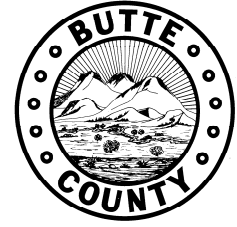


# *Butte County Department of Development Services*

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**AGENDA REPORT**  
**Butte County General Plan 2030**  
**Board of Supervisors Study Session (#2/3-4)**  
**Meeting Series #2/3 –Development of Alternatives**

November 27, 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 #2/3-4**  
**Development of Alternatives**

**Attachments:**

- A. Meeting Series #2/3 Board of Supervisors Study Session Materials:**
  - A.1 Memo from General Plan Consultant DC&E
  - A.2 Land Use and Transportation Alternatives Descriptions and Maps
  - A.3 Land Use Alternatives Overview Table
  - A.4 Land Use Alternatives with the Planning Commission's Recommendations
  - A.5 Policy Alternatives with the Planning Commission's Recommendations
- B. Butte County General Plan 2030 Guiding Principles**
- C. Economic Summit Memorandum on Policy Recommendations**
- D. Meeting Series #1 Key Issues Summary**
- E. Raw Input from Public Workshop and Citizens Advisory Committee**
- F. Public Comments Received**

## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors receive and consider all of the information pertaining to Meeting Series #2/3 generated by the 2 Planning Commission Study Sessions, 3 Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings, the Public Workshop, and as provided by staff. Staff additionally recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve the General Plan 2030 Alternatives including any additional changes as deemed appropriate.

## **Summary**

This Study Session (the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of Combined Workshop Series #2/3 –Development of Alternatives) is the Board of Supervisors opportunity to review and build upon all of the information from the meetings held to date concerning the Development of Alternatives, including the General Plan 2030 Public Workshop held May 17, 2007; the Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings held on May 31, 2007, August 2, 2007 and September 6, 2007; and the Planning Commission Study Sessions held on September 28, 2007 and October 11, 2007. Since this is the final meeting in Meeting Series #2/3, the Board of Supervisors may act to approve the General Plan 2030 Alternatives at this Study Session. Should the Board act to approve the General Plan 2030 Alternatives, the evaluation of the Alternatives will begin in preparation of Meeting Series #4, Selection of a Preferred Alternative. Meeting Series #4 will begin March, 2008 (see Section IV of the Agenda Report for further information).

### Agenda Report Organization:

#### **Section I, Meeting Series #2/3 Board of Supervisors Study Session Materials**

This Section pertains to the Study Session materials associated with Meeting Series #2/3, Development of Alternatives. This includes a cover letter from General Plan Consultant Design Community & Environment staff that provides detailed instructions on the use of this material;

#### **Section II, Overview of Butte County General Plan 2030 Process**

This section provides an overview of major milestones and work products associated with the General Plan 2030 process and helps to explain the larger context of the General Plan 2030 process;

#### **Section III, Chronological Summary of Meeting Series #2/3**

This section provides detailed information on each of the meetings (Public Workshop, Citizens Advisory Committee, and Planning Commission) held during this Meeting Series and helps to provide background and context to the Alternatives Development process ; and

#### **Section IV, Next Steps: Meeting Series #4 Butte County General Plan 2030**

This Section discusses the next steps in the General Plan 2030 process, which will take place after Meeting Series #2/3 and the approval of the Alternatives. This includes an overview of Meeting Series #4, Alternatives Evaluation and Selection.

##### Course Correction on Meeting Series #2 and #3

As originally planned, a total of three Meeting Series (each consisting of a Public Workshop, 1 or more Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meetings, a Planning Commission Study Session, and a Board of Supervisor Study Session) would be devoted to the identification of Assets/Issues and the creation of Policy Issues and Geographic General Plan Alternatives. In coordination with the General Plan consultant, Design, Community & Environment and in consultation with the Board of Supervisors, Development Services staff restructured this phase of the General Plan 2030 update to combine Meeting Series #2 and #3. This change resulted in the combined Meeting Series #2/3 being devoted to the creation and finalization of the three General Plan Alternatives.

The reason for this course correction is due, in part, to the success of Meeting Series #1, which was devoted to the creation of a comprehensive list of county-wide issues. Meeting Series #1 effectively replaced the need for further information gathering, which was proposed for Meeting Series #2. In addition to the success of Meeting Series #1, the Area-Wide Workshops and Community Meetings that have taken place throughout the County during this time have garnered large amounts of valuable information that have helped to shape the alternative selection process.

This change has kept participants engaged and focused on the development of General Plan Alternatives, while increasing the efficiency of the General Plan 2030 process overall.

**I. Meeting Series #2/3 Board of Supervisors Study Session Materials (Attachment A)**

The County's General Plan Consultant, Design, Community & Environment (DC&E) provides the attached package (Attachment A) of Study Session Materials for the Planning Commission's review and comment. A cover memo from DC&E provides instructions to the Board of Supervisors regarding this material and how it will be used. The material has been updated to reflect all of the input of the Citizens Advisory Committee and public. The Planning Commission recommendations are presented as a separate document for the Land Use Alternatives and with underline and strikeout text for the Policy Alternatives document. This material is provided in the following attachments:

- A.1 Memo from General Plan Consultant DC&E
- A.2 Land Use and Transportation Alternatives Descriptions and Maps
- A.3 Land Use Alternatives/Study Areas Overview Table
- A.4 Study Area Changes Recommended by Planning Commission
- A.5 Policy Alternatives

## II. Overview of Butte County 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 the last Study Session for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. The Study Sessions are designed to provide the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors an opportunity to comment and provide feedback regarding these tasks.

### Butte County General Plan 2030 Guiding Principles (Attachment B)

The Butte County Board of Supervisors approved the final Guiding Principles for General Plan 2030 on February 13, 2007 after a series of public meetings concerning their content. A “Draft Framework of Guiding Principles” was initially reviewed and edited by the Board of Supervisors on May 23, and July 25, 2006, after the Planning Commission reviewed and commented upon the concept of Draft Guiding Principles on April 27, 2006. The Draft Guiding Principles document was then reviewed by the General Plan Citizens Advisory Committee

on December 7, 2006, and again by the Planning Commission on January 11, 2007 before returning to the Board for final approval.

The Guiding Principles consist of 13 topics with general statements about what is to be considered important and valued during the General Plan update process. The Principles function to provide guidance during the General Plan update process and will be used as an important point of reference during deliberations on all the tasks associated with the update including the consideration of plan alternatives, policies and programs, and the preferred general plan. The Guiding Principles have also been used to organize information and input received during the process.

### Community and Area-Wide Meetings and Outreach

During Meeting Series #1, staff completed an intensive schedule of public meetings (Chapter 19 of the Butte County General Plan 2030 Setting and Trends Report provides a detailed overview) designed to engage Butte County's unincorporated communities and areas in the General Plan 2030 process and to identify individual community assets, issues and future vision. The information obtained at these meetings has been carefully reviewed to help decide the most appropriate way to address each area in the development of General Plan Alternatives. These meetings were also 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 (Task I). Members of the public may also access complete summaries of these meetings on the General Plan 2030 website or by contacting Development Services.

### General Plan 2030 City/County Summit

Cooperative Planning is one of the 13 Guiding Principles intended to guide the General Plan 2030 process. As the Planning Commission is aware, the General Plan 2030 City/County Summit Meeting held on January 27, 2007 was followed by individual "1 on 1" meetings with each the 5 incorporated cities located within Butte County. All of the individual "1 on 1" meetings between the County and the cities have now been completed and notes from all of these meetings have been posted to the General Plan 2030 website for public viewing. Development Services staff is scheduling additional follow-up meetings on issues that have been brought up through this process, such as coordination on City Spheres of Influence, future growth areas, and revenue sharing for areas considered for future annexation. Because many of these jurisdictions are updating their own General Plans it is critical for the County to work with each city as new information becomes available.

## Butte County General Plan 2030 Economic Summit (Attachment C)

Economic Development is one of the 13 Guiding Principles intended to guide the General Plan 2030 process. The Butte County General Plan 2030 Economic Summit was an all-day event held on October 15, 2007. Attachment C provides Economic Development policy suggestions provided from the facilitated discussions held with 14 break-out groups during the Economic Summit. The Summit was a stand-alone meeting, not part of a specific meeting series in the General Plan 2030 process. The Summit was hosted by the Butte County Development Services Department and Butte County Administration to focus on economic trends, goals, and needs in Butte County and to help inform the land use and policy decisions that will be made as part of the General Plan 2030 process. This meeting was an open invitation to the public at large and approximately 185 attendees were present. Representatives from various public and private entities in Butte County attended, including Supervisors Jane Dolan, Curt Josiassen, Bill Connelly, Kim Yamaguchi and Maureen Kirk; Planning Commissioners Nina Lambert, Rick Leland, and Fernando Marin; Butte County Development Services staff and members of the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Butte County Development Services Director Tim Snellings delivered a welcome address and introduced Butte County Board of Supervisors Chair Jane Dolan, who also welcomed the crowd. David Early, founding principal of Design, Community and Environment, the lead consultant of the General Plan 2030 process, described the purpose of the Summit and provided an overview of the agenda. The overview was followed by two presentations, the first from Matt Kowta, a principal with Bay Area Economics. Mr. Kowta discussed current strategies in economic development, comprehensive and specific economic strategies, the importance of incorporating a wide variety of community stakeholders in strategic development, and the national and local organizations that are responsible for developing and implementing economic strategies.

