
General Plan Academy

Executive Summary

California state law requires each city and county to 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” (§65300). The California Supreme Court has called the general plan the “constitution for future development.” The general plan expresses the community’s development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land uses, both public and private. The policies of the general plan are intended to underlie most land use decisions. Pursuant to state law, subdivisions, capital improvements, development agreements, and many other land use actions must be consistent with the adopted general plan. In counties and general law cities, zoning and specific plans are also required to conform to the general plan. In addition, preparing, adopting, implementing, and maintaining the general plan serves to:

- ❖ Identify the community’s land use, circulation, environmental, economic, and social goals and policies as they relate to land use and development.
- ❖ Provide a basis for local government decision-making, including decisions on development approvals and exactions.
- ❖ Provide citizens with opportunities to participate in the planning and decision-making processes of their communities.
- ❖ Inform citizens, developers, decision-makers, and other cities and counties of the ground rules that guide development within a particular community.

Every city and county must adopt “a comprehensive, long term general plan” (§65300). The general plan must cover a local jurisdiction’s entire planning area and address the broad range of issues associated with a city’s or county’s development.

The plan must cover the territory within the boundaries of the adopting city or county as well as “any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency’s judgment bears relation to its planning” (§65300). For cities, this means all territory within the city limits, both public and private. Counties must address all unincorporated areas. When establishing its planning area, each city should consider using its sphere of influence as a starting point. The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) in every county adopts a sphere of influence for each city to

represent “the probable physical boundaries and service area” of that city (§56076). Although there is no direct requirement that the sphere and the planning area match, the former provides a convenient measure of the city’s region of interest. A county should consider the general plans of every city within the county in its own plans. City planning policies may be reflected in the county plan in various ways. The county plan may discuss city policies in the broad context of countywide policy. It may summarize city policies while laying out the county policies for the surrounding unincorporated area. It may examine city policies in the context of community plans that it has adopted for the surrounding unincorporated areas. In addition, since issues are not confined to political boundaries, the law provides for planning outside of the jurisdiction’s territory. Cooperative extraterritorial planning can be used to guide the orderly and efficient extension of services and utilities; ensure the preservation of open space, agricultural, and resource conservation lands; and establish consistent standards for development in the plans of adjoining jurisdictions. Cities and counties should work together to delineate planning areas and may establish formal agreements for processing development proposals. For example, Yolo County delegates a portion of its land use authority to the City of Davis within areas surrounding the city. As urbanization occurs and adjoining cities expand, the potential for conflict between cities competing for the same lands increases. Intercity cooperation in establishing planning areas can proactively help to avoid such disputes.

Information stated in the Executive Summary and throughout the General Plan Academy was included with permission from Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, *State of California General Plan Guidelines* (2003)

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 policy 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 policy. A special subset of 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.

A County General Plan is generally 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 following County Departments and local agencies would potentially be involved (this list is not meant to be exhaustive): Assessor, Agriculture, Air Quality Management District, Butte County Association of Governments, Butte County Fire/CDF, Community Action Agency, Development Services (Planning and Building Divisions), Information Systems (GIS Division), LAFCO, Public Health Public Works, Sheriff-Coroner, and Water and Resource Conservation.

The importance of Butte County's General Plan update cannot be overstated. This document will guide future development strategies until 2030. General Plan policy can have far reaching consequences in the area of the public's health, safety and welfare. Experience shows that a General Plan update is most successful when the General Plan's goals, policies and programs stems from the valuable input of local agencies and departments as well as the public. It has been demonstrated for instance, that well designed urban and regional development patterns can have a positive influence on the areas of public safety, physical health, air quality, transportation, housing, and protection and conservation of natural resources. Regional strategies for the protection of our County's natural resources benefit a variety of areas including surface and groundwater quality, fire and flood protection, and recreation. These are areas of concern for all Butte County citizens.

What are the General Plan Elements?

A General Plan is required to address each of the following seven mandated elements to the extent that they are locally relevant:

- ❖ **Land Use-** This element functions as a guide to planners, the general public, and decision makers as to the ultimate pattern of development for the city or county at build-out.
- ❖ **Circulation-** The Circulation element is not simply a transportation plan. It is an infrastructure plan addressing the circulation of people, goods, energy, water, sewage, storm drainage, and communications.
- ❖ **Housing-** Housing element law requires local governments to adequately plan to meet their existing and projected housing needs including their share of the regional housing need. Unlike the

other mandatory elements, the housing element is subject to detailed statutory requirements regarding its content and must be updated every five years.

- ❖ **Conservation-** The Conservation element provides direction regarding the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources. Its requirements overlap those of the Open-Space, Land Use, Safety, and Circulation elements. The Conservation element is distinguished by being primarily oriented toward natural resources.
- ❖ **Open Space-** The Open-Space element guides the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of “open-space land”. Open-space land is defined in statute as any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved
- ❖ **Noise-** The purpose of the Noise element is to limit the exposure of the community to excessive noise levels.
- ❖ **Safety-** The aim of the Safety element is to reduce the potential risk of death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from fires, floods, earthquakes, landslides, and other hazards. Other locally relevant safety issues, such as airport land use, emergency response, hazardous materials spills, and crime reduction, may also be included.

The order in which the elements are presented matches the order in which they are listed in the General Plan Guidelines. This should not be misconstrued as the order of importance or the order in which a jurisdiction should prepare elements. All elements have equal weight under the law and can be prepared in any order or even combined.

State law offers considerable flexibility to go beyond the mandatory elements of the General Plan. A county or city may adopt any other elements or address any other subjects, which, in the judgment of the legislative body, relate to the physical development of the county or city. Once adopted, an optional element carries the same legal weight as any of the seven mandatory elements and must be consistent with all other elements. Butte County’s Current General Plan includes the following four additional elements:

- ❖ **Agriculture-** The Agriculture element is the County’s commitment to specific policies, Programs and strategies to ensure continued agriculture productivity unhindered by development pressures.
- ❖ **Recreation-** The recreation element addresses parks, tourism and bike trails
- ❖ **Scenic Highways-** This element includes criteria for the selection of scenic corridors and protecting designated corridors
- ❖ **Seismic Safety-** The seismic element outlines the County’s geological setting and seismic history including description of active and potentially active earthquake faults.

