

Butte County Department of Development Services

TIM SNELLINGS, DIRECTOR | PETE CALARCO, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

7 County Center Drive
Oroville, CA 95965
(530) 538-7601 Telephone
(530) 538-5366 Facsimile

www.buttecounty.net/dds
www.buttegeneralplan.net



AGENDA REPORT Butte County General Plan 2030

May 8, 2007

Butte County Board of Supervisors
25 County Center Drive
Oroville, CA 95965

**Subject: Butte County General Plan 2030
Board of Supervisors Study Session, Meeting Series #1
Existing Conditions and Issue Identification**

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors receive and consider all of the information pertaining to Butte County's Existing Conditions and Issue Identification generated by the Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings, Public Workshop, Planning Commission Study Session and Staff. Staff additionally recommends that the Board include any additional issues as appropriate and direct staff to transmit this information for use in the upcoming Meeting Series (Meeting Series #2, 3, and 4) associated with the development of alternatives and the evaluation and selection of alternatives.

Summary

This Study Session (the 4th meeting in the 1st Workshop Series –Existing Conditions and Issue Identification) is the Board of Supervisors opportunity to review and build upon all the information that has been received from the General Plan 2030 Public Workshop held March 15, 2007, the Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings held on December 7, 2006 and March 29, 2007, and the Planning Commission Study Session held on April 13, 2007. Those meetings were focused on identifying Butte County's issues that needed to be addressed by the General Plan 2030 process and identifying assets that needed to be promoted or conserved.

Presented below is: I. An overview of the General Plan 2030 process; II. A discussion on the identified Issues and Assets obtained from the public, Citizens Advisory Committee, Planning Commission and staff; III. A chronological summary of all of the meetings associated with Meeting Series #1; and, IV. A discussion on the next steps associated with the General Plan 2030 process.

I. Overview of General Plan 2030 Process

The Butte County General Plan 2030 process requires the completion of 12 major tasks itemized as follows:

Butte County General Plan 2030 Project Tasks

- A. Project Initiation
- B. Existing Conditions Analysis
- C. Issue Identification
- D. Butte County and City Cooperation and Outreach
- E. Development of Alternatives
- F. Alternatives Evaluation and Selection
- G. Preliminary Goals and Policies Development
- H. Draft General Plan
- I. Housing Element Update
- J. Development Code and Zoning Ordinance Update
- K. Draft EIR
- L. Final General Plan, Final Zoning Ordinance and Final EIR Review and Adoption

The General Plan 2030 update process uses a “Meeting Series” approach to address the 12 major tasks identified above. There is a total of 8 Meeting Series, and each consists of four meetings: 1) a Public Workshop, 2) a Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting 3) a Planning Commission Study Session, and 4) a Board of Supervisors Study Session.

This process ensures that the public, the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission, and ultimately, the Board of Supervisors are fully integrated into the update process. Information from each meeting is funneled into this last Study Session for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. The last Study Session is when the Board can comment and provide feedback regarding these tasks. In this way, the Board of Supervisors maintains the ability to make “course corrections” and to provide direction to the Butte County General Plan 2030 process.

Community and Area-Wide Meetings

Staff has also begun an intensive schedule of public meetings (Attachment G) that will engage Butte County’s unincorporated communities and areas in the General Plan 2030 process. The information obtained at these meetings will be carefully reviewed to help decide the most appropriate way to address each area in the development of General Plan Alternatives. These

meetings will also be used to gather input from members of the public regarding their concerns for housing in the unincorporated area to be used during the update of the Housing Element. To date, meetings have been held in Central Buttes/Butte Valley, Cherokee, and Cohasset areas. Members of the public may access complete summaries of these meetings on the General Plan 2030 website or by contacting Development Services.

General Plan 2030 Existing Conditions Briefing Book

As the Board is aware, an Existing Conditions Briefing Book has been prepared for use during the identification of issues. To date, 500 copies of the Briefing Book have been distributed to the public at the Public Workshop held on March 15, the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting held on March 29, the Planning Commission Study Session held on April 13th and at all Community Meetings held to date. They have also been made available at County Libraries and Development Services' front desk and distributed to Butte County's neighboring counties. The Briefing Books will continue to be an important tool in the General Plan process, and will be distributed at all future public meetings.