The second presenter, Troy Givans, is a principal planner with the Sacramento County Economic Development Department. Mr. Givans provided insight into his work developing an economic strategy for Sacramento County. Prior to 1993, Sacramento County lacked any formal economic development strategy. Since the establishment of the County's Economic Development Department in 1997, Sacramento County has strengthened regional and local partnerships, intensified business retention, established property-based improvement districts, redeveloped two airfields, fostered growth in the County's sports, tourism and recreation sectors, revitalized commercial corridors, and attracted key regional sales tax generators. In addition, Sacramento County has also included an Economic Element in their General Plan.

The majority of the Summit was devoted to three panel sessions, each represented by leaders from significant industrial sectors within Butte County.

Panel #1 surveyed the Agricultural sector. The panelists were Matt Kowta of Bay Area Economics, Troy Givans of the Sacramento County Economic Development Department, John Hasbrook of Sunwest Foods, Inc. in Biggs, and Grant Lundberg of Lundberg Family Farms in Richvale.

Mr. Kowta described the agricultural sector in Butte County as growing slowly but nevertheless growing. Mr. Kowta acknowledged that Butte County has maintained a stable job market for agricultural jobs while other parts of the nation have faced significant fluctuations in job growth. Mr. Givans noted that two challenges facing Sacramento County's agricultural sector have been the ease and cost of transporting goods to market, and efforts at habitat conservation, which is challenging for vintners because vineyards have a low habitat value. Mr. Hasbrook described the operations at Sunwest Foods, which was founded in 1986 and is now the largest rice mill in California. Mr. Hasbrook emphasized the importance of growing rice in California, since the United States is one of only three countries that produce premium grain Japonica rice, along with Japan and Australia. He also discussed the importance of exporting California grown rice overseas, since rice grown in Japan is domestically consumed and rice growers in Australia face a severe drought. Mr. Lundberg described the operation at Lundberg Family Farms, which produces organic and specialty rice crops using sustainable methods. This farm employs 165 year-round workers. David Early then briefly described agricultural preservation techniques in Yolo County, including a strong right-to-farm ordinance, specific zoning for residential development in agricultural areas, urban limit lines around unincorporated communities, marketing and branding efforts, revenue sharing agreements with the Cities of Davis and Winters, an active land trust, a prohibition on transferring water rights away from agricultural users, and required "agricultural stewardship plans" for any new residential development proposed on agricultural lands. The panel also referenced an American Farmland Trust determination that the division of land into 5-, 10- and 20-acre lots has placed agricultural land at risk.

Following the presentations and comments from the panelists, members of the audience made comments and asked questions of the panel. Comments and questions from the audience were related to the use of agricultural byproducts; affordable housing; value-added agricultural business; local and global markets; and specialized agricultural jobs. Howard Isom, a member of the audience and the former chairman of Blue Diamond Nuts in Sacramento, also provided the perspective of the almond growing sector. Mr. Isom noted that California produces the majority of the world's almond supply, which is an important export crop, and that nut crops are not subsidized. He recommended that the General Plan distinguish between economically-productive agricultural lands and non-economically-productive lands. Additional questions and comments from the audience were related to the Farm Bill; form-based zoning; the Governor's initiative regarding green products; transportation infrastructure; and the potential

impacts of diminishing water and oil supplies on the ability to grow and transport crops.

Panel #2 surveyed the Tourism and Recreation Sector; the panelists were Matt Kowta of Bay Area Economics, Troy Givans of the Sacramento County Economic Development Department, Jamie Johansson of the Sierra Oro Farm Trail Association, and Debra Lucero of Butte County Cultural Tourism.

Mr. Kowta noted that the tourism industry is growing fast in Butte County, and he described transient occupancy, sales and restaurant taxes as possibilities for generating tax revenue. Mr. Givans discussed Sacramento County's efforts in agricultural tourism, and highlighted public/private partnerships as critical to tourism development efforts. Ms. Lucero called attention to the numerous natural, cultural and historic gems in Butte County, noting that bird watching, gardening and cultural activities are all on the rise among baby boomers with spending power. Ms. Lucero also identified challenges faced by the County, such as funding, the low transient occupancy tax rate of 6 percent, the lack of a formal tourism plan, the volunteer infrastructure, and maintaining the balance between rural and urban needs, as well as strategies to improve this sector, such as networking and technical assistance. Mr. Johansson discussed the process of developing the Sierra Oro Farm Trail and Passport Weekend, his marketing strategies, and the importance of economically healthy farms.

Following the presentations and comments from the panelists, members of the audience made comments and asked questions of the panel. Comments and questions from the audience were related to the creation of a visitor's bureau for Butte County; developed recreation and the county's hotel room supply to support large sporting events; the importance of wildflower viewing to the economy; the cultural impacts of tourism; home-stays and farm-stays; the need for cultural heritage protection; funding for tourism investment; and the transfer occupancy tax rates in Butte County. Arlene Ward of the Mechoopda Tribe cited several events that highlight the County's Native American heritage and could be opportunities for cultural preservation as well as increased tourism.

The Summit broke for lunchtime, during which Jean Ross, Executive Director of the California Budget Project, was the featured speaker. Ms. Ross presented a number of graphs illustrating the growing inequality of job development and wages in California, in which most job growth has occurred among low-wage and high-wage jobs, while the gap between the low-wage and high-wage workers has widened. Ms. Ross discussed the importance of workforce education in order to bring high-quality jobs to the area, because while people follow jobs in the short term, jobs follow people in the long term. Ms. Ross also stated that, next to an educated workforce, the second most important criteria in attracting jobs is adequate infrastructure, including technological infrastructure such as wireless internet.

Panel #3 focused on the Manufacturing, Office and Commercial sectors; the panelists were Matt Kowta of Bay Area Economics, Troy Givans of the Sacramento County Economic Development Department, Victor Abreo and Ron Moras of Compass Equipment in Oroville, and Robert Bateman of Roplast Industries Inc. in Oroville.

Mr. Kowta described the trends in manufacturing, office and commercial, which constitutes a significant portion of Butte County's economy. Mr. Givans discussed the importance of providing adequate manufacturing land with infrastructure in the county, the benefits and challenges associated with enterprise zones, and the need for workforce development. Mr. Bateman highlighted the benefits of doing business in Oroville, and described the products and methods employed by his plastics manufacturing firm, which employs about 120 people. He noted challenges associated with road conditions on Highways 70 and 99 and inadequate housing for employees in Oroville. He also highlighted the benefits of the enterprise zone, as well as his relationship with the plastics program at Chico State. Mr. Bateman suggested that the Cities of Oroville and Chico collaborate on business and housing development. Mr. Abreo and Mr. Moras also highlighted the benefits of doing business in Oroville, and described the company's services and products related to construction materials and equipment. They noted that the housing downturn has been challenging for their business. Mr. Moras felt that there are opportunities for new housing growth in Butte County, but that it needs to be responsible with appropriate transportation planning and infrastructure. Mr. Abreo and Mr. Moras noted that the enterprise zone has created a positive business environment, but that it can be difficult to find adequate staff with the specialized skills necessary for their company.

Following the presentations and comments from the panelists, members of the audience made comments and asked questions of the panel. Comments and questions from the audience were related to diminishing water and oil supplies and climate change; how to best use Butte County's valuable resources, such as biomass for fuel; industrial land supplies; and how the General Plan can support innovation and sustainability.

Jon Gregory of Golden Capital Network provided the final presentation of the afternoon, in which he discussed the role of entrepreneurs, or "game changers," in an economic development strategy. Mr. Gregory highlighted the importance of attracting entrepreneurs into the marketplace, creating aggregations of businesses that work together, and the idea that as more retirees move from Sacramento, Contra Costa and Santa Clara Counties to Butte County, along with them comes their business expertise and networking contacts. He suggested that the County should create an environment in which "hyper competent" people can meet and network and discussed the "WIRED project" he is currently

launching to engage stakeholders, plan events, collect data, organize angel investors and increase the local focus on entrepreneurs.

Following his presentation, the audience broke out into small group discussions to review the major conclusions of the day, and to generate ideas for land use designations and policies for incorporation into the General Plan. The following is a summary of the ideas generated during the small group exercise.

The small groups highlighted the importance of agriculture and the need to provide adequate transportation infrastructure for this industry. Other comments and suggestions included the protection of agricultural lands, creation of new markets such as biodiesel and ethanol from byproduct materials, water conservation, increased education and research on agricultural issues, promotion of local goods, provision of housing for farm workers, and creation of agri-business zones.