What is a Zoning Ordinance?

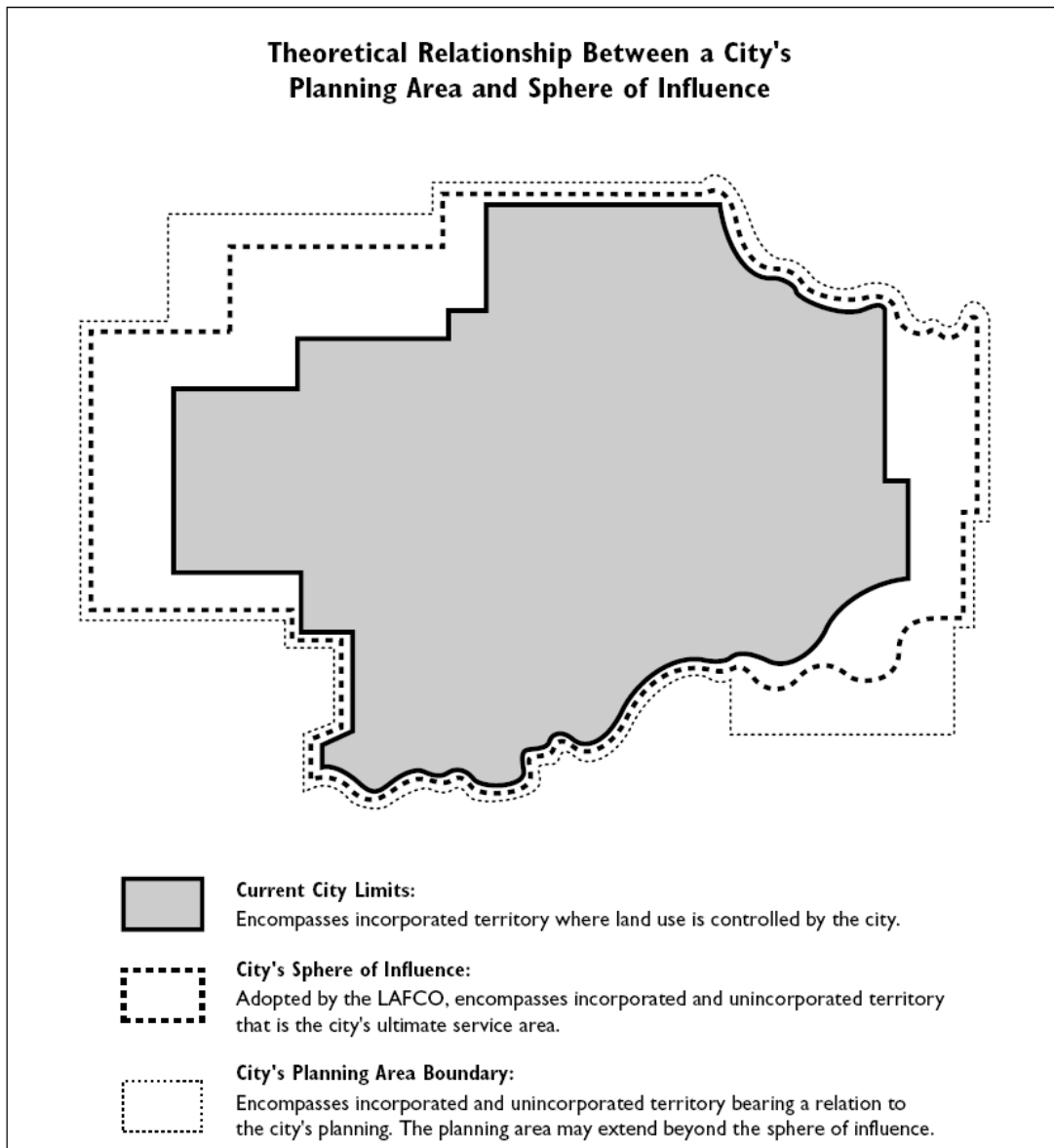
A zoning ordinance is one of the primary means of implementing a General Plan. In contrast to the long-term outlook of the general plan, zoning classifies the specific, immediate uses of land. The success of a general plan, and in particular the land use element, rests in part upon the effectiveness of a consistent zoning ordinance in translating the long-term objectives and policies contained in the plan into everyday decisions. Consistency between the two documents is critical to avoid confusing and conflicting policies.

Why Update both the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance?

- ❖ Age of current General Plan and Zoning Ordinance
- ❖ A mutual update of documents will ensure consistency
- ❖ Ensures implementation of the General Plan

What is a Sphere of Influence?

A "Sphere of Influence" is the physical boundary and service area that a local governmental agency is expected to serve. Establishment of this boundary is necessary to determine which governmental agencies can provide services in the most efficient way to the people and property in any given area.



What is CEQA?

CEQA, or the California Environmental Quality Act, is a state statute that requires state and local agencies to identify the significant environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, if feasible. CEQA applies to "projects" proposed to be undertaken or requiring approval by state and local government agencies. Although fitting into this loose definition, some things are not projects. Most proposals for physical development in California are subject to the provisions of CEQA, as are many governmental decisions, which do not immediately result in physical development (such as adoption of a general or community plan). A project is an activity undertaken by a public agency or a private activity, which must receive some discretionary approval (meaning that the agency has the authority to deny the requested permit or approval) from a government agency, which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment.

What is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)?

An EIR is a detailed report required by CEQA when a public agency proposes a major action significantly affecting the quality of the environment. An EIR is a detailed report describing and analyzing the significant effects of a project and discussing ways to mitigate or avoid the effects.

Who are participants in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Update process?

- ❖ General Public
- ❖ Citizens Advisory Committee
- ❖ Board of Supervisors
- ❖ Planning Commission
- ❖ Butte County Department of Development Services Staff
- ❖ Other County Departments
- ❖ Cities, Districts and State Agencies
- ❖ Hired Consultant - Design Community & Environment

Previous Butte County General Plan Update Efforts

Two General Plan Update programs began in the early 1990s and again in 2002 which were never completed. The 1990s effort produced a Draft Background Report that addressed all General Plan issues except those associated with the Housing Element, which was prepared separately. This draft, completed in March 1993 was called the *Butte County General Plan Draft Background Report*.

