

14.0 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

14.1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

As defined by §15050 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA), the Shasta County Department of Resource Management is serving as “Lead Agency” for preparation of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Tierra Robles Planned Development (Z10-002 / TM 1996) (herein referenced as the proposed project). The County’s responses to comments on the Draft EIR for the proposed project represents a good-faith, reasoned effort to address the environmental issues identified by the comments. As discussed in §15088(a) of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, the Lead Agency is not required to respond to all comments on the Draft EIR, but only to those comments that *raise environmental issues*.

The Final EIR presents the environmental information and analyses that have been prepared for the proposed project, including comments received addressing the adequacy of the Draft EIR, and responses to those comments. In addition to the responses to comments, clarifications, corrections, or minor revisions have been made to the Draft EIR. This document and the Mitigation and Monitoring Program (MMP) will be used by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in the decision-making process for the proposed project.

14.2 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The EIR process begins with the decision by the Lead Agency to prepare an EIR, either during a preliminary review of a project or at the conclusion of an Initial Study. Once the decision is made to prepare an EIR, the lead agency sends a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to appropriate government agencies and, when required, to the State Clearinghouse (SCH) in the Office of Planning and Research (OPR), which will ensure that responsible State agencies reply within the required time. The SCH assigns an identification number to the project, which then becomes the identification number for all subsequent environmental documents on the project.

The process of determining the focus and content of the EIR is known as scoping. Scoping helps to identify the range of actions, alternatives, environmental effects, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in depth, and eliminates from detailed study those issues that are not pertinent to the final decision on the proposed project. The scoping process is not intended to resolve differences of opinion regarding the proposed project or evaluate its merits. Instead, the process allows all interested parties to express their concerns regarding the proposed project and thereby ensures that all opinions and comments applicable to the environmental analysis are addressed in the EIR. Scoping is an effective way to bring together and address the concerns of the public, affected agencies, and other interested parties. Members of the public, relevant federal, State, regional and local agencies, interest groups, community organizations, and other interested parties may participate in the scoping process by providing comments or recommendations regarding issues to be investigated in the EIR.

In compliance with the State *CEQA Guidelines*, the County has taken steps to maximize opportunities for interested individuals, parties, and agencies to participate in the environmental process. During the preparation of the Draft EIR, an effort was made to contact various federal, State, regional, and local government agencies and other interested parties to solicit comments and inform the public of the proposed project.