The small groups also discussed tourism and recreation. Comments and suggestions related to these sectors included the development of a formal list to identify and protect all sites of cultural and historic interest in Butte County, development of a logo for community branding, the need for a regional approach to tourism development, and provision of incentives for recreation-based development. Participants also recommended that the Land Use Element allow the redevelopment of sites of historic interest as tourist destinations, and that zoning regulations related to tourism and recreation be concise and clear.

Small group comments and suggestions related to manufacturing, office and commercial sectors included the need to ensure that zoning regulations are conducive to industrial uses and that land is “shovel-ready,” as well as the encouragement of mixed-use development. In addition, participants felt that the General Plan should provide opportunities for more training and professional schools in Butte County; they also highlighted Butte College, which provides excellent training in several trade areas. In addition, participants noted that Oroville has a strong industrial land supply, while Chico has a skilled workforce; the county would benefit from coordination between these two cities. Participants also suggested the development of a governmental office of economic development.

At the conclusion of the Economic Summit, a feedback questionnaire was distributed to all Summit attendees. Question 4 on this form asked attendees to describe what the Butte County General Plan 2030 process should do to support economic development. Suggestions for the tourism sector included:

- create a county-wide tourism commission
- develop a visitors' information center and a convention center
- develop the Feather River Canyon and Lake Oroville areas to provide tourist amenities.

Suggestions for the agriculture sector included:

- subsidize agri-tourism
- strengthen agricultural conservation policies
- create an agriculture-related business park.

Suggestions for the manufacturing, commercial and office sectors included:

- develop enterprise zones
- developing job training programs,
- foster economic resiliency among a variety of sectors rather than a few specific sectors.

Additional responses were related to cooperation among government entities and agencies, and sustainability. Suggestions on cooperation included setting goals for economic development at a regional level, developing public and private partnerships, and encouraging community development. Suggestions on sustainability included determining the carbon imprint of current and future levels of development, supporting the production and use of biodiesel in Butte County, and producing more solar energy. These suggestions, along with the information provided by the small group discussions, will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for consideration and will provide the basis for some of the economic development policy alternatives to be discussed during Butte County General Plan 2030 Meeting Series #5, which is devoted to the development of goals and policies.

#### General Plan 2030 Existing Conditions Briefing Book

As the Board of Supervisors is aware, an Existing Conditions Briefing Book has been prepared for use during the identification of issues and as a guide for the existing conditions of Butte County. To date, over 1,000 copies of the Briefing Book have been distributed to the public at over 25 public meetings and numerous other events. The Briefing Books have also been made available at County Libraries and Development Services' front desk and distributed to Butte County's neighboring counties. The Briefing Book is available for viewing on the General Plan website. 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 Draft Setting and Trends Report

The "*Butte County General Plan 2030 Setting and Trends Report Public Draft*" was released at the Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting held on August 2, 2007, with copies also being distributed to the Planning Commission. Previously referred to as the "Background Report" for the Butte County General Plan 2030 update, the new title reflects this document's main purpose, to describe Butte County's existing setting within 19 different subject areas, and to describe trends

in growth and development throughout the County. Chapter 19 of the Setting and Trends Report is devoted to the community meeting and outreach process, and provides summaries for each of the 19 community meetings held throughout the county as well as an overview of Meeting Series #1 devoted to Existing Conditions and Issue Identification.

A vital component of the Butte County General Plan process, the *Setting and Trends Report* will be used in the Program Environmental Impact Report required for the General Plan update. The Setting and Trends Report also provides a valuable source of information for the remaining phases of the update process, including the Alternatives Evaluation and Selection, the Goals and Policies Development, Drafting the New General Plan, the Housing Element Update, and Zoning Ordinance Update.

The Setting and Trends Report can be viewed on the General Plan 2030 website and is available at all Butte County libraries, and at the Butte County Department of Development Services in Oroville. Compact Discs containing the full report are available at Development Services upon request at no charge.

The release of the Setting and Trends Report Public Draft provides an opportunity for public review and comment. Comments on the Public Draft of the Setting and Trends Report may be provided to:

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Email: [dbreedon@buttecounty.net](mailto:dbreedon@buttecounty.net)

#### Summary of Meeting Series #1 Existing Conditions and Issue Identification (Attachment D)

The Board of Supervisors Study Session held on May 8, 2007 (Meeting #1-4) was the last meeting held concerning Meeting Series #1. This meeting was the fourth in the four-part meeting series that focused on Existing Conditions and Issue Identification. The Board of Supervisors reviewed the community input and recommendations provided at the Public Workshop (Meeting #1-1), Citizens Advisory Committee meeting (Meeting #1-2), and Planning Commission Study Session (Meeting #1-3). The data and comment was grouped by Butte County General Plan 2030 Guiding Principles to help link the information with each of the Principles. During this Study Session, the Board of Supervisors discussed, refined and added to the recommendations and public input. The Key Issues Summary document (Attachment C) provides an excellent summary of all the information gathered during Meeting Series #1.

The information generated by Meeting Series #1 has been used in the development of General Plan Alternatives (Meeting Series #2/3). The information will continue to be used for Alternatives Evaluation and Selection (Meeting Series #4) and for Preliminary Goals and Policies Development (Meeting Series #5).

### **III. Chronological Summary of Meeting Series #2/3 –Development of Alternatives**

This section provides a summary for each of the meetings held during Meeting Series #2/3 in reverse chronological order as follows (raw input from the Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings is shown under Attachment E and Public Comments received are provided under Attachment F):

1. October 11, 2007 Planning Commission Study Session
2. September 28, 2007 Planning Commission Study Session
3. September 6, 2007 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting
4. August 2, 2007 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting
5. May 31, 2007 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting
6. May 17, 2007 Public Workshop

The summaries provided in this section are synthesized from notes taken at the meetings and the data gathered at these meetings shown under Attachment E. The summaries provided from the Planning Commission Study Session are taken from the Minutes of the Study Sessions.

#### Planning Commission Study Session of October 11, 2007

The second Planning Commission Study Session devoted to the creation of alternatives (Meeting Series #2/3-3B) for Butte County General Plan 2030 was held on October 11, 2007, following up on the Planning Commission Study Session held on September 28, 2007. The focus of this meeting was the development of alternatives for the General Plan, including land use, transportation and policy alternatives. All five of the Planning Commissioners were present for the meeting. Butte County Development Services staff Tim Snellings, Pete Calarco, Chuck Thistlethwaite and Dan Breedon attended, as well as Joanna Jansen and Tanya Sundberg of Design, Community & Environment, the lead General Plan consultant. In addition, members of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the public were in attendance.

At the outset of the meeting, Chair Lambert reviewed the goals of the meeting and the process for reviewing the alternatives. Commissioners Leland and Nelson noted their concerns about the process identifying study areas before establishing goals and policies. The Commission discussed the issue, and agreed to move forward with the review of the alternatives.

Dan Breedon continued by describing recent correspondence between the County, members of the public, and others, relating to the General Plan process, as described below.

- Commissioner Harrel Wilson suggested including a health and youth element in the General Plan document.
- John Luvaas requested that additional information and clear guiding policies be established prior to the identification of study areas.
- Dr. Armeda Ferrini expressed her concerns about the planned development of over 2,000 homes north of Chico, noting possible impacts to groundwater supply and traffic.
- Scott Perkins requested that the boundaries of Study Area #15 (Eastern Oroville/Oroville Foothills) be expanded to include the east side of Miners Ranch Road.
- Roger Cutler suggested extending the boundary of Study Area #30 (Berry Creek) to incorporate a larger expanse of the Berry Creek community.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Study Areas by geographic regions, including the Gridley/Biggs, Oroville, Paradise, Chico, and Unincorporated County regions. In regards to the Study Areas, as discussed by region, the Commission recommended the following changes to the land use alternatives:

### **Gridley/Biggs**

- ◆ The Study Areas and the range of alternatives provided were agreed upon for submission to the Board of Supervisors.
- ◆ The Commission noted that the boundary between Study Areas 22 (Biggs Area) and 23 (North of Gridley) are for the General Plan analysis purposes only; the Planning Commission is not approving an ultimate boundary between the two cities.

### **Oroville**

- ◆ The boundaries of Study Area #15 (Eastern Oroville/Oroville Foothills) should be expanded to include the east side of Miners Ranch Road.
- ◆ The boundaries of Study Area #16 (Stringtown Mountain Specific Plan) should be expanded for a comprehensive study of the area.

### **Paradise**

- ◆ Study Area #26 (South Paradise/Pentz Road), Alternative 3 buildout should be increased to 420 units in response to a landowner request.
- ◆ A new study area J should be considered between Study Areas #27 (Paradise Urban Reserve) and #8 (Nance Canyon/SR-99), in the area

between the Skyway and Neal Road for a comprehensive study of the area.

### **Chico**

- ◆ The Commission discussed the addition of a new study area for the Stanley Avenue area, near Study Area #5 (Chico Growth Area 2). The Commission did not reach agreement on whether this study area, which would be outside of the Greenline, should be added.
- ◆ Study Area 10 (Hamlin Canyon/SR-99), Alternative 2 buildout should be increased to 9,000 units in response to a landowner request.