The 1993 Draft Background Report was reformatted and renamed the "Master Environmental Assessment" (MEA) in 1996. The 1996 MEA changed the structure of the *1993 General Plan Draft Background Report*, including changing the chapter order, rearranging sections into

different chapters, and adding several new chapters. The document was only published as a public review draft.

The May 1996 Butte County Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) was updated by Butte County Planning Division staff in 1998 and 1999. These 1998-1999 revisions were called the Butte County General Plan Technical Background Report and provided substantial updates to many of the sections in the 1996 MEA. The document's structure remained the same as in the 1996 MEA. The 1998-1999 revisions were never officially published and remained in draft form.

In the fall of 2002, the Board of Supervisors authorized County staff and consultants to begin a technical update of the Butte County General Plan. The *Butte County General Plan Technical Update (GPTU)* project was limited in scope. Its purpose was to revise, reformat, and update the Butte County General Plan to ensure its legal adequacy and its usefulness as a long-term guide for day-to-day decision making. The objectives of the GPTU were to:

- ❖ Update background information for the General Plan
- ❖ Consolidate and reformat all existing General Plan elements into a consistent single document or set of documents; and
- ❖ Ensure the General Plan's legal adequacy.

The GPTU work program was not designed to address significant changes in land use or policy issues. Such policy issues were intended to be addressed in a second phase ("Policy Update") to be undertaken following the conclusion of the GPTU. The GPTU work program involved a public review process, community and Planning Commission workshops, and a Response to Comments document that addressed public comments received during the review process. The final product was entitled the "*Butte County General Plan Technical Background Report (GPTU) and Policy Document Final Draft, August 8, 2005.*" After further review of this important technical planning document, a decision was made to undertake a more comprehensive update to the General Plan. The adoption process of the *Butte County General Plan Technical Update Background Report (GPTU) and Policy Document Final Draft* was therefore discontinued in favor of the comprehensive General Plan update currently underway.

Description of Butte County

Butte County lies in north central California at the northern end of the Sacramento Valley, approximately 150 miles northeast of San Francisco and 70 miles north of Sacramento. State Highways 70 and 99, which extend in a north-south direction through the county, define the principal transportation corridors connecting the county to the region. State Routes 32 and 162 provide sub-regional connections to areas to the west of the county and to Interstate 5.

Butte County's jurisdictional boundaries are defined by the Sacramento River, Butte Creek, and Glenn and Colusa Counties to the west; Tehama County to the north; Plumas County to the east; and Sutter and Yuba Counties to the south. South Honcut Creek and Wilson Creek are the southeast boundary with Yuba County. The County encompasses approximately 1,670 square miles (1,068,000 acres) and can be divided into three general topographical areas: a valley area, a foothill region east of the valley area, and a mountain region east of the foothills. These topographic areas comprise approximately 46 percent, 23 percent and 31 percent, respectively, of the county's land.

The county includes five incorporated communities (Chico, Oroville, Paradise, Gridley, and Biggs) and several small unincorporated rural communities.

The U.S. Forest Service is a major landowner in Butte County with holdings in Plumas National Forest (81,972 acres) and Lassen National Forest (49,240 acres). The U.S. Bureau of Land Management owns 18,960 acres, consisting of scattered foothill lands. Combined, these two Federal agencies own and control 12.3 percent of the land area in Butte County.

Historically, land use patterns in Butte County have been closely related to the natural characteristics of the county's main geographic areas. Each of the three geographic areas (Valley, Foothills, and Mountains) has provided a context for the development of its own set of industries and land use patterns. The industries associated with each area are frequently nontransferable economic activities; that is, they are highly dependent upon the preservation of local geographic and land use conditions. For example, the cultivation of almonds and other orchard crops, a major industry in Butte County, is dependent on the deep rich soils of the valley in order to thrive, and the timber industry is dependent on the forests in the higher altitudes of the east county.

Butte County possesses fertile soils, abundant water resources, and a relatively long growing season. Agriculture continues to be one of the major elements of the county's economic base despite greater diversification over the past decade. Because the soils and operating systems are different for cultivated agriculture and livestock ranching, particularly for cattle and sheep, agriculture in Butte County is divided into two sub areas: 1) orchard and field crops, which includes field crops, seed crops, vegetable crops, fruit and nut crops, nursery stock, and apiary products; and 2) grazing and open land, which involves animal husbandry forms of agriculture.

Urban land constitutes a proportionally small share of total land area in Butte County. In 2000, the most recent year that the Division of Land Resource Protection in the California Department of Conservation has data for Butte County, urban land uses occupied 62.7 square miles or 4

percent of all county land in 2000 (Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). In 2000, incorporated areas of the county accounted for 3.6 percent of all county land, according to U.S. Census data.

The county's urban areas are located in the valley, with the exception of the Paradise and Magalia/Upper Ridge areas located in the mountains. Their locations reflect their history: located adjacent to the prime agricultural lands which were their economic backbone and adjacent to the major transportation corridors (the Union Pacific Railroad and Highways 70, 32, and 99).

The direction in which the communities have grown also reflect changes that have occurred over time, such as the shift from one transportation system (trains) to another (motor vehicles), the development of new infrastructure (such as Lake Oroville), and the decline in natural resources (e.g., the establishment of the Greenline in Chico to protect prime agricultural land). Growth among major educational institutions such as CSU Chico and Butte College also influences regional growth in Butte County.

