identified below:

- **Impact 3.3-1:** General Plan implementation would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants.
- **Impact 3.7-1:** General Plan implementation has the potential to generate GHG emissions that could have a significant impact on the environment and/or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.
- **Impact 3.12-1**: General Plan implementation may result in exposure to significant traffic noise sources.
- **Impact 3.14-2:** General Plan implementation may result in VMT per capita that is greater than 85 percent of Baseline conditions.
- **Impact 3.15-2:** General Plan implementation would not result in sufficient water supplies available to serve the City and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years.
- **Impact 4.3:** Cumulative impact on the region's air quality.
- **Impact 4.7:** Cumulative impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions and energy.
- **Impact 4.12:** Cumulative impacts related to noise.
- **Impact 4.14:** Cumulative impacts related to transportation.
- **Impact 4.15:** Cumulative impact related to utilities.
- **Impact 4.17:** Irreversible and adverse effects.

5.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

Under CEQA, the identification and analysis of alternatives to a project is a fundamental part of the environmental review process. CEQA Public Resources Code Section 21002.1(a) establishes the need to address alternatives in an EIR by stating that, in addition to determining a project's significant environmental impacts and indicating potential means of mitigating or avoiding those impacts, "the purpose of an environmental impact report is ... to identify alternatives to the project."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 provides further direction regarding the definition of project alternatives:

> *An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.*

The CEQA Guidelines emphasize that the selection of project alternatives is to be based primarily on the ability to reduce significant effects relative to the proposed project, "even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly." The range of alternatives is to be guided by a "rule of reason," such that only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice are addressed.

Project alternatives selected for analysis must be considered for their feasibility. Specifically, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(1) states that:

> *Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site…*

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e) also requires the analysis of a "no project" alternative.

> *When the project is a revision of an existing land use or regulatory plan, policy or ongoing operation, the "no project" alternative will be the continuation of the existing plan, policy, or operation into the future."*

Based on the alternatives analysis, an environmentally superior alternative is to be designated. If the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, then the EIR shall identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c) requires that an EIR identify any alternatives that were considered for analysis but rejected as infeasible and discuss the reasons for their rejection.

The range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall also include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially

lessen one or more of the significant effects. Among the factors that may be considered when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent).

Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the project's significant effects need be considered for inclusion. An alternative whose effect cannot be reasonably ascertained and whose implementation is remote and speculative need not be considered. The range of feasible alternatives shall be selected and discussed in a manner that fosters meaningful public participation and informed decision making.

5.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN THIS EIR

FACTORS GUIDING SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES

The City circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to the public and held a public scoping meeting during the public review period to solicit recommendations for a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project. No specific alternatives were recommended by commenting agencies or the general public during the NOP public review and comment period.

An EIR must only discuss in detail an alternative that is capable of feasibly attaining most of the basic objectives associated with an action, while at the same time avoiding or substantially lessening any of the significant effects associated with the proposed project. As described in Chapter 2.0 (Project Description), the following objectives have been identified for the proposed Project:

1. Reflect the current goals and vision expressed by City residents, businesses, decision-makers, and other stakeholders;
2. Address issues and concerns identified by City residents, businesses, decision-makers, and other stakeholders;
3. Protect Mountain House's existing residences, character, and sense of community;
4. Proactively plan for and accommodate local and regional growth in a responsible manner;
5. Allow for a range of high-quality housing options;
6. Attract and retain businesses and industries that provide high-quality and high-paying jobs;
7. Continue to maintain a safe and efficient roadway network while improving multimodal transportation opportunities;
8. Maintain strong fiscal sustainability and continue to provide efficient and adequate public services;
9. Address the requirements of State law; and
10. Address emerging transportation, housing, and employment trends.

SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Pursuant to Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project that would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. Only those impacts found significant and unavoidable are relevant in making the final determination of whether an alternative is environmentally superior or inferior to the proposed project. Through the analysis provided within this Draft EIR, it has been determined that the proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the following environmental issue area(s):

- **Impact 3.3-1:** General Plan implementation would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants (Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 3.7-1:** General Plan implementation has the potential to generate GHG emissions that could have a significant impact on the environment and/or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases (Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 3.12-1**: General Plan implementation may result in exposure to significant traffic noise sources (Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 3.14-2:** General Plan implementation may result in VMT per capita that is greater than 85 percent of Baseline conditions (Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 3.15-2:** General Plan implementation would not result in sufficient water supplies available to serve the City and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years (Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 4.3:** Cumulative impact on the region's air quality (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 4.7:** Cumulative impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions and energy (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 4.12:** Cumulative impacts related to noise (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 4.14:** Cumulative impacts related to transportation (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 4.15:** Cumulative impact related to utilities (Considerable Contribution and Significant and Unavoidable)
- **Impact 4.17:** Irreversible and adverse effects (Significant and Unavoidable)

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c), an EIR should identify any alternatives that were considered for analysis but rejected as infeasible and briefly explain the reasons for their rejection. According to the CEQA Guidelines, among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration are the failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, infeasibility, or inability to avoid significant environmental impacts. The

following possible alternatives were considered but not carried forward for additional analysis since they would not accomplish most of the basic objectives of the Project or were considered infeasible.