### **Unincorporated County**

- ◆ Study Area #30 (Berry Creek) should be expanded, as suggested in the letter from Roger Cutler.
- ◆ Study Area #31 (SR-191 (Clark Road)/Durham Pentz) should be expanded to include all four corners of the intersection. In Alternative 3, the commercial uses should be expanded, and the residential density should be increased.
- ◆ Study Area #32 (Durham) should be expanded to include the area between Jones Avenue and the Midway.
- ◆ Study Area C (Upper Stilson Canyon) should be expanded west to Highway 32.

In response to the Planning Commission's discussion of land use alternatives, the public attendees were invited to raise questions, comments and concerns. This input is summarized below.

Grace Marvin requested that the County recognize the importance of the Habitat and Conservation Plan (HCP) in sustaining Butte County's environment. Ms. Marvin suggested that decisions concerning future development should not take place without the knowledge that the HCP will provide. Furthermore, the community should be responsible for determining which natural resources to preserve. There is more to learn about sustainable building practices, and planning with sustainability in mind will result in long-term economic savings.

Scott Huber, a member of the Altacal Audubon Society and the HCP stakeholder group, noted that any decisions about proposed study areas are premature. Mr. Huber agrees that the information provided by the HCP is necessary to go further with this process. He commented that the Audubon Society doesn't oppose or support study areas now, but does regard the timing of the review as inappropriate. He strongly urges the Planning Commission to put recommendations on hold until the process is informed by HCP.

Jay Oman, a representative for the landowner of the Lago Vista development site, commented that the Alternative 1 land use for Study Area #26 is inconsistent with the County's existing General Plan. The landowner is considering a buildout of 420 units.

Tony Rushing, a member of the CAC, requested clarification on current agriculture policies at the next CAC meeting. He commented that the General Plan 2030 process needs to address agricultural issues, such as flooding, in the next phase. Mr. Rushing noted that he is interested in redefining the alternatives because they are confusing; for example, development around Biggs wasn't included for concentrated growth.

Mike McLaughlin, a resident of Paradise, raised his concerns regarding development along the Skyway between Paradise & Chico. He noted that residents, like him, have been involved in protecting that area for a long time and now there are two Study Areas directly adjacent to the Skyway.

Noel Carvalho, a professional planner involved with visioning for the parcels in Study Area #10 (but not representing the landowner), commented that the alternatives don't accurately represent the landowner's vision for property. Alternatives 2 and 3 are very similar. Mr. Carvalho suggested that additional land uses be included. Specifically, 625 acres should be designated for a commercial/public/industrial mix, and 1,875 acres should be designated for a mix of residential densities. Under these designations, Mr. Carvalho expects the development would generate approximately 9,000 new dwelling units.

Todd Hall, a member of the CAC, is concerned with the concept of adding too much development around Chico because Mr. Hall believes that not many people want Chico to expand its boundaries. Mr. Hall encourages infill development for Chico and boundary expansions for Gridley and Biggs. He also requested that the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission ensure that the CAC has adequate time for the selection of a preferred alternative and the development of goals and policies during Meeting Series #4 and 5.

Scott Perkins suggested expanding Study Area #15 beyond Miners Ranch Road. Mr. Perkins thinks that the General Plan 2030 process has gone well thus far. In addressing the comments from Ms. Marvin and Mr. Huber, he believes that they are misinterpreting the process by saying environmental constraints are not being considered. He believes that they are suggesting slowing down or stopping the process, but instead they should become more involved to ensure the process goes smoothly. Mr. Perkins was raised in the Berry Creek area and believes it is appropriate for rural residential development because there is not much agriculture; he also supports the expansion of Study Area #31 to reduce traffic.

Bob Kromer finds that the process has been inclusive so far and that the General Plan 2030 team had been doing a good job. Mr. Kromer is a proponent of the theory of urbanization. Looking forward he sees transportation issues such as congestion, and he believes that urbanizing around urban centers makes sense. This method preserves “true agricultural land.” He believes that Study Area #4 is no longer suitable for agriculture because of existing development. He thinks the Greenline could be moved in certain areas that make sense, particularly around Mud Creek. He would like to see Bell Muir remain as a Study Area.

Following public commentary on the land use alternatives, the Planning Commission reviewed the Transportation Alternatives and the Policy Alternatives. The Planning Commission agreed that the Transportation Alternatives were ready for submission to the Board of Supervisors. In regards to the Policy Alternatives, the Commission recommended the following policy changes:

### **Greenlines and Buffers**

- ◆ Question 1, bullet 9 should be revised to say “Follow the initiative process” rather than “Establish an initiative process,” since one is already in place. Commissioner Nelson raised concerns about including this as a policy option, since he does not support “planning by initiative,” but ultimately it could be left in in the interest of considering a range of policy alternatives. Chair Lambert pointed out that the initiative process would be a legal option whether it is included in the General Plan or not.
- ◆ Question 2 should include an option to not modify the Greenline.

### **New Development and Housing**

- ◆ Question 4 should include a definition of affordable housing.

### **Regional Coordination**

- ◆ Question 5 should be modified to refer to other types of entities, and the policy options should include coordination with BCAG on the HCP/NCCP and with special districts and school districts.

### **Agriculture**

- ◆ Question 6 should include an option to enforce and apply Program 2.2, and to adjust the buffer width based on natural features and the type of agricultural use.
- ◆

## **Natural Resources and Habitat**

- ◆ Question 13 should include a policy option to penalize developers for removing protected species prior to submittal of an application for development.

## **Water Resources**

- ◆ Question 13 should include a policy option to identify recharge areas, as well as one to protect them.

## **Transportation**

- ◆ Question 17 should include a policy option to re-examine County road standards.
- ◆ Question 18 should include a policy option to require that bicycle routes be clearly separated from the main roadway and 5 to 7 feet in width.
- ◆ Question 19 should include policy options to encourage residential development near job centers, carpooling and telecommuting.

## **Parks and Recreation**

- ◆ Question 23, bullet 1 should be revised to include neighborhood parks.
- ◆ Question 23 should include a policy option to evaluate the collection of Quimby Act (parkland dedication) fees.

## **Airport**

- ◆ Question 24, bullet 1 should be revised to eliminate the reference to the year 2000, so that the policy will still be accurate if the ALUCP is revised.
- ◆ Question 24 should include a policy option to encourage the Airport Land Use Commission to consider revising the compatibility zones.

## **Green Building and Sustainability**

- ◆ Question 27 should be revised to reference AB 32.

In response to the Planning Commission's discussion of policy alternatives, the public attendees were invited to raise questions, comments and concerns. This input is summarized below.

Tony St. Amant thinks that the second policy option for question 17 regarding development fees should be rephrased. Secondly, Mr. St. Amant thinks that the policy options should be presented to the public as a survey because it would

reach a cross section of the county instead of just reaching people who are able or interested to attend community meetings.

Bob Kromer reiterated that a survey would reach a broader cross section of the county's residents. Also, he has concerns about the wording used in the policy alternatives document. The phrase "How should the county..." implies that the county should undertake the action, leaving out an option not to do it. The policy alternatives should be reworded so that respondents first have to answer the question of whether or not the County should address the particular issue.

Scott Perkins mentioned that economics drives a lot of what happens in the county (for example, with public transit). Mr. Perkins suggested creating policy about how the General Plan connects to regional transportation, and pointed to the example of Amador County, which has encountered difficulties because of a "disconnect: between its General Plan and Regional Transportation Plan. In addition, Mr. Perkins supports the removal of the policy option to modify the Greenline through an initiative process.

In conclusion of the Planning Commission Study, Tim Snellings provided updates and reminders related to the General Plan 2030 process. The Butte Regional Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) process will catch-up with the General Plan 2030 process and provide studies that can be used to begin the constraints analysis for the Study Areas and County. The Board of Supervisors will meet in a Special Study Session on November 27, 2007 at 1:30pm that will conclude the Alternatives Development process (Meeting Series #2/3), an additional Citizens Advisory Committee meeting is being planned for December, and Meeting Series #4 is expected to begin in January 2008.

#### Planning Commission Study Session of September 28, 2007

Butte County General Plan 2030 Meeting #2/3-3A, the Planning Commission Study Session, was held on September 28, 2007. This meeting is part of Meeting Series #2/3, which is focused on the development of alternatives. Four Planning Commissioners were present; Commissioner Harrel Wilson was absent. Butte County Development Services staff Tim Snellings, Dan Breedon, and Pete Calarco attended, as well as Joanna Jansen and Tanya Sundberg of Design, Community & Environment, the lead General Plan consultant. In addition, members of the Citizens Advisory Committee and the public were in attendance.

At the outset of the meeting, the agenda was revised to end the meeting at noon with time for public comment prior to the meeting close.