Traditionally, urban development in Butte County has been concentrated in the urban areas formed by the county's five incorporated communities. Up to the 1960s and 1970s, development in these areas occurred primarily within the communities' corporate boundaries. More recently, however, much of the development activity has taken place on the periphery of established communities. Some of this development has taken place under the jurisdiction of cities, but much of it has not. In addition to the development in the established urban areas, the 1970s saw a sharp increase in the amount of development that occurred throughout the foothill areas of the county, beyond the existing urban areas. This development was associated with the influx of retirement age residents who moved to Butte County specifically to live in a more rural setting, away from the urban centers. This development is dispersed throughout foothill areas (generally below the snow line), but with varying concentrations near pre-existing unincorporated rural communities such as Berry Creek, Hurleton, Bangor, Butte Meadows, Cohasset, Forest Ranch, Cherokee, Concow, Jarbo Gap, Pulga, Yankee Hill, DeSabra, Inskip, Lovelock, Stirling City, Feather Falls, Brush Creek, Clipper Mills, Forbestown, Rackerby, Magalia, Paradise Pines, and Toadtown

Existing General Plan

The term, "existing General Plan" refers to the Butte County General Plan as of May, 2006, consisting of a collection of 11 elements that were adopted between 1971 and 2004. Since its adoption, the existing Butte County General Plan has been supplemented and portions of it superseded by the adoption of area plans, updates to existing elements, and additions of new elements. Some of the elements have been amended, while most have not. There are also areas within the County where the adopted zoning classifications are not fully consistent with the General Plan land use designations. The following is a summary of the status of the various elements of the General Plan.

Existing Required General Plan Elements

- Land Use Element (Adopted October 1979; amended several times since its adoption)
- Circulation Element (Adopted May 1984; minor changes were made in 1988)
- Housing Element & Background Report (Adopted 1981, revised 1994; new element adopted in 2004)
- Conservation Element (Adopted August 1971; no changes or amendments)
- Open Space Element (Adopted December 1976; no changes or amendments)
- Safety Element (Adopted March 1977; no changes or amendments)
- Noise Element (Adopted March 1977; no changes or amendments)

Existing Optional General Plan Elements

- Scenic Highways Element (Adopted March 1977; no changes or amendments)
- Seismic Safety Element (Adopted March 1977; no changes or amendments)
- Recreation Element (Adopted August 1971; no changes or amendments)
- Agricultural Element (Adopted February 1995; no changes or amendments)

Because Butte County is physically, environmentally and socially diverse, countywide land use policy is not sufficiently detailed to adequately address the unique issues applicable to different parts of the county. Because of this, the “area plan” concept of the General Plan was initiated through the adoption of the Land Use Element in 1979. Policies applicable to specific planning areas were established within the existing Land Use Element, beginning on page LUE-82, to provide extra detail beyond what the General Plan was designed to accomplish. These policies supplement and provide more specific direction to the various planning areas. The following is the list of Butte County’s Area Plans:

Area Plan Date Adopted

- Oroville 1984
- Chico 1982
- Gridley-Biggs 1986
- Paradise Urban Reserve 1981
- Durham-Dayton-Nelson 1992
- Concow* 1982
- Palermo/Honcut* 1990
- Butte Meadows - Not completed
- Forest Ranch - Not completed
- Richvale - Not completed
- Bangor - Not completed
- Stirling City - Not completed

* Area plan maps were integrated into the Countywide Land Use Map; no separate policies were adopted.

How long will the update process take?

The General Plan and Zoning Ordinance update is scheduled for completion by September 2009. Refer to the project schedule for a time line and list of tasks.

Public Participation

When a general plan is written or amended, state law requires the planning agency to provide opportunities for the involvement of public agencies, public utility companies, community groups, and the general public through public hearings or other appropriate methods. The law also requires that a jurisdiction make a diligent effort to include all economic groups when drafting its housing element.

In addition to any organized participation activities, state law allows the public to attend all meetings of appointed advisory committees, planning commissions, and local legislative bodies, with a few exceptions (Brown Act, §54950, et seq.) For more information on Brown Act requirements, see the California Attorney General's Office's publication *The Brown Act: Open Meetings for Local Legislative Bodies* (2003).

What are the Goals and Outcomes?

There are many practical reasons to involve the public in the general plan process or in any other planning process. These include:

- ❖ Providing valuable information leading to more informed policy development by decision-makers
- ❖ Insuring the plan's successful implementation by building a base of long-term support with the public
- ❖ Reducing the likelihood of conflict and drawn-out battles by addressing public concerns during the general plan process rather than on a case-by-case basis in the future. This can also speed the development process and reduce project costs

Public participation as part of the general plan process can have positive impacts on the entire community, including:

- ❖ Educating the public about community issues
- ❖ Increasing the public's ability and desire to participate in the community
- ❖ Enhancing trust in government by strengthening the relationship between elected officials, government staff, and the public
- ❖ Working towards community consensus and creating a vision for the future
- ❖ Laying the groundwork for community revitalization and increased investment in the community
- ❖ Obtaining public input regarding plan policies and community issues and objectives
- ❖ Providing the public with opportunities to evaluate alternative plans and to participate in developing and choosing a plan that works for their community
- ❖ Informing decision-makers about public opinion

Butte Regional Growth Projections 2006 – 2030

The regional growth projections below reflect the growth trends that are anticipated to occur within Butte County and incorporated cities and town during the next twenty-four years.

BCAG staff collaborated and reached consensus with city, town and county planning staff on the development of the projections. This was accomplished through meetings of the City/Town/County Planning Directors Group. Each jurisdiction will be integrating the growth projections into their General Plan updating efforts and the projections will also be integrated into BCAG’s Regional Transportation Plan update in 2007 and traffic model update in 2007/08. The projections will also form the basis for the 2007/08 Regional Housing Needs Plan update.