General Plan 2030 Background Report

The Butte County General Plan 2030 Background Report will provide an assessment on many different subject areas important to Butte County. The Background Report will also contain information that will be used to complete the "Project Setting" section of the Environmental Impact Report. Sections of the Background Report are being reviewed at this time. It is anticipated that the Background Report will be completed and available for review in time for the May 31st Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting concerning Alternatives Selection (Series #2-2). The Background Report will also contain a "Development Trends Analysis" that will look at the last 15 - 25 years of development in Butte County and provide factual information about development trends and growth patterns for consideration by the General Plan 2030 process.

II. Identified Issues and Assets from Meeting Series #1

The information gathered at the December 7, 2006 and March 29, 2007 Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings, the March 15, 2007 Public Workshop and the April 13, 2007 Planning Commission Study Session and staff input on issues and assets was recorded at each meeting and transferred into 2 spreadsheets, one including ASSETS and another for ISSUES (Attachments C and D). In total, input was received resulting in 213 listed assets, and 413 listed issues. A Summary of Key Issues is also provided that was created from all of the 413 issue obtained to date (Attachment B). The summary also includes key issues raised by the public, the Butte County General Plan Web Discussion Forum, and suggested by County Staff.

Meeting notes are also provided as an attachment (Attachment E) to this Agenda Report from the November 16, December 7, 2006, and March 15, 2007 Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings, and the March 15, 2007 Public Workshop. These meetings are summarized in Section III below.

The Butte County General Plan 2030 Guiding Principles (Attachment A), which the Planning Commission reviewed on January 11, 2007, and the Board of Supervisors approved on February 13, 2007, provide important guidance for the General Plan Process. Because of the important role the Guiding Principles play within the General Plan 2030 process, the assets and issues information is categorized within the spreadsheets and the Key Issues by each of the 13 Guiding Principles. This allows the Board to easily refer to all of the issues or assets related to each Guiding Principle.

Some of the assets and issues could not be categorized by Guiding Principle. Items that could not be categorized into a Guiding Principle were classified as "Other". Some of these items were further categorized into subtopics regarding "Community Character", and "Regulatory Setting".

Staff recommends that the Board's discussion be structured around each of the 13 Guiding Principles. This Study Session is also the appropriate time to include additional issues or assets that the Board has experience with and that needs to be addressed by the Butte County General Plan 2030 process, and which may not have been identified at the Public Workshop, Citizens Advisory Committee meetings or the Planning Commission Study Session.

III. Summary of Meeting Series #1 –Existing Conditions and Issue Identification, Citizens Advisory Committee Kick-off Meetings, and the City/County Summit Meeting

Planning Commission Study Session (#1-3) Held on April 13, 2007

Butte County General Plan 2030 Meeting #1-3, the Planning Commission Study Session, was held on April 13, 2007. This meeting is the third in the four-part meeting series focused on issue identification. All Planning Commissioners were present. Butte County Development Services staff Tim Snellings and Dan Breedon attended, as well as Ellen Clark and Tanya Higgins of Design, Community & Environment, the lead General Plan consultant. In addition, two members of the Citizens Advisory Committee and several members of the public attended.

The Planning Commission reviewed the community input provided at the Public Workshop (Meeting #1-1) and the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting (Meeting #1-2), which was arranged by Guiding Principle. The Commission discussed, refined and added to this public input, as summarized below. Agriculture Commissioner Richard Price and Citizens Advisory Committee member Jeff Carter provided comments to the Planning Commission and they have been incorporated into the Planning Commission's list of Issues.

The Commission supported the concept of revenue-sharing agreements between the County and the incorporated municipalities, and suggested investigation into such agreements for other Counties and the Indian casinos. The Commission also emphasized the need to coordinate with the Cities and unincorporated communities about where to direct growth. Other growth topics were discussed, including growth boundaries, second units, transfer of development rights programs, cluster development, student housing, development densities and building heights. Expectations and costs of providing public services in rural areas were

emphasized, and it was suggested that the County investigate the use of a “zone of benefit” model, which takes into account the distance from services.

The Commission debated the notion of “Agricultural Residential” designations and minimum lot sizes in agricultural areas. The Commission emphasized the need to protect agriculture in general, including large-lot grazing uses and small orchard farms, leading to a discussion of the Williamson Act, farmland trusts, and other incentive programs. The Commission discussed the agricultural buffer, emphasizing the need for the setback to be on the urban side and for mitigations of conflicts with adjacent land uses. The conflicts between bicyclists and agricultural uses were also highlighted; the Commission supported the notion of bicycle routes along levees, railroads, and other locations that are separate from the roadways and/or not in agricultural areas.

The Commission discussed land use conflicts with airports, directing the need for compatibility between the General Plan and the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The Commission also had some suggestions for access and utilization of the Chico Municipal Airport.