Tim Snellings provided an overview of the General Plan 2030 process, addressing concerns regarding the development of land use alternatives before the development of policy alternatives, as well as concerns about incorporating

preliminary development proposals into the alternatives. Snellings also highlighted a terminology change from the phrase “change area” to “study area,” to help clarify that the areas are identified for study, but that they will not necessarily change. The Commission raised several questions and comments related to the process; these questions, comments and staff’s responses are summarized below.

Commissioner Nelson was concerned that during the policy discussion, participants may realize that the wrong study areas were considered. Joanna Jansen noted that, based on DC&E’s experience, participants typically make decisions about land use based on ideas about policy, but that most laypeople find it difficult to articulate a policy suggestion without having considered specific land use examples. The geographic mapping exercises help them to work through these land use examples and to formulate policy ideas, so that during the subsequent policy discussion phase, there are not likely to be significant changes to the policy ideas that guided their decisions about land use mapping.

Commissioner Leland was also concerned that not all development interests have been represented in the process. It is possible that some landowners and developers have not yet brought plans before the County. Snellings highlighted the outreach process for General Plan 2030, and noted that the Commission will be providing input on the boundaries of the study areas during this meeting. Snellings also indicated that the alternatives analysis phase may reveal the need to study additional areas, and that the process is flexible.

Commissioner Leland asked about the process of choosing the study areas, and felt that that the selection of these study areas should occur through an analysis of constraints conducted on all parcels throughout the county. Commissioner Leland also questioned how the general input provided at the workshops and meetings directly contributed to the formation of the study areas. Dan Breedon used the Durham, Dayton and Nelson Area-Wide Workshop as an example, describing how public input identified a need for revitalization in town, which contributed to an alternative providing higher densities in the downtown area. In addition, some specific development proposals in the Durham area are included in the study area so that they could be a part of the upcoming Task F analysis.

Following this discussion, Jansen provided an overview of the meeting agenda, and Breedon reviewed the Guiding Principles. Breedon also summarized additional input that was submitted since the packet was mailed to the Commission, including correspondence regarding the General Plan 2030 process and the alternatives, comments from City of Biggs staff regarding the study areas around Biggs, and comments made to the General Plan 2030 website forum. Staff recommended the expansion of the Stringtown Mountain Specific Plan study area based on this input. Other comments about the alternatives were minor and requested changes to the land uses within existing

study areas; in such cases staff recommended that the alternatives not be changed, since they had been reviewed by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and will already be studied for possible change under the existing alternatives.

Tanya Sundberg then presented an overview of the process to date, and reviewed the land use alternatives. Commissioner Lambert raised a question about Study Area 2, the North Chico Specific Plan (NCSP), and its compatibility with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) under the Existing General Plan and/or Character alternative. Snellings responded that although the NCSP is not currently compatible with the ALUCP, staff will ensure that General Plan 2030 will be compatible with the ALUCP.

The Commission then invited public comments, which are summarized below.

CAC member Jeff Carter felt that the process is problematic and that communication between County staff, the CAC, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors is inadequate. He suggested that the policy discussion should occur before the land use discussion. Carter has heard policy ideas raised through the workshops that are not reflected in the alternatives, such as the desire to maintain a rural character. Carter also felt that the CAC has not had a real opportunity to review the alternatives, in part because the three questions that the CAC was asked to consider don't allow the possibility for any study areas to be eliminated. Furthermore, the CAC has not had any consensus on these questions. Carter felt that the CAC should lead a citizen-driven process.

Tony St. Amant, a member of the public, commented that he agreed with Carter's concerns about the role of the CAC and the lack of consensus or agreement about the alternatives. The CAC has only reviewed the alternatives, but not approved or rejected them. The speaker noted Board resolutions regarding the functions and role of the CAC, which directed that findings from the CAC be transmitted to the Planning Commission for review. However, there were no findings made at the CAC meeting. The speaker was also concerned about a lack of open channels of communication between the public, CAC, Planning Commission and Board, noting that he was told that he should speak at the Planning Commission Study Session to have his opinions heard. Without better communication between the CAC and the decision-makers, the CAC will be "window dressing."

John Luvaas, another member of the public, noted his experience with a large steering committee in Chico, similar to the size of the CAC. He feels that the process is defective, and his major concern is that the schedule is constrained. The City of Chico General Plan committee with which he worked reached consensus on difficult issues, but it took a long time. The CAC should be given enough time to reach consensus. The speaker also felt that the policy discussion

should occur before the selection of the preferred land use alternative, in part because some areas that are appropriate for growth may be left out of the alternatives evaluation. He was concerned that the Guiding Principles lack the detail to guide the land use alternatives. He also noted that rural areas will become unaffordable for housing locations in the future due to increasing housing and oil prices. When asked by the Commission for a possible solution to correct these issues, the speaker suggested giving the CAC more time to determine the needs of the alternatives, staff more time to determine the housing types that will be needed, and additional time to consider policies.

CAC member Todd Hall felt that a process reviewing policy first and one reviewing land use alternatives first would be equally effective. Hall was concerned about his experience as a CAC member, in which he has not been given a clear understanding of his role and tasks for each meeting. He felt that some additional discussion about the policies and process would be helpful. He would like to know what will occur during upcoming meetings. Hall was also concerned about timing constraints, noting competition for time to speak among CAC members and the public.

The Commission asked staff about the possibility of the CAC working separately from the public. Snellings responded that staff is developing plans to modify the CAC meeting format to allow the CAC to work independently of the public, with time for public comment at the end.

CAC member Bill Black felt that the process is adequate, and did not support Commissioner Leland's suggestion to rank all of the parcels in Butte County due to the labor and expense involved. He was also concerned about the amount of public input at the last CAC meeting, noting that they led the discussion off on tangents and decreased the time available for CAC input. He supported a limited opportunity for public comment at CAC meetings.

Howard Isom, a member of the public, commented that the General Plan should offer quality of life, different lifestyles and proper housing costs, while being environmentally sensitive and improving transportation. The speaker felt that the CAC should have more time to accomplish their tasks without interruptions, and believes that staff is working towards that goal. The speaker also suggested the possibility of a fourth alternative that would be a blend of the three existing alternatives.

CAC member Mike Evans highlighted his experience working through a similar process for the City of Oroville General Plan Update. Oroville's General Plan Steering Committee also struggled with the process. Evans found that when he set aside his concerns about the process, and thought about his experience and knowledge of each change area, he was able to develop his own range of alternatives and relate them to the range presented by staff and consultants. He

thinks of the land use alternatives as bookends on a range of options, which is needed before a preferred alternative can be selected. Evans expects the preferred land use alternative to be a blending of the alternatives. He emphasized the need to move forward; he trusts that the process will work based on his experience in Oroville. Evans also supported more separation between the public and CAC discussions. In addition, Evans commented that the process is landowner-driven rather than developer-driven.

The Commission asked Evans whether he felt the process of selecting a preferred land use alternative prior to the policy alternatives was appropriate. Evans responded that when he reviewed the land use alternatives for each change area, he considered whether his policy concerns were represented in one of the choices. He also noted that there will be different policy concerns and desires in different parts of the county.

The Commission asked Evans whether there were questions about how study areas were selected among the Oroville General Plan Update participants. Evans responded that there were discussions about why areas were considered change areas.

The Commission asked Evans about the concept of a developer-driven process, noting the concern that there are some landowners who have not yet developed plans, and are therefore excluded from the process. Evans responded that he is aware of some large landowners who have participated in the process without concrete plans; they are waiting to understand the community desires before they develop plans. Commissioner Leland noted his concerns that there may be some landowners whose property is being considered for down-zoning, but they are unaware of this possible change. Evans responded that the process has to keep moving.

Geri Benedict supported the process to date. The speaker raised her main concerns for the General Plan, based on her experience as a resident of the Upper Ridge and Paradise. She is concerned that the transportation alternatives are considering road improvements in the Upper Ridge area for emergency-only routes. This area is growing very fast as a rental community, and roads are very important. She recommended that the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) be directed to investigate State funding for pay/toll roads between the Upper Ridge and Chico. The speaker also supported Alternative 2 in the Upper Ridge area. If any growth occurs in this area, there needs to be assurances for water, circulation, and fire and police protection.

Elizabeth Deveraux, a member of the public, participated in the Chico General Plan Update, for which there was a 41-member task force. She supported the separation of public input from the CAC meetings to allow adequate time for the CAC to work, and she supported the allowance of more time in general to get the

work done. The speaker did not support the notion of a landowner-driven process. Rather, the process should be driven by the needs of the whole community. She felt that the most important issue when considering growth is the quality of life. In Chico, they developed a community design to set the vision for development before they identified study areas and alternatives. The speaker also noted changing demographics in Butte County, in which the population is changing to single people and retired couples rather than families. Furthermore, global warming and fossil fuel availability will affect where and how the county will grow. The General Plan should reflect these changes. The General Plan should also consider sensitive species through an overlay analysis, as well as impacts to water supply and groundwater. Overall, the process needs more time to develop a vision that is specific and to consider more information before making decisions.

Karen Lazlo, a member of the public, highlighted her recent cross-country trip in which she experienced urban sprawl. She is concerned about the loss of small towns, and wants to ensure the county's valuable farmland is preserved.