Regional Population Projections 2006 - 2030

Jurisdiction	2006*	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Total Increase 20062030	Percent Increase 20062030	Average Annual Growth Rate
Biggs	1,780	1,955	2,311	3,062	3,533	3,997	2,217	125%	5.2%
Chico	79,091	85,610	94,520	104,358	115,220	127,212	48,121	61%	2.5%
Gridley	5,949	7,231	9,141	10,804	11,928	13,170	7,221	121%	5.1%
Oroville	13,550	15,696	20,033	23,447	25,888	28,582	15,032	111%	4.6%
Paradise	26,516	27,592	29,433	30,781	32,192	33,667	7,151	27%	1.1%
Unincorporated	90,323	93,991	98,786	103,825	109,121	114,687	24,364	27%	1.1%
Total County	217,209	232,075	254,224	276,277	297,882	321,315	104,106	48%	2.0%

*Source: Department of Finance

Regional Housing Unit Projections 2006 - 2030

Jurisdiction	2006*	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Total Increase 20062030	Percent Increase 20062030	Average Annual Growth Rate
Biggs	622	683	807	1,070	1,234	1,397	775	125%	5.2%
Chico	32,864	35,573	39,276	43,363	47,877	52,860	19,996	61%	2.5%
Gridley	2,224	2,703	3,417	4,039	4,459	4,923	2,699	121%	5.1%
Oroville	5,785	6,701	8,553	10,010	11,052	12,203	6,418	111%	4.6%
Paradise	12,707	13,223	14,105	14,751	15,427	16,134	3,427	27%	1.1%
Unincorporated	39,181	40,772	42,852	45,038	47,335	49,749	10,568	27%	1.1%
Total County	93,383	99,655	109,010	118,271	127,384	137,266	43,883	47%	2.0%

*Source: Department of Finance

Employment Projections

Jurisdiction	2006	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Butte County	88,714	92,181	98,109	103,487	114,646	123,539

Note: 2006 estimate based on ratio of 0.95 jobs/housing unit ratio This ratio decreases to 0.925 for 2010, 0.90 for 2015 and 0.875 for 2020 to reflect anticipated bedroom community effect in southern portion of county The ratio then increases to 0.90 for 2025 and 2030

All information in this section was taken from the BCAG (Butte County Association of Governments) Regional Growth Projections report. For more information, please visit www.bcag.org

Butte County Fact Sheet

Population, November 2006

County of Butte: 217,209
City of Biggs: 1,780
City of Chico: 79,091
City of Gridley: 5,949
City of Oroville: 13,550
Town of Paradise: 26,516
Source: CA Dept. of Finance

Butte Population by Race/Ethnicity 2005

White: 164,910
Hispanic: 27,551
Asian: 9,403
Black: 3,985
American Indian: 5,787
Source: CA Dept. of Finance

Labor Force 2006

County of Butte: 102,700
City of Biggs: 900
City of Chico: 34,200
City of Gridley: 2,500
City of Oroville: 5,200
Town of Paradise: 12,000
Source: CA EDD

Total Employment 2006

County of Butte: 97,600
City of Biggs: 800
City of Chico: 32,500
City of Gridley: 2,200
City of Oroville: 4,900
Town of Paradise: 11,600
Source: CA EDD

Total Unemployment 2006

County of Butte: 5,100
City of Biggs: 100
City of Chico: 1,700
City of Gridley: 300
City of Oroville: 400
Town of Paradise: 400
Source: CA EDD

Data compiled by the Center for Economic Development/Small Business Development Center at CSU, Chico Research Foundation, Chico CA 95929-0765

Total Personal Income 2005

County of Butte: 4,872,527
Source: Woods & Poole Economics

Per Capita 2005

County of Butte: \$26,453
Source: Woods & Poole Economics

Median Household Income 2005

County of Butte: \$37,521
Source: Center for Economic Development

Poverty Rate 2003

County of Butte: 15.8%
California: 13.8%
Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Taxable Retail Sales 2004

County of Butte: 1,948,720
Source: CA BOE

Total Taxable Sales 2004

County of Butte: 2,550,996
Source: CA BOE

Total Housing Units 2006

County of Butte: 91,668
City of Biggs: 622
City of Chico: 32,864
City of Gridley: 2,224
City of Oroville: 5,785
Town of Paradise: 12,707
Source: CA DOF

Births by Residence 2004

County of Butte: 2,354
California: 544,685
Source: CA Dept. of Health

Deaths by Residence 2003

County of Butte: 2,200
California: 239,325
Source: CA Dept. of Health

Web Links

- ❖ **Butte County**
 - ✓ www.buttecounty.net
 - ✓ www.buttegeneralplan.net/links.asp
- ❖ **Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG)**
 - ✓ www.bcag.org
- ❖ **Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)**
 - ✓ www.buttelafco.org
- ❖ **Governor's Office of Planning & Research**
 - ✓ www.opr.ca.gov
 - ✓ www.opr.ca.gov/planning/PDFs/General_Plan_Guidelines_2003.pdf
- ❖ **Other Jurisdictions General Plan Update Efforts**
 - ✓ www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/cd/main/fm/index.cfm
 - ✓ www.napacountygeneralplan.com
 - ✓ www.opr.ca.gov/planning/PDFs/consol.pdf
- ❖ **American Planning Association**
 - ✓ www.planning.org
 - ✓ www.calapa.org
- ❖ **Land Use Planning Information Network LUPIN**
 - ✓ www.ceres.ca.gov/planning/
- ❖ **Local Government Commission**
 - ✓ www.lgc.org/
- ❖ **Smart Growth**
 - ✓ www.planning.org/smartgrowthcodes
 - ✓ www.smartgrowthplanning.org
 - ✓ www.urbanfutures.org/index.cfm
 - ✓ www.newurbannews.com/transect.html
 - ✓ www.cnu.org
- ❖ **Rural Growth / Agricultural**
 - ✓ www.butte.cfbf.com
 - ✓ www.farmland.org
 - ✓ www.buttecounty.net/agcommissioner
 - ✓ <http://www.greatvalley.org>
- ❖ **Conservation / Natural Resources**
 - ✓ www.buttecountyrcd.org
 - ✓ www.buttecounty.net/WATERANDRESOURCE
 - ✓ www.conservation.ca.gov
 - ✓ www.dfg.ca.gov
- ❖ **Maps and Data**
 - ✓ www.buttecounty.net/dds/GIS/maps.htm
 - ✓ www.calpin.ca.gov

ELECTED AND APPOINTED CITY & COUNTY OFFICIALS

Butte County Government

Butte County Grand Jury

City Councils

City of Biggs

City of Chico

City of Gridley

City of Oroville

Town of Paradise

JOINT CITY AND COUNTY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEE

Air Quality Management District

Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC)

Butte County Association of Governments

California integrated Waste Management Local Task Force

City Selection Committee

Community Transit Advisory Committee

Emergency Services Council

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)