The Commission directed that open space and natural resources should be preserved and linked, such as the preservation of contiguous oak woodlands. These scenic and natural resources were highlighted as supporting the county’s economy through tourism.

Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting (#1-2) Held on March 29, 2007

This meeting’s agenda included a presentation by DC&E on the Existing Conditions Briefing Book and overview of the existing conditions of Butte County. A presentation was also provided by Development Services Principal Planner Dan Breedon on the outcome of the City/County Summit Meeting held on January 27, 2007. A summary of the March 15 Public Workshop was also provided by DC&E. A total of 23 Citizen Advisory Committee members and 12 members of the public attended this meeting.

The meetings main purpose was to review and discuss information provided from the Public Workshop and City/County Summit Meeting pertaining to issue and asset identification. The Citizens Advisory Committee, along with participating members of the public, formed 4 groups to review existing information and to formulate additional issues and assets that were recorded by a group facilitator and presented by a group spokesperson. The Citizen Advisory Committee identified approximately 100 more issues and 12 more assets as part of this exercise.

Public Workshop (#1-1) Held March 15, 2007

The first Public Workshop for General Plan 2030 was held at the Southside Community Center in Oroville on March 15, 2007. This workshop focused on existing conditions and the identification of county-wide issues that need to be addressed by the General Plan 2030 process. A total of 54 members of the public attended, along with 20 members of the Butte County Citizens Advisory Committee.

Development Services Director Tim Snellings opened the evening's meeting, which started with a presentation on the Butte County General Plan 2030 process by Michael Brilliot of DC&E. Mr. Brilliot also provided an overview of the Existing Conditions Briefing Book, which was distributed at the meeting. DC&E Principal David Early facilitated the workshop's main event, an exercise involving the identification of Butte County's assets and issues that need to be addressed by the Butte County General Plan 2030 process. Participants were divided into 10 groups and each group was assigned a staff facilitator. The assets and issues identified by group members were recorded by each group's facilitator.

At the conclusion of the exercise, each group selected a spokesperson that provided an overview of their group's assets and issues. Over 150 assets and over 200 issues were identified by the 10 groups involved in this exercise. The information provided by each group was provided to the Citizens Advisory Committee at their meeting on March 29.

City/County Summit Meeting held January 27, 2007

Official counts indicate that 54 public officials, including City Council members, Planning Commissioners and Board members, attended this important event. Another 77 people also attended the event bringing the total attendance to 131. This meeting included an exercise facilitated by Butte County General Plan 2030 consultant David Early during which elected officials, planning commissioners, the public, and county and city staffs provided one or two issues each that involved city and county collaboration and planning. Further discussion ensued from this information and Mr. Early worked with participants to build consensus around several key areas. It was recommended by some that the County should:

- 1) Use an area plan approach to plan the unincorporated areas of the county.
- 2) Minimize large lot residential subdivisions in areas better left to agricultural pursuits.
- 3) Consider the input of large parcel property owners in the vicinity of incorporated cities, to promote better planning in each city's sphere of influence.

Eight themes developed regarding inter-jurisdictional issues between the county and cities including:

- 1) Coordination between the county and the cities on the designation of sphere of influences and the development of land use plans, policies and development standards. Coordinated land and growth planning should focus on minimizing urbanization outside of existing spheres. Additionally the county and the cities should coordinate development standards within city spheres of influence to ensure that development in the County, which will ultimately be annexed by the adjacent city, has the same developments standards as the adjacent city.
- 2) Coordination between the county and the cities on a county-wide economic development strategy.

- 3) Coordination between the county, cities and special districts on the efficient provision of services.
- 4) Coordination of revenues and costs between the county and cities, including consideration of tax sharing agreements between the County and the Cities.
- 5) Coordination of transportation planning between the county and the cities, as well as with surrounding counties and Cal Trans, to ensure that a transportation system is planned and developed that adequately serves future development. Transportation planning should be integrated within the General Plan update process and address the roadway network, public transportation and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- 6) Investigate the development of a regional metropolitan planning organization, similar to the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, which would address regional planning issues, including transportation. An expanded BCAG could form the basis for this regional planning organization.
- 7) Coordination of a county-wide recycling program and the expansion of the Neal Road Landfill.
- 8) Coordination on the development of policies and land use plans that will preserve agriculture in Butte County.