Robin Huffman, a member of the public, suggested that the CAC establish leadership, so that the leader of the group could represent the CAC. The CAC members should have a stronger role in the process, and they should be more organized. The speaker also supported the notion of considering the big picture through a policy-based process, and felt that policy should be reviewed before the preferred alternative is selected. The speaker felt that the Butte County General Plan should address the entire county rather than specific study areas.

Jan Sneed, a member of the public, noted her concerns about the aquifer, noting that wells in North Chico are failing. The speaker is on a board for a special district, and was concerned that her district has not been included in the process. She felt that special districts should be involved in the discussions about revenue sharing with the Cities and County. She recommended that the process be slowed down or stopped until the special districts are included.

Bruce Hall, a member of the public, asked how the three alternatives were established, and whether the process will only allow the selection of one alternative and exclude possible benefits of the others. Snellings responded that he expects the preferred alternative to be a combination of all three alternatives.

Following this public comment period, the Commission discussed the issues that were raised regarding the process. The Commission felt that there should be some changes to the process involving the timing and order of decisions, as well as the operation of the CAC itself.

Snellings noted the comments about the CAC meetings. He indicated that the Board had considered CAC leadership roles, but instead opted for a consensus-

based approach. This has been difficult to achieve due to the degree of public input at the CAC meetings. He supported the separation of public input during CAC meetings to help achieve that goal.

When asked by the Commission about what will happen at the next Planning Commission Study Session, Snellings recommended that the Planning Commission review the material that was presented in the packet for this meeting. Commissioner Lambert indicated that each study area should be reviewed during that meeting so that they can fully consider the alternatives.

The Commission discussed further the methods for identifying study areas and the order of the policy alternatives review relative to the selections of a preferred land use alternative. Commissioners Leland and Nelson felt that the priorities should be established first, and then the study areas selected based on those priorities. They also felt that the list of study areas should be flexible to allow the addition of new areas. Commissioner Marin felt that is important to continue progressing. Although slight corrections are appropriate, he was concerned that the process will lose momentum if it is stopped.

Snellings responded that we are still in the information-gathering phase, and that new information will emerge to inform the process. Decisions won't be made until Meeting Series #4, when the information from the alternatives evaluation is presented.

Jansen elaborated on the upcoming steps for the alternatives evaluation, involving constraints analyses to understand the impacts of the alternatives. This information will assist decision makers in selecting the preferred alternative, which will likely include some study areas for which no growth will be selected.

When asked by the Commission about whether new study areas could be included in the alternatives evaluation after Meeting Series #2/3, Jansen responded that suggestions for new study areas will still be made during the next phase, but that the study areas identified in Meeting Series #2/3 provide for a more focused analysis. Commissioner Leland was concerned that the areas not included as study areas in the final land use alternatives will not be evaluated during the next phase. He recommended that the constraints analysis occur first to determine the study areas and that specific development proposals then be added to the list. This would avoid the exclusion of some areas that may be appropriate for development.

The Planning Commission Study Session was continued to October 11, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. The Planning Commission will review the Draft Land Use Alternatives and Policy Alternatives at that time.

## Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting of September 6, 2007

The third and final Citizens Advisory Committee meeting for Meeting Series #2/3 (Development of Alternatives) was held on Thursday, September 6, 2007, at the Little Chico Creek Elementary School in Chico. This meeting was designed as a workshop for members of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and representatives of the public to review proposed land use change areas and policy alternatives for the General Plan 2030 process.

Of the 124 attendees at the meeting, 20 were representatives of the Citizens Advisory Committee and 104 were members of the public. Tim Snellings, Butte County Development Services Director, introduced the workshop and staff and consultants. Guest speaker Gail Williams, from the Butte County Air Quality Management District, presented on air quality in Butte County. Joanna Jansen, Senior Associate from Design, Community & Environment (DC&E), provided an overview of the meeting content and format. Tanya Sundberg, Associate from DC&E, presented an overview of the outcomes of the August 2<sup>nd</sup> CAC meeting, including revisions to existing change areas and transportation alternatives.

The bulk of the September 6 CAC meeting was devoted to the presentation and discussion of eight new change areas that had been introduced for consideration after the August 2 meeting. Tanya Sundberg presented descriptions of the eight new proposed change areas, and Tim Snellings facilitated a discussion on the issues concerning these areas. For each change area, the Citizens Advisory Committee and the public were asked to discuss the following questions:

- 1. Is the proposed change area of countywide significance?*
- 2. Are the proposed change area boundaries appropriate? Should it be bigger or smaller?*
- 3. Does the range of alternatives proposed reflect an appropriate set of choices for future land use in the area?*

The following list of issues and suggestions is a summary of input received from the Citizens Advisory Committee and public attendees during the land use alternatives discussion. It should be noted that, although the CAC and members of the public were requested to limit their responses to the three questions above, many commenters also brought up specific concerns about allowing or forbidding development in certain change areas. This summary includes the eight change areas considered, A through H.

### **(A) North Chico Highway 99**

- ◆ Consider a mid-range option allowing a buildout figure between 0 and 2,000 dwelling units.

**(B) North Chico**

- ◆ There are aesthetics, vernal pool and groundwater recharge issues here.
- ◆ Keep 40-acre minimum lot sizes for septic issues.

**(C) Upper Stilson Canyon**

- ◆ There are fire suppression and habitat issues here.
- ◆ Consider clustering and lower densities due to traffic and safety issues along Highway 32.
- ◆ Consider a conservation easement for groundwater recharge.

**(D) North Butte Valley**

- ◆ No suggestions were given for this change area.

**(E) Stringtown Mountain Specific Plan Extension**

- ◆ Extend boundary to the south.
- ◆ Include commercial land uses to serve residential.

**(F) Bangor Extension**

- ◆ No suggestions were given for this change area.

**(G) Durham Dayton/SR-99**

- ◆ Include a residential option.
- ◆ There are issues with vernal pools here.

**(H) Durham Pentz/SR-99**

- ◆ There are issues with vernal pools here.

**(I) East Gridley Road**

- ◆ There are infrastructure issues here.
- ◆ Opposing viewpoints over whether this change area meets the criteria for study.

Following the review of the land use alternatives and the discussion of new change areas, the Citizens Advisory Committee and the public attendees provided input on the policy alternatives. For each alternative, the following questions were discussed:

1. *Does the range of questions under each topic adequately cover the issues related to that topic? If not, what additional questions should be asked?*

2. *Does the range of solutions to each question reflect an appropriate set of response choices? If not, what additional solutions should be included?*

A summary of the input received from the policy alternatives discussion is provided below.

Under the topic of **Greenlines and Buffers**, participants suggested that there be a question specific to the Chico Area Greenline, as well as consideration of a buffer around the Neal Road Landfill. There was also discussion of increasing the public's role in making decisions about greenlines and buffers.

Under the topic of **New Development and Housing**, participants suggested that design guideline policies specify that they are illustrated and include viewshed consideration. There was also a discussion about affordable housing, with suggestions to allow multiple options for developers, ensure adequate residential land supply and infrastructure, and develop a mix of public and private funds.

Under the topic of **Regional Coordination**, participants suggested that meetings between the Cities and County be made public, a successful model be identified and followed, and that regional coordination between counties be included. There was also support for the idea that the County should coordinate with the Cities on planning for development within the Cities' Spheres of Influence.

Under the topic of **Agriculture**, participants discussed water supply issues, the role of the Williamson Act in agricultural preservation, and the need to support existing grower cooperatives, specialty crops, and export markets. In addition, participants requested some clarifications and definitions related to Program 2.2, minimum parcel sizes, productive agricultural lands, and the transfer of development rights program.

Under the topic of **Scenic Highways**, participants suggested that scenic highways be clearly identified, and they discussed some existing scenic highways.

Under the topic of **Trails**, participants discussed the coordination of trail systems between different jurisdictions, and suggested additional trail development opportunities.

Under the topic of **Natural Resources and Habitat**, participants discussed the relationship between the County and State and federal agencies that protect natural resources, as well as coordination with other city and county jurisdictions. Participants also suggested a policy that sets a minimum amount of habitat mitigation to occur within Butte County, and a resource depletion surcharge for mining activities.

Under the topic of **Water Resources**, participants suggested that there be distinct questions related to groundwater and surface water supply. Participants also discussed additional study of groundwater resources, the need to coordinate with other Counties on groundwater management, and the development of a water budget. In addition, there were suggestions to encourage recharge of areas for habitat and environmental purposes, and suggestions that the policy alternatives address contamination issues related to well drilling.

Under the topic of **Transportation**, participants discussed road capacity issues associated with new development, regional coordination, and funding issues. Participants also suggested the encouragement of satellite retail development, slow streets, and safe bicycle routes.

Under the topic of **Utilities and Public Services**, participants discussed funding sources, capacity issues associated with new development, the impacts of new development on schools, and fire management.

Under the topic of **Economic Development**, participants discussed the fiscal health issues of the County, as well as sustainable business.