- **"Existing Master Plan Land Use Plan with New Policy Document" Alternative.** Under this alternative, the City would adopt the goals, policies, and actions of the proposed General Plan but would retain the land use designations and Land Use Plan of the existing Mountain House Master Plan without modification. Buildout would be the same as projected for the existing Master Plan (16,597 dwelling units, 43,028 persons, 7,966,063 square feet of non-residential development, and 9,814 jobs; refer to Table 2.0-2). This alternative was rejected from further consideration because it would create an inconsistency with the City's proposed Housing Element. The proposed General Plan revises residential density ranges and land use designations, including increased densities in the High Density Residential (R/H) and Mixed Use (M/X) designations, to accommodate the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 5,114 units, as required by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Retaining the Master Plan land use designations would not allow the City to fulfill its RHNA obligations, resulting in an internally inconsistent General Plan contrary to Government Code Section 65300.5, and would not meet proposed General Plan Objective 9 (Address the requirements of State law) or Objective 5 (Allow for a range of high-quality housing options). In addition, because the impacts of this alternative would be evaluated against existing conditions, buildout under the Master Plan would still result in substantial development over existing conditions; this alternative would therefore reduce, but would not be expected to eliminate, the significant and unavoidable impacts of the proposed Project.
- **"Substantial Land Use Changes" Alternative.** The Project has always been intended to retain the fundamental growth pattern established in the existing Master Plan Land Use Map and convert Master Plan policy direction into a modern general plan that reflects the current needs of residents and meets State requirements. Therefore, any alternative that would have resulted in substantial land use changes, including a significantly altered land use map, a larger planning area, or the introduction of new urban land uses within areas of the City that are not already designated for such uses by the existing Master Plan, was rejected due to the fact that it didn't meet a core project objective of carrying forward the existing Master Plan vision and policy direction, including the existing Master Plan Land Use Map.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

Two alternatives to the proposed General Plan were considered based on the analysis performed to identify the environmental effects of the proposed Project. The alternatives analyzed in this EIR include the following:

- **Alternative 1: No Project Alternative**. Under Alternative 1, the City would not adopt the proposed General Plan. The City would continue to implement the existing local regulatory framework, including the Master Plan and applicable Specific Plans, and no

changes would be made to address the requirements of State law. The Existing Master Plan Land Use Map is shown on Figure 2.0-3.

- **Alternative 2: Residential Focused Alternative**. Under Alternative 2, the City would adopt the updated General Plan policy document, including the proposed General Plan Land Use Map and updated goals, policies, and actions. However, Alternative 2 would place more emphasis on residential development, increasing the maximum allowable development densities for residential and mixed use land use designations. For comparison it is assumed that this Alternative would result in a 15 percent increase in the number of new residential dwelling units when compared to the proposed Project. This Alternative would result in more residential growth than the proposed Project and Alternative 1. This alternative was developed to allow for additional housing opportunities and a more efficient use of land and resources by reducing per capita impacts associated with air quality, energy, greenhouse gas emissions, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

A summary of the potential growth, including population growth, housing units, and jobs for the proposed Project and each Alternative is shown in Table 5.0-1.

TABLE 5.0-1: GROWTH PROJECTIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

	Dwelling Units	Population	Non-Residential Square Footage	Jobs
Existing Conditions				
Planning Area	8,440	28,795	660,303	1,092
New Growth				
Proposed General Plan	9,723	25,463	7,209,575	7,107
Alternative 1: No Project	8,157	14,233	7,305,760	8,722
Alternative 2: Residential Focused	12,448	33,602	7,209,575	7,107
Buildout Growth: Existing Plus New Growth				
Proposed General Plan	18,163	54,258	7,869,878	8,199
Alternative 1: No Project	16,597	43,028	7,966,063	9,814
Alternative 2: Residential Focused	20,888	62,397	7,869,878	8,199

Source: City of Mountain House & De Novo Planning Group, 2026.

5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The alternatives analysis provides a summary of the relative impact level of significance associated with each alternative for each of the environmental issue areas analyzed in this EIR. Following the analysis of each alternative, Table 5.0-4 summarizes the comparative environmental effects of each alternative.

The primary difference between the proposed General Plan and Alternative 2 is that Alternative 2 would allow for approximately 15 percent greater residential densities, resulting in approximately 2,725 more housing units and 8,139 residents compared to the Project; refer to Table 5.0-3. The goals, policies, and actions contained in the proposed General Plan would also apply and be implemented under Alternative 2. Therefore, changes to the Land Use designation descriptions are the only variables that may increase or decrease the severity of one or more of the significant environmental impacts identified in this Draft EIR. It is important to note, however, that all of the Land Use Maps across all of the Alternatives analyzed in this EIR include the same urban footprint. In other words, none of the Alternatives introduce new urban land uses within areas of the City that are not already designated for such uses by the existing Master Plan.

ALTERNATIVE 1 - NO PROJECT

As required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e), Alternative 1 represents the No Project Alternative. Under Alternative 1, the City would not adopt the proposed General Plan. The City would continue to implement the existing local regulatory framework, including the Master Plan and applicable Specific Plans, and no changes would be made to address the requirements of State law and the relevant items addressed in Government Code Section 65300 et seq. California Government Code Section 65360 requires newly incorporated cities to adopt a comprehensive, long-range general plan within 30 months following their incorporation. Since Mountain House was incorporated in July 2024, the deadline for adoption of a legally compliant General Plan is January 2027, at which time Alternative 1 would result in a violation of California planning mandates. Further, under Alternative 1, the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions would not be adopted to address the concerns of the City's residents, property owners, decision-makers, and other stakeholders that participated in the visioning process, which led to many of the General Plan's goals and subsequent policy development.

Alternative 1 would result in the continuation of existing conditions and development levels. New growth would be allowed as envisioned under the existing Master Plan, with land uses required to be consistent with the existing Master Plan Land Use Map; refer to Figure 2.0-3. Table 5.0-2 compares the assumed development potential associated with the Master Plan and proposed General Plan.