Redevelopment Committee for (GCUARPA & CMRPA)

Southside Oroville Community Center Advisory Committee

GOVERNING BOARDS APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Bangor Cemetery District

Gridley-Biggs Cemetery District

Nimshew Cemetery District

Oroville Cemetery District

Paradise Cemetery District

Pine Creek Cemetery District

Thompson Flat Cemetery District

Upham Cemetery District

Butte County Mosquito & Vector Control District

Durham Mosquito Abatement District

Oroville Mosquito Abatement District

Biggs Swimming Pool District (CSA #31)

Gridley Swimming Pool District (CSA #34)

Irrigation Districts

Durham irrigation District

Paradise Irrigation District

Richvale irrigation District

South Feather Water & Power Agency (Formerly OWID)

Thermalito Irrigation District

Recreation & Park Districts

Chico Area Recreation & Park District (CARD)
Durham Recreation & Park District
Feather River Recreation & Park District
Paradise Recreation & Park District
Richvale Recreation & Park District

Reclamation Districts

Reclamation District No 833
Rock Creek Reclamation District
Sacramento River Reclamation District

Utility Districts

Lake Oroville Area Public Utility District

Sanitary Districts

Richvale Sanitary District

Water Districts

Biggs-West Gridley Water District
Butte Water District
Lake Madrone Water District
Western Canal Water District

COMMITTEES APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Africanized Honey Bee Task Force
Agricultural Advisory Commission
AIDS Task Force
Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Committee
Animal Control Advisory Board
Area II Developmental Disabilities Planning Board
Assessment Appeals Board
Building Code Board of Appeals
Butte County Behavioral Health Board
Butte County Code Enforcement Advisory Board
Butte County Fair Board
Butte County Housing Authority Board
Butte County Human Services Coordinating Council
Butte County Indian Gaming Local Community Benefit Committee
Butte County Library Advisory Board
Butte County Resource Conservation District
Butte County Treasury Oversight Committee
Butte County Water Advisory Committee
Butte County Water Commission
Children and Families Commission
Community Action Agency
County Assessment District Review Committee
County Service Area 37 - Gridley Ambulance Service
Deferred Compensation Advisory Committee
Disabled Access Board of Appeals

Economic Development Corporation of Butte County
Emergency Medical Care Committee
Fish and Game Commission
In-Home Supportive Services Advisory Committee
Juvenile Justice Commission/Delinquency Prevention Commission
Land Conservation Act Advisory Committee
Law Library Trustees
Memorial Halls
 Biggs Memorial Hall Committee
 Chico Memorial Hall Committee
 Gridley Memorial Hall Committee
 Oroville Memorial Hall Committee
 Paradise Memorial Hall Committee
Parole Board
Planning Commission
Private Industry Council (PIC)
Rabbi Trustee Committee
Solid Waste Permit Enforcement and Appeal Independent Hearing Panel
Surface Mining Aggregate Operations Committee
Miscellaneous Committees
 Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)
 Bicycle Advisory Committee
 Butte Basin Water Users Association
 Butte County Audit Committee
 Facilities Master Plan Steering Committee
 Friends of the Arts
 Butte Regional Waste Management Authority
 California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
 Chico Habitat and Resource conservation Plan Steering Committee
 Chico Urban Issues Committee
 Fire Safe Council
 Interagency Children's Services Coordinating Council
 Job Creation Task Force
 Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council
 Lake Oroville Joint Powers Authority (JPA)
 Local Child Care Planning Council
 National Association of Counties
 North State Cooperative Library System Advisory Board
 Oversight Committee for Citizens Option for Public Safety Program (COPS)
 Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC)
 Rehabilitation Loan Committee
 Remote Access Network (RAN)
 Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum
 Sierra Nevada Conservancy
 Transient Occupancy Tax Committee
 Tri-County Economic Development Corporation Revolving Loan Fund
 Tri-County Economic Development District and Small Business Development

Upper Sacramento River Advisory Council
West Feather River Levee Reconstruction Agency

SPECIAL DISTRICTS - ELECTED BOARDS

Community Service Districts

Berry Creek Community Services District
Buzztail Community Services District
Richardson Springs Community Services District

Drainage Districts

Drainage District No 1
Drainage District No 2
Drainage District No 100
Drainage District No 200
Butte Creek Drainage District

Fire Protection District

El Medio Fire Protection District

Glossary of Planning Terms

ADT- Average daily trips made by vehicles during a 24-hour period

Affordable Housing: Housing capable of being purchased or rented by a household with very low, low, or moderate income, based on a household's ability to make monthly payments necessary to obtain housing. "Affordable to low-and moderate- income households" means that at least 20 percent of the units in a development will be sold or rented to lower income households, and the remaining units to either lower or moderate income households. Housing units for lower income households must sell or rent for a monthly cost not greater than 30 percent of 60 percent of area 256 General Plan Guidelines median income as periodically established by HCD. Housing units for moderate income must sell or rent for a monthly cost not greater than 30 percent of area median income.

Agricultural Preserve: Land designated for agriculture or conservation.

Airport-Related Use: A use that supports airport operations including, but not limited to, aircraft repair and maintenance, flight instruction, and aircraft chartering.

Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC): The purpose is to protect public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring the orderly expansion of airports and the adoption of land use measures that minimize the public's 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.

Below-market-rate dwelling unit (BMR): (1) Any housing unit specifically priced to be sold or rented to low- or moderate-income households for an amount less than the fair-market value of the unit. Both the State of California and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development set standards for determining which households qualify as "low income" or "moderate income." (2) The financing of housing at less than prevailing interest rates

Blight: A condition of a site, structure, or area that may cause nearby buildings and/or areas to decline in attractiveness and/or utility. The Community Redevelopment Law (Health and Safety Code §33031 and §33032) contains a definition of blight used to determine eligibility of proposed redevelopment project areas.

Brownfield: An area with abandoned, idle, or underused industrial and commercial facilities where expansion, redevelopment, or reuse is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.

Buffer Zone: An area of land separating two distinct land uses that acts to soften or mitigate the effects of one land use on the other.