Under the topic of **Green Building and Sustainability**, participants discussed building retrofitting, an air emissions budget, recycling and wind power.

#### Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting of August 2, 2007

The second Citizens Advisory Committee meeting for Meeting Series #2/3 (Alternatives Development and Finalization) was held on Thursday, August 2, 2007, at Selvester's Café-by-the-Creek on the California State University, Chico campus. This meeting was designed as a workshop for members of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and representatives of the public to review the preliminary draft land use, transportation and policy alternatives for the General Plan 2030 process.

Of the 51 attendees at the meeting, 26 were representatives of the Citizens Advisory Committee and 25 were members of the public. Tim Snellings, Butte County Development Services Director, introduced the workshop and staff and consultants, and provided an overview of the meeting content and format. Guest speaker, Professor Timothy Lawrence, PhD, presented on water quality issues in Butte County. Dr. Lawrence discussed a variety of methods for water treatment, specifically addressing low impact development that is designed to protect aquifer and recharge areas. David Early, Founding Principal of Design, Community and Environment (DC&E), and Associate Tanya Sundberg followed, presenting the draft land use alternatives and the purpose of and process for CAC input.

For the next hour, County and DC&E staff facilitated six breakout discussion groups, each of which focused on a specific geographic area of the county. For this exercise, the group facilitator posed three questions:

1. Should the change area be larger, smaller, or is it an appropriate size?
2. Does the range of alternatives reflect an appropriate set of choices for future land use in each change area?
3. Are the change areas the “right” places to consider for land use change, should area be added or taken away?

The following is a summary of modifications, comments and final suggestions from the six breakout discussion groups that address the land use alternatives.

#### *Chico Area #1*

The Chico Area #1 group discussed seven change areas, including the existing City of Chico limits, the North Chico Specific Plan (NCSP), the Bell Muir Area, and Chico Growth Areas 1, 2 and 3. Modifications were suggested for the NCSP, the Bell Muir Area, Growth areas 2 and 3.

For the NCSP, greater residential densities should be considered, more commercial and industrial uses should be added, and an analysis of potential conflicts with the airport and habitat areas should be performed. In the Bell Muir Area, the boundaries should be extended to include both sides of Bell Avenue and Bay Avenue, 5 acre parcels should be incorporated, and higher densities should be considered. For Chico Growth Area 2, its boundaries should be extended to the north, higher residential densities should be considered, and commercial and industrial uses should be added east of the railroad tracks. For Chico Growth Area 3, an open space buffer should be added around existing industrial uses, a new school should be added, densities neighboring the greenline and wetland areas should be reduced, and industrial use should be added along Hegan Lane.

#### *Chico Area #2*

The Chico Area #2 group discussed five change areas, including the Shuster Property, the Nance Canyon Property, Blakely-Western Property, the Horning Property, and the Tuscan Ridge Golf Course. Modifications were suggested for each change area.

For the Shuster Property, boundaries should be moved to avoid recharge areas, densities should be modified to account for constrained land, a new school should be added, an option that offers 50% residential and 50% open space should be added, and an option that combines alternatives 2 and 3 should be provided. For the Nance Canyon Property, comments regarding the change area boundary included suggestions to extend the boundary to Highway 99, condense

the change area, and combine it with the Horning Property change area. Other input about the Nance Canyon Property included suggestions to consider the potential conflicts with the landfill, habitat loss, and topography, and to avoid leapfrog development. Regarding industrial uses in the Nance Canyon Property change area, suggestions included the reduction of industrial uses, addition of industrial uses along Highway 99, and concentration of industrial uses around the landfill. For the Blakely-Western Property, residential uses should be removed from the area along the golf course, industrial uses should be concentrated around the landfill, coordination should be made with Durham, and industrial, commercial, and more residential uses should be added to alternative 3. For the Horning Property, land use designations should take soil quality into consideration, and commercial uses should be added. For the Tuscan Ridge Golf Course, the boundaries should be extended to include parcels on the north side of the Skyway.

#### *Oroville Area*

The Oroville Area group discussed eight change areas, including the existing City of Oroville limits, Thermalito, the Orobay Site, Eastern Oroville/Oroville Hills, the Stringtown Mountain Specific Plan Area, Las Plumas/Southside/Ophir Road, the Rio D'Oro Site, Southern Oroville, and Palermo. Modifications were suggested for the existing City of Oroville limits, Thermalito, Eastern Oroville/Oroville Hills, the Stringtown Mountain Specific Plan Area, and for Southern Oroville.

For the existing City of Oroville limits, all land uses should be determined by the City's General Plan. For Thermalito, the boundary should be extended to include the area south of Highway 162 to the Department of Water Resources property, and a mixed use/redevelopment corridor should be created. For the Eastern Oroville/Oroville Hills, the boundary area should be extended to the planning boundary; in addition, the boundary should be extended to the east and south to incorporate Miners Ranch and Lower Wyandotte Roads. For the Stringtown Mountain Specific Plan Area, the boundary should be extended to include Loafer Creek LLC and Sierra Vista permit applications; in addition, the boundary should be extended to the north and east. For Southern Oroville, industrial uses should be removed from one of the alternative options.

#### *Biggs & Gridley Area*

The Biggs & Gridley Area group discussed four change areas, including the existing City of Biggs limits, South of Biggs, the Biggs Area, and the North of Gridley Area. Modifications were suggested for South of Biggs, the Biggs area, and the North of Gridley Area.

For South of Biggs, the boundary should be extended north to the canal. For the Biggs Area, higher densities should be considered, industrial uses should be incorporated in the west, commercial should be added along the Highway 99 corridor, and agricultural areas should have medium densities or commercial

residential. For the North of Gridley Area, the boundary should be extended to the west and south, and commercial uses should be incorporated along Highway 99.

### *Paradise Area*

The Paradise Area group discussed four change areas, including the Southeast Paradise Specific Plan Area, Magalia/Paradise Pines, the Lago Vista Site, the Paradise Urban Reserve Area, and the Tuscan Ridge Golf Course. The group felt that all of the change areas have an adequate range of alternatives, except that the current infrastructure for Alternative 1 is inadequate. In addition, the group suggested the addition of new change areas in the Paradise region.

Modifications were suggested for the Paradise Urban Reserve Area. Specifically, the density should be reduced in Alternative 3, and the boundary should be extended to the northwest.

### *Unincorporated Communities*

The Unincorporated Communities group discussed seven change areas, including Forest Ranch, Concow, Berry Creek, the Gunn Property, Durham, Bangor, and Palermo. Modifications were suggested each change area, and it was suggested that a new change area be added for the Nord community.

For all of the change areas, it was suggested that the boundaries be extended. For the Gunn Property, commercial uses should be added. For Durham, higher densities should be considered. For Bangor, industrial uses should be added, and limitations on water and law enforcement should be considered. For Palermo, more residential and industrial uses should be added, and the density planned for Forest Ranch should be moved to Palermo.

The small group exercise was followed by a large-group discussion of bikeway and roadway improvement alternatives. Improvements were mentioned for bikeways and roadways throughout the county. The bulleted list below identifies the roadways that were mentioned in this discussion.

#### **Bikeway Improvements**

- ◆ Remove bike path along the railroad in the north Paradise area
- ◆ Connect Butte Creek to Bidwell Park

#### **Roadway Improvements**

- ◆ Connect Forest Ranch and the Skyway.
- ◆ Upper Ridge- provide more roads to increase accessibility in the event of an emergency.
- ◆ Improve the Midway.

- ◆ Lower Wyandotte Road improvement- extend to connect Oroville to Highway 70.
- ◆ Lower Honcut- improve accessibility during flood season.
- ◆ Biggs-Gridley Bypass- improvements should include passing lanes, 4 lanes north and south of Gridley.
- ◆ Bangor- Improve roadways to accommodate truck traffic to and from the gravel pit.
- ◆ East Gridley Road- improve route to connect to Highway 5

At the conclusion of this meeting, it was agreed that the alternatives finalization needed further review and planning. To address this need, and to consider recent proposals for new change areas, another meeting was added to further discuss the alternatives finalization. This meeting was scheduled for September 6, 2007, at Little Chico Creek Elementary School, 2090 Amanda Way, Chico, CA 95928, from 5:00pm to 9:00pm.

#### Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting of May 31, 2007

The first Citizens Advisory Committee meeting for Meeting Series #2/3 (Alternatives Development and Finalization) was held on Thursday, May 31, 2007, at the University of Phoenix in Chico. This meeting was designed as a workshop for members of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and representatives of the public to contribute to the development of the land use and policy alternatives for the General Plan 2030 process.

Of the 39 attendees at the meeting, 18 were representatives of the Citizens Advisory Committee and 21 were members of the public. Tim Snellings, Butte County Development Services Director, introduced the workshop and staff and consultants. Ellen Clark, Senior Associate with Design, Community and Environment (DC&E) and DC&E Associate Tanya Sundberg then provided an overview of the meeting, reviewed the results of Meeting Series #1 and the Public Workshop in Meeting Series #2/3, presented smart growth principles, and provided an overview of the small group and open house exercises.