TABLE 5.0-2: ALTERNATIVE 1 COMPARED TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

	Dwelling Units	Population	Non-Residential Square Footage	Jobs
Alternative 1 (Existing Master Plan)	16,597	43,028	7,966,063[a]	9,814
Proposed General Plan	18,163	54,258	7,869,878	8,199
Difference	*-1,566*	*-11,230*	*96,186*	*1,615*

Source: City of Mountain House & De Novo Planning Group, 2026.
Note: a) The existing Master Plan does not include buildout projections for non-residential square footage. This table calculates Master Plan non-residential square footage using the same methodology as the proposed General Plan and is included for comparison purposes only.

As shown in Table 5.0-2, compared to the Project, Alternative 1 (Existing Master Plan) would result in a net decrease of 1,566 dwelling units and 11,230 persons, and a net increase of 96,186 square feet of non-residential development and 1,615 jobs. Under Alternative 1, the existing Master Plan policy framework would still be in effect, which would constitute a status quo approach to land use regulation in the City. While the proposed General Plan retains the overall direction and land use pattern outlined in the Master Plan, it would provide an enhanced and modernized structure, meeting current State requirements. The proposed General Plan was prepared in conformance with State laws and regulations associated with the preparation of general plans, including requirements for environmental protection.

Alternative 1 would not include updated policies, particularly those related to housing, greenhouse gases, biological resources, public safety, complete streets, and environmental justice, as required by State law. This alternative would not include policies proposed in the General Plan to ensure protection of environmental resources, both at a project level and under cumulative conditions, consistent with the objectives of CEQA.

Alternative 1 fails to meet nearly any of the basic Project objectives, including the following:

- Reflect the current goals and vision expressed by City residents, businesses, decision-makers, and other stakeholders;
- Address issues and concerns identified by City residents, businesses, decision-makers, and other stakeholders;
- Proactively plan for and accommodate local and regional growth in a responsible manner;
- Attract and retain businesses and industries that provide high-quality and high-paying jobs;
- Continue to maintain a safe and efficient roadway network while improving multimodal transportation opportunities;
- Maintain strong fiscal sustainability and continue to provide efficient and adequate public services;
- Address the requirements of State law; and
- Address emerging transportation, housing, and employment trends.

ALTERNATIVE 2 – RESIDENTIAL FOCUSED ALTERNATIVE

Alternative 2 (Residential Focused Alternative) would result in additional residential growth when compared to the proposed General Plan. Under Alternative 2, the City would adopt the General Plan policy document, including the proposed goals, policies, and actions; however, the City would place more emphasis on residential development, increasing the maximum allowable development densities for residential uses by 15 percent. Land use designations would be the same as in the proposed General Plan, except the maximum allowable density would be increased by 15 percent for each of the residential designations and the mixed use designation. For comparison purposes, it is assumed that residential growth projections for buildout under Alternative 2 would be 15 percent greater than the proposed Project. Alternative 2 would thus result in more residential growth and population than the proposed General Plan, but non-residential development and jobs would remain the same.

The goals, policies, and actions of the General Plan would apply to subsequent development, planning, and infrastructure projects under Alternative 2. As shown in Table 5.0-3, Alternative 2 would result in an additional 2,725 dwelling units and 8,139 residents within the Planning Area when compared to the proposed General Plan; non-residential square footage and jobs would remain the same when compared to the proposed General Plan.

TABLE 5.0-3: ALTERNATIVE 2 COMPARED TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

	Dwelling Units	Population	Non-Residential Square Footage	Jobs
Alternative 2 (Residential Focused Alternative)	20,888	62,397	7,869,878	8,199
Proposed General Plan	18,163	54,258	7,869,878	8,199
Difference	*2,725*	*8,139*	*0*	*0*

Source: City of Mountain House & De Novo Planning Group, 2026.

IMPACT COMPARISON

Aesthetics

As described in Section 3.1 (Aesthetics), impacts related to Aesthetics were found to be less than significant.

The Project and both Alternatives would allow for increased residential and non-residential development in the Planning Area when compared to the existing setting. While slight variations in development types, units, and non-residential square footages would be seen throughout these alternatives, both Alternatives would result in similar development patterns and a similar development footprint to the proposed Project. Similar to the Project, future development under both Alternatives would be subject to all applicable requirements in the Municipal Code and/or applicable Specific Plan. Additionally, as with the proposed Project, applicable future land use and development review applications would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis prior to consideration by the decision-making authority. If necessary, project-specific mitigation would be recommended to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. However, the updated policy document under the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 would enhance the review of individual development projects and would be a slight improvement when compared to Alternative 1, which does not include an updated policy document. As such, impacts under Alternative 2 would be similar to the proposed Project and impacts under Alternative 1 would be environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

Agricultural and Forestry Resources

As described in Section 3.2 (Agricultural and Forestry Resources), impacts related to Agricultural and Forestry Resources were found to be less than significant.

There are no Williamson Act contracts within the Planning Area, nor are there any parcels designated as forest land or zoned as forest land, timber, or timber production within the Planning Area. As such, the Project and both Alternatives would not conflict with any existing Williamson Act contract or zoning for forest land, timber, or timber production, nor result in the loss of forest land. There are seven parcels within the Planning Area that are zoned Agriculture-Urban Reserve. These parcels are designated for industrial uses under existing conditions and would continue to be designated as such under the Project and both Alternatives. Similar to the Project, while neither of the Alternatives propose any zone changes, these areas may eventually be developed with urban land uses. Existing agricultural operations within the parcels zoned AU-20 are anticipated to remain in agricultural operation as an interim use until development of the site is proposed. While the Development Code and Zoning Map currently identify parcels in the Planning Area zoned AU-20, the Development Code makes clear that these parcels are intended to be developed with urban uses. As such, impacts related to conflicts with agricultural use zoning or Williamson Act parcels would remain the same under all scenarios.