Central Business District: The major commercial downtown center of a community. General guidelines for delineating a downtown area are defined by the U.S. Census of Retail Trade, with specific boundaries being set by the local municipality.

Clustered Development: Development in which a number of dwelling units are placed in closer proximity than usual, or are attached, with the purpose of retaining an open-space area.

Community Noise Equivalent Level: A 24-hour energy equivalent level derived from a variety of single-noise events, with weighting factors of 5 and 10 dBA applied to the evening (7 PM to 10 PM) and nighttime (10 PM to 7 AM) periods, respectively, to allow for the greater sensitivity to noise during these hours.

Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions: A term used to describe restrictive limitations that may be placed on property and its use, and which usually are made a condition of holding title or lease.

Developable Land: Land that is suitable as a location for structures and that can be developed free of hazards to, and without disruption of, or significant impact on, natural resource areas.

Easement: Usually the right to use property owned by another for specific purposes or to gain access to another property. For example, utility companies often have easements on the private property of individuals to be able to install and maintain utility facilities.

Easement, Conservation: A tool for acquiring open space with less than full-fee purchase, whereby a public agency buys only certain specific rights from the land owner. These may be positive rights (providing the public with the opportunity to hunt, fish, hike, or ride over the land) or they may be restrictive rights (limiting the uses to which the land owner may devote the land in the future.)

Farmers Home Administration (FmHA): An agency of the federal government that provides credit assistance to farmers and other individuals who live in rural areas

Federal Emergency Management Agency: Agency of the US government tasked with Disaster Mitigation, Preparedness, Response & Recovery planning

Fiscal Impact Report: A projection of the direct public costs and revenues resulting from population or employment change to the local jurisdiction(s) in which the change is taking place. Enables local governments to evaluate relative fiscal merits of general plans, specific plans, or projects.

Form Based Codes: Conventional zoning divides municipalities into a series of mapped districts (zones), and then assigns a permitted use(s) to each zone. Critics of conventional zoning point out that it ignores the importance of design. One alternative to conventional zoning is known as the form-based code. Compared with traditional zoning, a form-based code doesn't focus on specific uses. Instead, you start with a question—what does the community want to look like—and then work back from there. Physical patterns—the design of buildings, streetscapes, and civic infrastructure are the central issue. Formbased codes control only the most important physical attributes of a group of buildings. This often includes their alignment on a street, the disposition of space between them, and their overall height. Typically, such controls are not expressed as absolutes, but rather as ranges of acceptable values. Form-based codes are more visual in nature and are thus more understandable to the community than complicated zoning regulations. The emphasis on design supports mixed-use development and allows uses to evolve as the market changes. One can study older towns and find that in their development over time, land use regulation was secondary to form. The mix of uses has responded to market forces and buildings have changed their uses any number of times since they were built. A form-based code is a useful implementation measure for achieving certain general plan goals, such as walkable neighborhoods and mixed-use and transit-oriented development. As of this writing, no local government in California has entirely replaced its conventional zoning ordinance with a form-based code. However, formbased codes have been used in selected planning areas. (Source: California General Plan Guidelines)

Groundwater: Water under the earth's surface, often confined to aquifers capable of supplying wells and springs.

Groundwater Recharge: The natural process of infiltration and percolation of rainwater from land areas or streams through permeable soils into water- holding rocks that provide underground storage (aquifers).

Historic Preservation: The preservation of historically significant structures and neighborhoods in order to facilitate restoration and rehabilitation of the building(s) to a former condition.

Housing and Community Development Dept, State of CA (HCD)- Federal office which oversees home ownership, low-income housing assistance, fair housing laws, homelessness, aid for distressed neighborhoods, and housing development programs.

Housing Unit: A house, an apartment, a mobile-home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied as a separate living quarters, or, if vacant, is intended for occupancy as a separate living quarters (2000 U.S. Census definition).

Jobs/Housing Balance; Jobs/Housing Ratio: The availability of affordable housing for employees. The jobs/housing ratio divides the number of jobs in an area by the number of employed residents. A ratio of 1.0 indicates a balance. A ratio greater than 1.0 indicates a net in-commute; less than 1.0 indicates a net out-commute.

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO): LAFCO is a state mandated local agency that oversees boundary changes to cities and special districts, the formation of new agencies including incorporation of new cities, and the consolidation of existing agencies. The broad goals of the agency are to ensure the orderly formation of local government agencies, to preserve agricultural and open space lands, and to discourage urban sprawl.

Level of Service (Traffic): A scale that measures the amount of traffic that a roadway or intersection can accommodate, based on such factors as maneuverability, driver dissatisfaction, and delay.

Mello-Roos Community Facilities District: Under the Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982 (§53311, et seq.), a legislative body may create within its jurisdiction a special tax district that can finance tax-exempt bonds for the planning, design, acquisition, construction, and/or operation of public facilities, as well as public services for district residents. Special taxes levied solely within the district are used to repay the bonds

Mixed Use: Properties on which various uses such as office, commercial, institutional, and residential are combined in a single building or on a single site in an integrated development project with significant functional interrelationships and a coherent physical design.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): An Act to establish a national policy for the environment, to provide for the establishment of a Council on Environmental Quality, and for other purposes.

Neotraditional Development: An approach to land use planning and urban design that promotes the building of neighborhoods with a mix of uses and housing types, architectural variety, a central public gathering place, interconnecting streets and alleys, and edges defined by greenbelts or boulevards. The basic goal is integration of the activities of potential residents with work, shopping, recreation, and transit all within walking distance.

Ordinance: A law or regulation set forth and adopted by a governmental authority, usually a city or county.

Overlay: A land use designation on the General Plan Land Use Map, or a zoning designation on a zoning map, that modifies the basic underlying designation in some specific manner.

Planned Unit Development (PUD): A description of a proposed unified development, consisting at a minimum of a map and adopted ordinance setting forth the regulations governing, and the location and phasing of all proposed uses and improvements to be included in the development.

Planning Area: The area directly addressed by the general plan. A city's planning area typically encompasses the city limits and potentially annexable land within its sphere of influence.