Following those presentations, Tim Snellings facilitated a brainstorming session and discussion about land use alternatives themes. The following list includes the land use alternatives themes suggested during this brainstorming session:

- ◆ Spheres-oriented growth
- ◆ Locally- and regional-coordinated safe, sustainable, mixed-use, clustered and infill development, liberally interspersed with open, agriculture and recreational space

- ◆ Growth areas identified
- ◆ Predictable
- ◆ Retain rural atmosphere/character
- ◆ Agriculture, recreation and smart growth
- ◆ Constraints-driven design
- ◆ Development compatible with natural resources
- ◆ Efficient and effective water use
- ◆ Coordinated development strategy between jurisdictions
- ◆ South county-oriented growth
- ◆ Development that is focused on safety
- ◆ Economic stability
- ◆ Sustainable growth and design
- ◆ Limited growth in foothills
- ◆ Coordinated activities with the cities in the spheres
- ◆ Economic stability and equity between jurisdictions

An open house session for the policy alternatives followed, during which Committee members and the public visited stations where they wrote down responses to policy questions related to a series of topics. These policy questions were generated from the issues identified during Meeting Series #1, and they addressed the following topics:

- ◆ Cooperative Planning, Growth, Urban and Rural Development, and Housing
- ◆ Agriculture
- ◆ Natural and Cultural Resources, Recreation, and Water Resources
- ◆ Traffic, Transportation, Utilities and Public Services
- ◆ Airports, Economic Development and Sustainability

Following the policy alternatives open house, Committee members and the public worked in small groups to contribute to the development of the land use alternatives. Each group focused on a different geographic region, including Chico, Paradise, Central Buttes, Oroville, and Gridley and Biggs. Participants were presented with maps of key areas in each of these geographic regions, as well as up to three alternative scenarios for land use change in those areas. Participants were then asked to draw how those scenarios should be mapped on the ground, and to discuss and map other possible scenarios. The goal of this exercise was to create a suitable range of alternative land use scenarios for these key areas.

A summary of each group's input is provided below:

*Eastern Chico Area*

If the County were to emphasize an approach that consolidates new subdivision activity, it should occur to the southeast edge of the City of Chico limits, between the Skyway and Doe-Mill Road. If the County were to direct growth to the Skyway, it should occur on the south side of the Skyway, in the Crouch Ravine area. Growth along the Skyway should be focused near the Spheres of Influence for Chico and Paradise. The County should avoid developing the aquifer recharge area to the north and east of the City of Chico, and should limit and guide the design of any development that does occur in this area. The County should also consider adding wildlife parks, residential and open space in this area.

*Western Chico Area*

If the County were to work to preserve agriculture in this region, it should create an agricultural transition zone, as well as zone for intensive agriculture with larger minimum parcel sizes. If the County were to allow commercial growth along Highway 99, it should occur at the intersection of Pentz Road and Highway 99, and it should avoid the "strip mall" form.

*Northern Chico Area*

Any development in the northern Chico area should be compatible with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) and protect the airport. In addition, the North Chico Specific Plan and ALUCP should be made consistent.

*Paradise Area*

Development in the Paradise area should be limited until the constraints of this region are addressed, including emergency access and evacuation, water supply and wastewater. The County should address design guidelines in this area, consider aesthetic impacts of new development, and establish Pentz Road as a scenic highway with setback requirements, billboard restrictions, and cluster development guidelines.

*Central Buttes Area*

If the County were to allow additional development along Highway 99 south of Chico, the County should ensure that prime farmland is protected from development, the infrastructure needs of the new development are met, and development serves Butte College with housing and employment. The group also suggested that a commercial/retail node be designated at the intersection of the Durham-Dayton Highway and Highway 99. High density residential should be designated northeast of the intersection and at the intersection of the Durham-Dayton Highway and Highway 191, while maintaining some open space in the area for groundwater recharge. Other general comments about development in this area included the desire for it to have its own character, the need for a

school, the importance of the views of the buttes and the foothills, the need for bicycle connections, and the need for design standards.

*Oroville - Highway 162 Corridor*

If the County were to promote tourism and resort development in this area, it should occur along the southern portion of Lake Oroville, near Kelly Ridge. This area should be designated for commercial to include hotels, resorts, and recreational uses. Residential development should be designated northeast of this commercial area to provide housing in proximity to these employment generators. Highway 162 should also be designated as a mixed use corridor.

*Oroville – Thermalito Area*

If the County were to allow additional development in the Thermalito area, it should be directed to existing commercial nodes and include a mixed use corridor along Oro Dam Boulevard.

*Southern Oroville Area*

In the Southern Oroville area, the County should create a commercial corridor along Lower Wyandotte Road, and a commercial node on Ophir Road at Lincoln. The County should also develop a mixed use zone in the Ophir Road, Greenville Road and Las Plumas Avenue area.

*Gridley and Biggs Area*

If the County were to establish a boundary between the growing Cities of Gridley and Biggs without a buffer, it should be placed at Hinaman Drive. If the County were to establish a narrow buffer between these two cities, it should take the form of a 200- to 300-foot greenbelt buffer along Hastings Avenue, and should provide bicycle trails and other recreational amenities. Alternatively, it could follow a natural feature, such as a creek. Development in the Area of Concern region should be directed away from the railroad tracks. Railroad crossings should be avoided by limiting development west of the railroad tracks. This group also suggested that the County establish a commercial zone along Highway 99 and B Street that also incorporates agricultural commercial uses, as well as a transportation and development corridor along Highway 162 west to Interstate 5. The group also suggested that urban areas be connected to the Feather River through a trail network.

Public Workshop held on May 17, 2007

The Public Workshop for Meeting Series #2/3 (Alternatives Development and Finalization) was held on Thursday, May 17, 2007, at the Oroville Municipal Auditorium. This meeting was designed as a workshop for the public to contribute to the development of the land use and policy alternatives for the General Plan 2030 process.

Of the 35 attendees at the meeting, 11 were representatives of the Citizens Advisory Committee and 24 were members of the public. Tim Snellings, Butte County Development Services Director, introduced the workshop and staff and consultants. David Early, Founding Principal of Design, Community and Environment (DC&E) provided an overview of the workshop. Ellen Clark, Senior Associate with DC&E, overviewed the General Plan 2030 process and the results of Meeting Series #1. David Early then presented an overview of smart growth principles, followed by a description of the open house exercise.

For the remainder of the workshop, participants visited open house stations that presented policy questions and map areas.

At the policy stations, participants wrote down responses to policy questions related to a series of topics, including:

- ◆ Cooperative Planning, Growth, Urban and Rural Development, and Housing
- ◆ Agriculture
- ◆ Natural and Cultural Resources, Recreation, and Water Resources
- ◆ Traffic, Transportation, Utilities and Public Services
- ◆ Airports, Economic Development and Sustainability

There were five geographic stations, at which participants were asked to propose land use changes at key areas in the County by drawing and describing their ideas. These geographic map stations included the following regions:

- ◆ Chico
- ◆ Paradise
- ◆ Central Buttes
- ◆ Oroville
- ◆ Gridley and Biggs

A map of the entire county was also provided, on which participants could describe proposed land use changes for areas not covered at the other map stations.

#### **IV. Next Steps: Meeting Series #4 Butte County General Plan 2030**

The General Plan 2030 process will begin the process of narrowing down the list of the 43 individual study areas that are now under consideration through Meeting Series #4. Meeting Series #4 will be devoted to the evaluation of the alternatives and the selection of a preferred alternative from the 3 alternatives currently under consideration. The Meeting Series will accomplish this through: 1) a Public Workshop 2) 2-3 Citizens Advisory Committee meetings, 3) a Planning Commission Study Session, and 4) a Board of Supervisors Study Session.

Dates for the Meeting Series #4 Public Workshop, Citizens Advisory Committee meetings and the individual Study Sessions before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will be made available as soon as they are scheduled. As with all Meeting Series, the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission will provide final direction regarding the preferred alternative at their last Study Session. Based on final feedback from the Board of Supervisors, County staff and DC&E will make any needed refinements to create the final preferred alternative at the conclusion of the Meeting Series.

Prior to Meeting Series #4, and after the conclusion of Meeting Series #2/3, the General Plan Consultant, Design, Community & Environment, and their team of subconsultants and Development Services staff will evaluate each of the three alternatives for their potential implications in the areas of transportation, economics, agriculture, water supply, wastewater infrastructure, biological resources, cultural resources, public services (including fire protection, emergency response, schools, and police), and safety/hazards. Each of the three alternatives will also be analyzed on how each meets the assets, issues, and future vision identified during Meeting Series #1 –Existing Conditions and Issue Identification, and the 19 Community Meetings held in conjunction with this Meeting Series.

Should you have any questions regarding any of the information provided within this Agenda Report, please do not hesitate to contact me at 538-6821 or Principal Planner Dan Breedon at 530-538-7629.

Sincerely,

Tim Snellings, Director,  
Butte County Department of Development Services