



<http://www.buttegeneralplan.net>

Welcome to the Official Butte County General Plan Update Website

Last Update: 2006-06-14

NEXT MEETING: On June 13, 2006, the Board of Supervisors discussed the [Working Draft Framework of Guiding Principles](#) at the Butte County Board Chambers, 25 County Center Dr., Oroville, CA 95965.

FOR CONSULTANTS:
[Information to respond to the Request for Proposals for Butte County's comprehensive General Plan/Zoning Ordinance Update and EIR](#)

FOR APPLICANTS FOR THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:
[Citizens Advisory Committee \(formerly called Steering Committee\)](#)

Butte County is updating its General Plan/Zoning Ordinance. Why should you care?

- How much Agricultural land will stay in production and possibly be brought into production?
- How do we encourage an appropriate balance of jobs and housing for a healthy economy?
- Where will Butte County add 70,000 people in the next 25 years?
- Where will new job centers and adequate housing be developed to accommodate increasing populations?
- How can we preserve our natural habitats while maintaining these working landscapes?
- Is there a need for a new city/town and if so where?
- What is the future of the lands located in-between our existing cities and communities?
- Are there opportunities for the cities and county to collaborate planning the Spheres of Influence?
- Is there a regional solution to wastewater treatment & disposal?
- How can traffic congestion be alleviated and transportation needs met?
- How can we protect our high quality & quantity water supply?

What is a General Plan? A General Plan is a collection of county policies regarding long-term development in the form of maps and accompanying text. Under California Law, the General Plan is considered the "**constitution**" for land use and development and represents a jurisdiction's own vision and **policies** for the future. The General Plan is shaped by the citizens of Butte County and adopted by their elected representatives serving on the Board of Supervisors. The General Plan is considered a master "blueprint"; all other County regulations are required to be consistent with its instruction and policies. Subordinate regulations, such as the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, Specific Plans, and Capital Improvement Plans, serve to **implement** the General Plan's **policies** and programs by providing more detailed and specific information not contained within the General Plan.

County General Plan: A County General Plan is more regionally connected and focused than a City General Plan, and for that reason interaction with a variety of local agencies and interests is required. The importance of Butte County's General Plan update cannot be overstated. This document will guide future development strategies until 2030. General Plan policies can have far reaching consequences on public health, safety and welfare. Experience shows that a General Plan update is most successful when the General Plan's goals, policies and programs stem from the valuable input of local agencies and departments as well as the public.

A "Blueprint" for the Future: A General Plan guides the location and overall density and intensity of the various land use designations, while conserving lands devoted to agriculture, open space, and natural resources. Information provided in various background reports will be used to establish baseline information about the County. Using this information, staff and consultants will analyze long-term local and regional needs and trends. Opportunities and constraints will be identified to guide and ultimately decide future development and conservation decisions.

Required Elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Open Space, Conservation, Safety and Noise are the elements required by State Law. In addition to these, Butte County's current General Plan also includes the following elements – Agriculture, Parks & Recreation, Scenic Highway and Seismic. Through the update process, more elements may be added; the existing kept or even consolidated. Making the General Plan readable, consistent and enjoyable are the goals.

What is a Zoning Ordinance? The legislative body of any county or city may, pursuant to State Law, adopts ordinances that do any of the following: Regulate the use of buildings, structures, and land as between industry, business, residences, open space, including agriculture, recreation, enjoyment of scenic beauty, use of natural resources, and other purposes, AND MUCH MORE.

What is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)? A report required pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act that assesses all of the environmental characteristics of a project, determines what effects or impacts will result if the area is altered or disturbed by a proposed action, and identifies alternatives or other measures to avoid or reduce those impacts. (See "California Environmental Quality Act.")

Why Update Butte's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance?: Age of the current General Plan; Opportunity to coordinate with cities; Need to plan responsibly for future; Need to sustain Quality of Life; Sound Economic Policies; Strike a balance between Environment/Ag/Growth

History: Two General Plan Update programs began in the early 1990s and again in 2002 which were not completed. Our strategy is to review this data and utilize it where possible so that we don't expend funds on work that has already been done. But, it will need to have thorough staff and public review.

Challenges Doing a General Plan Update: Facilitating Public Participation; Keeping the process moving in a timely manner; Making sure of internal consistency (Calaveras Case – inconsistent Land Use and Circulation Elements); Keeping the General Plan 'General'

General Plan Trends in California: Regular Reviews & Updates; Community/Area Plans; Smart Growth Principles/Sustainability; Community Design/Form Based Codes; Watershed/Groundwater Planning; Disaster Mitigation Planning (Safety)

Roles in the Process: General Public; Citizens Advisory Committee (see 'Get Involved' below); Board of Supervisors; Planning Commission; Development Services Staff; Other County Departments; Cities, Districts, State Agencies, Associations; Consultant

Public Health: Urban and regional development patterns that are based upon the principles of comprehensive planning as set forth by a General Plan can have a positive influence on the areas of public safety and physical health by protecting air and water quality, providing safe and livable communities and neighborhoods, and protecting and conserving natural resources. Regional strategies for the protection of our County's natural resources benefit a variety of public health concerns including surface and groundwater quality, fire and flood protection, and recreation to name a few. The General Plan can also help focus urban development to areas best suited to support higher densities such as within the various city spheres of influence. Guiding county development away from areas identified to have physical and environmental constraints and towards existing communities will promote the overall quality of life and the services available to County citizens.

Board of Supervisors GP/ZO Update Subcommittee: Supervisors Josiassen and Dolan are the Board appointees

Key Dates: 2006-06-28 BOS to refine DRAFT Guiding Principles; 2006-06-13 BOS discussed DRAFT Guiding Principles; 2006-05-23 BOS approves concept of CAC, BOS Subcommittee and release of RFP for comprehensive update to the Butte County GP/ZO & EIR; 2006-04-27 Planning Commission discussion on GP/ZO/EIR; 2006-04-13 Charting the Course workshop (142 people attended).

Get Involved: Help 'Chart the Course' for Butte County's future by participating in the County's new General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Update. All interested citizens are encouraged to apply to become members of the Citizens Advisory Committee. The Citizens Advisory Committee will help guide the Butte County General Plan Update Process. Applications are available on line at www.buttegeneralplan.net. Application deadline is 2006-08-01.