The Project and both Alternatives would result in land use designations and a land use map that would result in buildout of the Planning Area and the conversion of farmlands, including Prime

and Unique Farmland, to non-agricultural use. Although existing agricultural activities occur within a limited number of parcels within the Planning Area, there would be no lands within the Planning Area designated for agricultural use under the Project and both Alternatives. Areas identified as Prime Farmland or Unique Farmland are currently designated for a mix of residential and non-residential development, which would continue with the Project and both Alternatives. Similar to the Project, while future development under both Alternatives would likely result in the conversion of these areas for urban uses, it is anticipated that agricultural uses would continue to operate until development of the site is proposed. Similar to the Project, future development under both Alternatives would be subject to all applicable requirements in the Municipal Code and/or applicable Specific Plan. Additionally, as with the proposed Project, applicable future land use and development review applications would be required to participate in the County agricultural mitigation fee program and the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan, and undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis prior to consideration by the decision-making authority. If necessary, project-specific mitigation would be recommended to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. However, the updated policy document under the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 includes policy direction to coordinate with the County on agricultural obligations and to participate in the County agricultural mitigation fee program and the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan, when applicable. As such, the Project and Alternative 2 would be a slight improvement when compared to Alternative 1, which does not include an updated policy document.

Air Quality

As described in Section 3.3 (Air Quality) Impact 3.3-1, the proposed General Plan implementation would result in significant impacts to air quality.

As further described in Section 3.3, policies and actions included in the proposed General Plan would further the fundamental goals of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) in reducing emissions of criteria pollutants associated with VMT, reducing building energy usage, and increasing opportunities for transit ridership in Mountain House and the surrounding areas. The General Plan policies and actions would work to further reduce criteria pollutant emissions, including City review of projects for conformance with applicable air quality plans and regulations, conducting comprehensive land use planning, reducing energy demands, and reducing VMT by providing additional pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities and opportunities, promoting non-vehicle travel modes, increasing regional connectivity, implementing a bicycle and trail network, and ensuring regional coordination on trip and VMT reduction efforts. However, even with implementation of the General Plan policies and actions and applicable CARB and SJVAPCD rules and regulations that would reduce criteria pollutant emissions, the proposed General Plan would increase VMT at a rate faster than the combined increase in jobs and population growth.

As shown in Section 3.3, implementation of the proposed Project would result in an approximately 47.8 percent increase in VMT, which is greater than the projected 18.2 percent increase in combined population and jobs, relative to the two scenarios. Because the growth rate associated

with the proposed General Plan is anticipated to be slower than the VMT increase associated with it, the proposed Project is anticipated to result in VMT increases on a per service population basis.

As shown in Table 5.0-1, Alternative 1 would provide for approximately 11,230 fewer residents and 1,615 greater employees when compared to the proposed Project. Alternative 2 would result in approximately 8,139 greater residents and the same number of employees when compared to the proposed Project. The jobs-housing ratio at buildout would be approximately 0.45 for the proposed General Plan, 0.59 for Alternative 1, and 0.39 for Alternative 2.

The improved jobs-housing ratio under Alternative 1 would shorten employee commute distances, reducing VMT and associated mobile-source emissions when compared to the Project. Alternative 1 would also result in lower area-source emissions due to the lower residential population when compared to the Project. Alternative 2 would result in a greater number of residents and would not improve the jobs-housing ratio when compared to the Project; as such, Alternative 2 would result in increased air quality impacts when compared to the Project.

However, the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 would include an updated policy document with an extensive list of policies and actions that are specifically aimed at improving air quality; refer to Section 3.3. These policies and actions would further the fundamental goals of the SJVAPCD in reducing emissions of criteria pollutants associated with VMT, reducing building energy usage, and increasing opportunities for transit ridership in Mountain House and the surrounding areas. While the air quality impacts may increase slightly under Alternative 1, as this alternative does not include the updated policy document, projects under this alternative would be required to comply with applicable requirements of the Municipal Code, applicable California Air Resources Board (CARB) and SJVAPCD rules and regulations, and Title 24 energy efficiency standards. Due to the fewer residents and improved jobs-housing ratio under Alternative 1 when compared to the Project, air quality impacts under Alternative 1 are likely to be slightly improved. When compared to the proposed Project, Alternative 2's impacts would be greater.

Biological Resources

There are various biological resources, including habitat, that occurs throughout the Planning Area. As described in Section 3.4 (Biological Resources), General Plan implementation would result in less than significant impacts to biological resources. Approval of the General Plan would not directly approve or entitle any specific development or infrastructure project. However, implementation of the General Plan would accommodate future development, redevelopment, and infrastructure improvements within the Planning Area. Future development projects consistent with the General Plan could result in direct or indirect impacts to special-status plant and wildlife species, riparian and sensitive natural habitat, wetlands, sensitive natural communities, and wildlife movement corridors. Future development projects will be required to comply with the General Plan and adopted federal, State, and local regulations for the protection of these resources.