At this time, two of the five scheduled follow-up “one-on-one” meetings between each city and the County have been completed. These meetings are to follow-up on the major themes identified at the Summit Meeting, but to also focus on issues specific to each city that could be included in the General Plan 2030 process. On March 15, 2007, the County met with the City of Gridley, and on March 29, 2007 the County met with the City of Biggs. Additional “one-on-one” meetings are being scheduled with the Cities of Chico and Oroville and the Town of Paradise.

Citizens Advisory Committee Kick-off Meeting #2 of December 7, 2006

The second kick-off meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee took place on December 7, 2006. This meeting was focused specifically on reviewing and commenting on the Draft Framework of Guiding Principles and receiving input from the Committee on their photo homework assignment showing individual Butte County photos of areas that are valued, as well as areas that needed to be improved or changed. Butte County District 5 Planning Commissioner Fernando Marin, Resource Conservation District President D. C. Jones, and Agriculture Commissioner Richard Price also attended the meeting.

Development Services Director Tim Snellings opened the evening’s agenda with a recap of the November 16th Kick-off meeting and introduced DC&E Associate Project Manager Michael Brilliot who led the first exercise. The first exercise involved breaking into 6 groups and

reviewing approximately 200 photos taken by Committee members. Each group narrowed the selection down to 10 photos apiece resulting in approximately 60 photos that showed each group's likes and dislikes. DC&E Planner Tanya Higgins then arranged each group's selection into a slide show for later viewing. Butte County Development Services Principal Planner Dan Breedon then provided an overview of the Draft Framework of Guiding Principles that the Board of Supervisors approved and transmitted to the Citizens Advisory Committee on July 25, 2006. After this overview, another exercise began during which each group selected a spokesperson that provided a narrative description of the 10 photos selected earlier. The Committee heard narratives from each of the six groups about many varied aspects of Butte County.

In the last part of the meeting, Development Services Director Tim Snellings held a workshop on the Draft Framework of Guiding Principles. Committee members were asked to draw upon their likes and dislikes, discussed during the previous exercises, in commenting on the Draft Framework of Guiding Principles. Mr. Snellings reviewed each of the 12 Guiding Principles with the Committee and edited input from members directly into existing text. This information was displayed for all Committee members to view. The Committee made changes to 8 out of the 12 Principles and added a 13th Principle regarding Water Resources.

Citizens Advisory Committee Kick-off Meeting #1 of November 16, 2006

The first kick-off meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee took place on November 16, 2006. This meeting was focused specifically in equipping the Committee members for the journey ahead involving the Butte County General Plan 2030 process. Committee members listened to opening talks from First District Supervisor and Vice Chairman Bill Connelly and Second District Supervisor Jane Dolan. Also present was District 5 Planning Commissioner Fernando Marin, Local Agency Formation Commissioner Dee Hunter, and County Administrative Officer Paul McIntosh.

As a means of introducing the Committee members, each member was paired with another Committee member. They used prepared questions to interview each other and then introduce each other. The group learned where Committee members lived, their inspiration for joining the Committee, the assets they believe make Butte County a great place to live, and a time in their lives when they were a part of a winning team or group.

A presentation was made by Development Services Director Tim Snellings about what it means for Butte County to update the General Plan. Catherine Reilly, a Senior Associate with General Plan Consultant Design, Community & Environment (DC&E), gave presentations on the Butte County General Plan 2030 process and the role the Citizens Advisory Committee will play during the process. During the last hour of the meeting there was an opportunity to hear comments and questions from Committee members as well as from the public.

IV. Next Steps

This Board of Supervisors Study Session will conclude Meeting Series #1. The information on issues and assets obtained from this Meeting Series will be used during Meeting Series #2, the Development of Alternatives for General Plan 2030. Meeting Series #2 will focus on the development of three land use alternatives. The alternatives will potentially address approaches to growth management, the mix of land uses, development options for key sites, approaches to commercial corridors, circulation options, and the interaction between land uses and transportation systems. This Meeting Series will have the following schedule:

Meeting Series #2, Development of Alternatives:

May 17, 2007	Public Workshop
May 31, 2007	Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting
June 15, 2007	Planning Commission Study Session
July 10, 2007	Board of Supervisors Study Session

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 530-538-6821 or Principal Planner Dan Breedon at 530-538-7629.

Sincerely,

Tim Snellings, Director

Attachments:

- A. Butte County General Plan 2030 Guiding Principles*
- B. Summary of Key Issues*
- C. Identified Assets Spreadsheet*
- D. Identified Issues Spreadsheet*
- E. Meeting Notes –Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings, Public Workshop*
- F. Printout from Web Forum*
- G. Community Meeting Schedule*
- H. Correspondence*