Prime Agricultural Land: (1) Land used actively in the production of food, fiber, or livestock. (2) All land that qualifies for rating as Class I or Class II in the Natural Resources Conservation Service land use compatibility classifications. (3) Land that qualifies for rating 80 through 100 in the Storie Index Rating.

Right-of-Way: A strip of land occupied or intended to be occupied by certain transportation and public use facilities, such as roads, railroads, and utility lines.

Riparian Lands: Riparian lands are comprised of the vegetative and wildlife areas adjacent to perennial and intermittent streams. Riparian areas are delineated by the existence of plant species normally found near freshwater.

Sanitary Sewer: A system of subterranean conduits that carries refuse liquids or waste matter to a plant where the sewage is treated, as contrasted with storm drainage systems (that carry surface water) and septic tanks or leech fields (that hold refuse liquids and waste matter on-site).

Specific Plan: A tool authorized by Government Code §65450, et seq. for the systematic implementation of the general plan for a defined portion of a Glossary 270 General Plan Guidelines community's planning area. A specific plan must specify in detail the land uses, public and private facilities needed to support the land uses, phasing of development, standards for the conservation, development, and use of natural resources, and a program of implementation measures, including financing measures.

State Responsibility Areas (SRA): Areas of the state in which the financial responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires has been determined by the State Board of Forestry (pursuant to Public Resources Code 4125) to be primarily the responsibility of the State.

Subdivision: The division of a tract of land into defined lots, either improved or unimproved, which can be separately conveyed by sale or lease, and which can be altered or developed. "Subdivision" includes a condominium project as defined in §1350 of the California Civil Code and a community apartment project as defined in §11004 of the Business and Professions Code.

Sustainability: Community use of natural resources in a way that does not jeopardize the ability of future generations to live and prosper.

Smart Growth: Smart growth means using comprehensive planning to guide, design, develop, revitalize and build communities for all that incorporate the following common themes:

- Efficient use of land
 - Fill in older parts of communities before spreading out
 - Build new communities in more compact way
- Mix of uses
 - Mix commercial and retail uses with residential
 - Support/create town and neighborhood centers
 - More destinations in walking/bicycling distance
- Support walking, bicycling and transit use
- Create strong local and regional economies
- Involve residents in planning process
(Source: Local Government Commission)

- Have a unique sense of community and place
- Preserve and enhance valuable agricultural, natural and cultural resources;
- Equitably distribute the costs and benefits of development
- Expand the range of transportation, employment and housing choices in a fiscally responsible manner;
- Value long-range, regional considerations of sustainability over short term incremental geographically isolated actions
- Promote public health and healthy communities.
- Compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development patterns and land reuse epitomize the application of the principles of smart growth. (Source: Department of Development Services Powerpoint, April 13, 2006, General Plan 2030 Meeting)

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): Moderate- to higher-density development, located within easy walk of a major transit stop, generally with a mix of residential, employment, and shopping opportunities designed for pedestrians without excluding the auto. TOD can be new construction or redevelopment of one or more buildings whose design and orientation facilitate transit use.

Trip Generation: The dynamics that account for people making trips in automobiles or by means of public transportation. Trip generation is the basis for estimating the level of use for a transportation system and the impact of additional development or transportation facilities on an existing, local transportation system. Trip generations of households are correlated with destinations that attract household members for specific purposes.

Urban Growth Boundary: An officially adopted and mapped line dividing land to be developed from land to be protected for natural or rural uses. Urban growth boundaries (also called urban limit lines) are regulatory tools, often designated for long periods of time (20 or more years) to provide greater certainty for both development and conservation goals. (Source: Greenbelt Alliance).

Urban Sprawl: Haphazard growth or outward extension of a city resulting from uncontrolled or poorly managed development.

Watershed: The total area above a given point on a watercourse that contributes water to its flow; the entire region drained by a waterway or watercourse that drains into a lake, or reservoir.

Zero Lot Line: A detached single family unit distinguished by the location of one exterior wall on a side property line.

Zoning: The division of a city or county by legislative regulations into areas, or zones, that specify allowable uses for real property and size restrictions for buildings within these areas; a program that implements policies of the general plan.

Common Acronyms

ALUC	Airport Land Use Commission
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADT	Average Daily Traffic (or Average Daily Trips)
AIA	American Institute of Architects
AICP	American Institute of Certified Planners
APA	American Planning Association
ASLA	American Society of Landscape Architects
BCAG	Butte County Association of Governments
BMP	Best Management Practices
BOS	Board of Supervisors
CAC	Citizens Advisory Committee
CAD	Computer Aided Design
CDF	California Department of Forestry
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
COG	Council of Governments
CSA	County Service Area
CWA	Clean Water Act
DC&E	Design Community and Environment
DET	Legal Lot Determination
DFG	Department of Fish and Game
DOF	Department of Finance
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EDD	Employment Development Department
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHA	Federal Housing Administration
GFA	Gross Floor Area
GIS	Geographic Information System
GP	General Plan
GPA	General Plan Amendment
GPS	Global Positioning System
GPTU	General Plan Technical Update
HCD	Housing and Community Development

▪ General Plan Academy ▪

HCP	Habitat Conservation Planning
HUD	Department of Housing & Urban Development
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LOS	Level of Service
MEA	Master Environmental Assessment
MER	Parcel Merger
MINUTP	Minimum Urban Transportation Planning
MMP	Mitigation Monitoring Program
MUP	Minor Use Permit
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Planning
NCSP	North Chico Specific Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NIMBY	Not In My Backyard
NWCSP	North West Chico Specific Plan
PC	Planning Commission
PUD	Planned Unit Development
QOL	Quality of Life
RFI	Request for Information
RHNA	Regional Housing Needs Assessment
ROW	Right of Way
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SFD	Single Family Dwelling
SP	Specific Plan
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TIS	Traffic Impact Statement
TNM	Traffic Noise Model
UP	Use Permit
USDA	US Department of Agriculture
USFS	US Forest Service
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
USGBC	United States Green Building Council
USGS	US Geological Survey
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
ZCA	Zoning Code Amendment
ZO	Zoning Ordinance