The development footprint and development types would be similar under the Project and both Alternatives. Similar to the Project, future development under both Alternatives would be subject

to all applicable federal, State, and local requirements related to the protection of biological resources. Additionally, as with the proposed Project, applicable future land use and development review applications would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis prior to consideration by the decision-making authority. If necessary, project-specific mitigation would be recommended to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. However, the updated policy document under the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 includes policies and actions intended to conserve and protect biological resources from adverse effects associated with future development and would be a slight improvement when compared to Alternative 1, which does not include an updated policy document. Therefore, because Alternative 2 would update conservation and biological resource policies consistent with the proposed General Plan, impacts to biological resources would be slightly reduced when compared to Alternative 1.

Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources

As described in Section 3.5 (Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources), General Plan implementation would result in less than significant impacts to cultural and tribal cultural resources. The proposed General Plan is a policy document that does not include any site-specific designs or proposals. However, implementation of the General Plan would accommodate future development, infrastructure improvements, and other ground-disturbing activities within the Planning Area with the potential to adversely impact cultural and tribal cultural resources. As the City considers future development and infrastructure projects, each project would be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and other applicable State and local regulations relative to historic and potentially historic resources.

The development footprint and pattern would be similar under the Project and both Alternatives. Similar to the Project, future development under both Alternatives would be subject to all applicable federal, State, and local requirements related to cultural and tribal cultural resources and human remains. Additionally, as with the proposed Project, applicable future land use and development review applications would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis prior to consideration by the decision-making authority. If necessary, project-specific mitigation would be recommended to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. However, the updated policy document under the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 includes policies and actions intended to conserve and protect cultural and tribal cultural resources from adverse effects associated with future development and would be a slight improvement when compared to Alternative 1, which does not include an updated policy document. Therefore, because Alternative 2 would update cultural and tribal cultural resource policies consistent with the proposed General Plan, impacts to cultural and tribal cultural resources would be slightly reduced when compared to Alternative 1.

Geology and Soils

As described in Section 3.6 (Geology), the proposed General Plan would result in less than significant impacts to Geology and Soils.

It is possible that future ground-disturbing activities could encounter undiscovered paleontological resources within the Planning Area. At the program level, future discretionary

projects would continue to undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis pursuant to CEQA to evaluate potential impacts to paleontological resources. Additionally, the General Plan includes policies and actions to protect significant paleontological resources within the Planning Area. With implementation of the General Plan policies and actions, potential impacts to paleontological resources associated with future development anticipated by the General Plan would be less than significant.

The development footprint and pattern would be similar under the Project and both Alternatives. Since the Planning Area is the same under all scenarios, similar physical constraints related to geology and soils exist. The potential for new development to expose people or structures to adverse effects associated with seismic ground shaking and geologic instabilities would be similar under the Project and both Alternatives. Future development projects would comply with the California Building Standards Code (CBSC) and applicable Municipal Code requirements, which require development projects to perform geotechnical investigations in accordance with State law, engineer improvements to address potential seismic and ground failure issues, and use earthquake-resistant construction techniques to address potential earthquake loads when constructing buildings and improvements. However, the updated policy document under the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 includes policies and actions related to geologic hazards, including requirements for project reviews and standards for construction and building practices, as well as paleontological resources. As such, Alternative 2 would be a slight improvement when compared to Alternative 1, which does not include an updated policy document. Therefore, because Alternative 2 would update geology and soils policies consistent with the proposed General Plan, impacts to geology and soils would be slightly reduced when compared to Alternative 1.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy

As described in Section 3.7 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy), Impact 3.7-1 the proposed General Plan would result in significant GHG-related impacts as General Plan implementation has the potential to generate GHG emissions that could have a significant impact on the environment and/or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

As discussed in Section 3.7, implementation of the proposed Project would result in an approximately 47.8 percent increase in VMT, which is greater than the projected 18.2 percent increase in combined population and jobs, relative to the two scenarios. Because the growth rate associated with the proposed General Plan is anticipated to be slower than the VMT increase associated with it, the proposed Project is anticipated to result in VMT increases on a per service population basis.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would limit increases to greenhouse gas emissions within the City; refer to Section 3.7. These comprehensive policy approaches serve to support regional and statewide efforts to reduce GHG emissions, including CARB's Scoping Plan and SJCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS through energy efficiency, green building, land use development, and the other policies and actions. However, even with implementation of the goals, policies, and

actions contained in the proposed General Plan, there is no guarantee that the General Plan alone would be sufficient to limit GHGs to the extent required by AB 32, SB 375, SB 32, and other federal and State regulations. Therefore, as a conservative approach, General Plan implementation is considered to have the potential to generate GHG emissions that could have a significant impact on the environment and/or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

As shown in Table 5.0-1, Alternative 1 would provide for approximately 11,230 fewer residents and 1,615 greater employees when compared to the proposed Project. Alternative 2 would result in approximately 8,139 greater residents and the same number of employees when compared to the proposed Project. The jobs-housing ratio at buildout would be approximately 0.45 for the proposed General Plan, 0.59 for Alternative 1, and 0.39 for Alternative 2.

The improved jobs-housing ratio under Alternative 1 would shorten employee commute distances, reducing overall VMT and associated GHG emissions and energy use when compared to the Project. Alternative 1 would also result in lower construction and operational-related GHG emissions and energy use (e.g., electricity and/or natural gas) due to the decreased residential population when compared to the Project, although this would be at least partially offset by the increase in non-residential uses. Alternative 2 would result in a greater number of residents and would not improve the jobs-housing ratio when compared to the Project; as such, Alternative 2 would result in increased GHG emissions and energy use impacts when compared to the Project. It should be noted that increased population and employee increases would generally be seen to decrease GHG emissions and energy levels on a per service population basis; however, similar to the Project, GHG and energy impacts under Alternatives 1 and 2 are likely to be significant and unavoidable due to the degree of projected growth.

The proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 would include an updated policy document with an extensive list of policies and actions that are specifically aimed at reducing GHG emissions and energy use; refer to Section 3.7. These policies and actions would further the fundamental goals of the SJVAPCD in reducing VMT, increasing opportunities for transit ridership in Mountain House and the surrounding areas, and reducing building energy usage. While the GHG emissions impacts may increase slightly under Alternative 1, as this alternative does not include the updated policy document, projects under this alternative would be required to comply with applicable State and SJCOG requirements. Due to the fewer residents and improved jobs-housing ratio under Alternative 1 when compared to the Project, GHG and energy impacts under Alternative 1 are likely to be slightly improved. When compared to the proposed Project, Alternative 2's impacts would be greater.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

As described in Section 3.8 (Hazards and Hazardous Materials), all impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials were found to be less than significant. The proposed General Plan and Alternative 2 would include updated policies and actions aimed at protecting the public from hazardous materials and other local hazards. These policies and actions in the General Plan would ensure that potential hazards are identified on a project-specific basis, that development is

located in areas where potential exposure to hazards and hazardous materials can be mitigated to an acceptable level, and that business operations comply with federal and State regulations regarding the use, transport, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. The proposed General Plan also includes policies and actions to ensure that the City has adequate emergency response plans and measures to respond in the event of an accidental release of a hazardous substance (as described in detail in Section 3.8). Since the Planning Area is the same under all scenarios, similar physical constraints related to wildland fires exist.

The Planning Area is not in an Airport Influence Area or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. However, a small northwestern portion of the Planning Area is located within a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) height notification zone associated with Byron Airport. This height notification zone does not prohibit development, but it requires notification to the FAA for certain proposed construction or alterations that exceed applicable Part 77 imaginary surface thresholds. Future development in the northwestern portion of the Planning Area that is subject to FAA height notification requirements would be required to comply with applicable federal aviation review requirements. Future projects involving tall structures, transmission lines, towers, or other features that could affect navigable airspace would also be subject to applicable FAA review and local development review. Compliance with these requirements would reduce the potential for conflicts with airport operations or navigable airspace. As such, impacts associated with airports would be the same under the Project and both Alternatives.

The proposed Project and both Alternatives would result in additional urban uses including residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development, as well as related public infrastructure. The development footprint and pattern would be similar under the Project and both Alternatives. The potential for new development to expose people or structures to adverse effects associated hazards and hazardous materials would be similar under the Project and both Alternatives. Future development projects would comply with applicable federal, State, and local regulations related to hazards and hazardous materials. However, the updated policy document under the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 includes policies and actions to address potential impacts from hazards and hazardous materials. As such, Alternative 2 would be a slight improvement when compared to Alternative 1, which does not include an updated policy document. Therefore, because Alternative 2 would update policies consistent with the proposed General Plan, hazards and hazardous material impacts would be slightly reduced when compared to Alternative 1.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As described in Section 3.9 (Hydrology and Water Quality), implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in less than significant impacts related to Hydrology and Water Quality.

Both Alternatives would allow development to occur in a manner similar to the proposed General Plan. While Alternative 1 would result in less dense residential development compared to the General Plan and Alternative 2, it is projected to result in more intense non-residential development. Under all scenarios, all future development would be subject to applicable stormwater and water quality requirements of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control

Board (RWQCB). The variation in density and intensity would not substantially alter impacts from or to flooding, water quality, stormwater, or on groundwater supplies because existing federal, State, and local regulations guard against flood hazards, water quality contamination, or impact on groundwater supplies. Similar to the Project, potential hydrology and water quality impacts under both Alternatives would be less than significant. However, the updated policy document under the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 includes policies and actions to enhance stormwater quality and infiltration as well as actions to review development projects to identify potential stormwater and drainage impacts. As such, Alternative 2 would be a slight improvement when compared to Alternative 1, which does not include an updated policy document. Therefore, because Alternative 2 would update policies consistent with the proposed General Plan, hydrology and water quality impacts would be slightly reduced when compared to Alternative 1.

Land Use, Population, and Housing

The proposed General Plan and both Alternatives are long-range land use plans. As described in Section 3.10 (Land Use, Population, and Housing), all impacts related to land use, population, and housing were found to be less than significant under the Proposed General Plan. As described previously, the proposed General Plan and Alternative 2 would include adoption of the updated policy document consistent with the proposed General Plan. The policies and programs within the proposed General Plan's policy document allow for greater consistency with applicable State and regional plans versus the existing Master Plan and would also promote efficiency in the delivery of urban services, and local agency coordination. Therefore, Alternative 2 would also result in the same impact level as the proposed General Plan.

Both Alternatives would allow for build out of the Planning Area comparable to the proposed General Plan and would result in similar impacts related to land use, population, and housing. However, Alternative 1 (No Project Alternative) would result in less consistency with pertinent State and regional plans relative to the proposed General Plan and when compared to Alternative 2, and would not implement changes in State law that address environmental concerns related to climate adaptation, hazards and safety, environmental justice, and VMT. Therefore, because Alternative 2 would update policies consistent with the proposed General Plan, land use, population, and housing impacts would be slightly reduced when compared to Alternative 1.

Mineral Resources

As described in Section 3.11 (Mineral Resources), the proposed General Plan would result in less than significant impacts relating to mineral resources. All of the alternatives, like the proposed General Plan, accommodate development generally in the same areas, and these areas are, for the most part, either already urbanized, urbanizing, or are planned for similar development patterns. Impacts associated with both Alternatives would be the same and would remain less than significant.

Noise

As described in Section 3.12, Impact 3.12-1, and Chapter 4.0, the proposed General Plan would result in significant noise impacts. Buildout of the General Plan would contribute to transportation

noise and in increases in traffic noise levels at existing sensitive receptors. The proposed General Plan and Alternative 2 include updated General Plan policies and actions intended to minimize exposure to excessive noise, including noise associated with increased traffic. Policies included within the updated policy document would ensure that new development minimizes potential noise impacts to the greatest extent feasible by incorporating noise control treatments and criteria for evaluating future increases in traffic noise levels; however, this impact would remain significant.

The impact under all scenarios would be substantially similar and all would be expected to result in significant noise impacts when compared to the existing noise environment. However, Alternative 2, which includes an updated policy document, would likely result in higher traffic noise levels when compared to Alternative 1 due to the greater number of residents in Alternative 2. While Alternative 1 would likely reduce traffic noise levels due to the reduced residential potential, this reduction would be at least partially offset by the greater amount of non-residential development. Further, without the updated policy document that includes best practices and additional noise minimizing policies and actions, Alternative 1 may result in only slightly fewer impacts when compared to the proposed Project and Alternative 2. Alternative 2 would result in slightly greater traffic noise impacts due to the greater residential potential when compared to the proposed Project.

Public Services and Recreation

As described in Section 3.13, the proposed General Plan would result in less than significant impacts relating to public services and recreation. New development would place increased demands on public services such as police, fire, schools, parks, libraries, and other governmental services. The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions intended to ensure new development provides for their fair share of public services and recreation facilities, and compliance with the Municipal Code provides for a special tax to fund the capital and operating costs of providing public safety services and parks/recreation. Further, school districts assess development impact fees against residential and non-residential development to mitigate impacts resulting from the increase in demand for school related services. Pursuant to SB 50, payment of fees to the applicable school district constitutes full mitigation for project impacts. Compliance with State and local regulations and implementation of General Plan policies and actions would ensure development allowed does not have adverse impacts on these services and agencies.

As described previously, the proposed General Plan and Alternative 2 would include adoption of the updated policy document consistent with the proposed General Plan. When compared to Alternative 1, both the Project and Alternative 2 would be superior as Alternative 1 would not include adoption of the updated policy document that included policies and actions that support public services and recreational opportunities and service levels throughout the community. Both Alternatives would allow development to occur in a manner similar to the proposed General Plan. While Alternative 1 would result in less dense residential development compared to the General Plan and Alternative 2, it is projected to result in more intense non-residential development. Alternative 2 is projected to result in greater residential development compared to the General

Plan and Alternative 1; and the same non-residential development as General Plan and slightly less non-residential development as Alternative 1. Impacts to public services (i.e., the demand for police, fire, schools, parks/recreation and other public services) are generally greater with residential development and as such, would be increased under Alternative 2 when compared to Alternative 1. Impacts to public services would be increased under Alternative 2 when compared to the Project. Overall, Alternative 1 would have a slightly increased impact to public services when compared to the proposed Project because it would not include adoption of the updated policy document; and Alternative 2 would have a slightly increased impact to public services when compared to the proposed Project because of the increased development potential.

Transportation

As described in Section 3.14 (Transportation) and Chapter 4.0, the proposed General Plan would result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to transportation VMT. Under future Project conditions, the proposed General Plan would exceed the VMT threshold for residential projects but would not exceed the threshold for employment-related land uses. All other transportation impacts associated with implementation of the General Plan would be less than significant.

The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions designed to reduce vehicle trips and VMT. Specifically, the proposed Circulation Element directs the City to provide additional pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities and opportunities, promote non-vehicle travel modes, and coordinate on trip and VMT reduction efforts. The proposed Environmental Justice Element also contains policies and actions to encourage active transportation and increase connectivity in the City. General Plan policies and actions that would contribute to reductions in VMT are identified in Section 3.14. These policies and actions would help to reduce the severity of VMT impacts to the greatest extent feasible.

Alternative 1 represents the No Project Alternative and would result in the continuation of existing (baseline) conditions and development levels. As shown in Table 3.14-9, future conditions with the proposed General Plan represent an improvement over baseline conditions (i.e., a reduction of 0.5 daily average VMT per dwelling unit and 4.9 daily average VMT per employee). As such, Alternative 1 would result in greater VMT per dwelling unit and employee than the proposed Project. In addition, Alternative 1 would not include the updated policy document which includes policies and actions designed to reduce vehicle trips and VMT, as well as improve access to and performance of the City's circulation system, and support roadway network safety, emergency access, and reduce design hazards along local roads. As such, Alternative 1 would result in greater transportation related impacts when compared to the Project.

Alternative 2 would provide for increased density and development within the Planning Area. Alternative 2 would also include adoption of the updated policy document and would include policies and actions to reduce VMT, improve the City's circulation system, and support roadway safety. However, buildout under Alternative 2 would result in 2,725 greater residential units when compared to the proposed Project. Because higher residential densities generally support shorter trips and greater use of walking, bicycling, and transit, Alternative 2 would be expected to result in slightly reduced VMT per capita compared to the Project, although total VMT would increase

due to the additional development. As with the Project, VMT impacts under Alternative 2 would remain significant and unavoidable.

Utilities and Service Systems

As described in Section 3.15 (Utilities and Service Systems) and Section 4.0 (Other CEQA-Required Topics), the proposed General Plan would result in a less than significant impact related to Utilities, with the exception of impacts associated with sufficient water supplies are considered to be significant and unavoidable and cumulatively considerable.

New development would place increased demands on utilities. Both Alternatives would allow for build out of the Planning Area comparable to the proposed General Plan and would result in similar impacts related to utilities and service systems. Alternative 1 would result in the least amount of residential development, while the proposed Project and Alternative 2 would result in the least amount of non-residential development. The quantity of infrastructure installed would not be substantially reduced under any alternative, as all alternatives would require similar development patterns and footprints, but the demand for utility services, including water, wastewater and solid waste services would generally be assumed to be less under Alternative 1 due to its reduced housing. Impacts under Alternative 2, which includes greater housing and population than the Project, would be greater than the Project and Alternative 1. However, both Alternatives and the Project would likely require the construction or expansion of new utilities to serve the site-specific development that could occur.

Total storm drainage would remain approximately the same under all scenarios due to the general development footprint remaining the same.

Overall, the demand for utilities would be slightly less under Alternative 1. However, the updated policy document under the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 includes policies and actions to address utilities impacts. Overall, Alternative 1 would have a slightly increased impact to utilities and service systems when compared to the proposed Project because it would not include adoption of the updated policy document; and Alternative 2 would have a slightly increased impact to utilities and service systems when compared to the proposed Project because of the increased development potential.

Wildfire

As described in Section 3.16 (Wildfire), the proposed General Plan would result in less than significant impacts relating to wildfire impacts. The development footprint and pattern would be similar under the Project and both Alternatives. The potential for new development to expose people or structures to wildfire would be similar under the Project and both Alternatives. Future development projects would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local regulations related to wildfire. Specifically, the applicant of any proposed development would be required to submit appropriate plans for plan review to ensure compliance with zoning, building, and fire codes prior to the issuance of a building permit. However, the updated policy document

under the proposed Project as well as Alternative 2 includes policies and actions to address emergency evacuation and potential impacts from wildfire. As such, Alternative 2 would be a slight improvement when compared to Alternative 1, which does not include an updated policy document. Therefore, because Alternative 2 would update policies consistent with the proposed General Plan, wildfire impacts would be slightly reduced when compared to Alternative 1.

Irreversible Effects

The proposed General Plan would have a significant and unavoidable impact associated with irreversible environmental effects as described under Impact 4.17. Implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in a commitment of land uses designated for the foreseeable future. Land use and development consistent with the General Plan would result in irreversible commitments by introducing development onto sites that are presently undeveloped. Additionally, development will physically change the environment in terms of aesthetics, air emissions, noise, traffic, open space, and natural resources. These physical changes are irreversible after development occurs. Therefore, the proposed General Plan would result in changes in land use within the Planning Area that would commit future generations to these uses.

During the planning horizon, development under both Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 would include similar overall development footprints and development patterns when compared to the proposed General Plan, and would therefore result in a similar permanent conversion of undeveloped lands. All Project alternatives would use nonrenewable resources, including metals, stone, and other materials related to construction, and result in on-going demand for fossil fuels and other resources associated with energy production. Because Alternative 2 would include approximately 2,725 more dwelling units than the proposed General Plan, it would result in a greater commitment of nonrenewable resources than the Project. Alternative 1 would include less development than the Project and would therefore result in a somewhat smaller commitment of nonrenewable resources; however, it would not include an updated policy document that includes additional policies and actions related to the conservation of resources and sustainable development patterns. The irreversible commitment of nonrenewable resources and permanent conversion of undeveloped lands would remain significant and unavoidable under both alternatives.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires that an environmentally superior alternative be identified among the alternatives that are analyzed in the EIR. If the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, an EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2)). The environmentally superior alternative is that alternative with the least adverse environmental impacts when compared to the proposed General Plan.

A comparative analysis of the proposed General Plan and each of the Project alternatives is provided in Table 5.0-4 below. The table includes a numerical scoring system, which assigns a score of 1 to 5 to each of the alternatives with respect to how each alternative compares to the proposed Project in terms of the severity of the environmental topics addressed in this EIR. A score of "3" indicates that the alternative would have the same level of impact when compared to the proposed Project. A score of "1" indicates that the alternative would have a better (or reduced) impact when compared to the proposed Project. A Score of "2" indicates that the alternative would have a slightly better (or slightly reduced) impact when compared to the proposed Project. A score of "4" indicates that the alternative would have a slightly worse (or slightly increased) impact when compared to the proposed Project. A score of "5" indicates that the alternative would have a worse (or increased) impact when compared to the proposed Project. The project alternative with the lowest total score is considered the environmentally superior alternative.

As shown in Table 5.0-4, the proposed Project is the environmentally superior alternative when looked at in terms of all potential environmental impacts. It should also be noted that all of the alternatives would fail to reduce any significant and unavoidable impacts to a less than significant level.

TABLE 5.0-4: COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	*PROPOSED PROJECT*	*ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO PROJECT)*	*ALTERNATIVE 2 (RESIDENTIAL FOCUSED)*
Aesthetics	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 - Same
Agricultural Resources	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Air Quality	3 – Same	2 – Slightly Better	4 – Slightly Worse
Biological Resources	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Cultural Resources	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Geology and Soils	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy	3 – Same	2 – Slightly Better	4 – Slightly Worse
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 - Same
Hydrology and Water Quality	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Land Use, Population, and Housing	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Mineral Resources	3 – Same	3 – Same	3 – Same
Noise	3 – Same	2 – Slightly Better	4 – Slightly Worse
Public Services and Recreation	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	4 – Slightly Worse
Transportation	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	2 – Slightly Better
Utilities	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	4 – Slightly Worse
Wildfire	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	3 – Same
Irreversible Effects	3 – Same	4 – Slightly Worse	4 – Slightly Worse
SUMMARY	**51**	**61**	**56**

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