

Butte County General Plan 2030
Summary of Input Received at the March 27, 2008 Public Workshop
Meeting Series #4, Evaluation & Selection of a Preferred Land Use Alternative

The March 27, 2008 General Plan 2030 public workshop included three main components: an Open House, during which participants visited Issue Stations and Study Area Stations; a presentation explaining the General Plan process as a whole and the Alternatives Evaluation process in particular; and a Town Hall Discussion in which participants shared ideas about policy issues that should be considered, resources that should be protected, and specific study areas.

Public input from this workshop is derived from the following sources:

- Verbal comments made during the Town Hall discussion and recorded by facilitator Joanna Jansen
- Written comments submitted on comment cards, which were available throughout the workshop
- Written comments submitted on the large sheets of paper posted at each Study Area Station
- Written comments submitted to the County either before or after the workshop

This is a summary of the overall themes of the public input received on March 27. In addition, CAC members will be provided with raw data including transcriptions of the large sheets from the Study Area Stations and the Town Hall discussion comments, and scans of the written comments submitted via comment card or communication to County staff.

This summary focuses on comments regarding Countywide issues as well as study-area specific comments for Study Areas 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 20, which will be discussed at the April 10, 2008 CAC meeting.

Input on Countywide Issues

During the Town Hall discussion from 6:55 to 7:00 PM, participants spoke at an open mic in the front of the room to share their ideas about what important issues should be considered in formulating the Preferred Alternative, as well as any issues to consider in specific study areas.

A clear majority of the comments concerned the need to prevent sprawl and preserve open space and agriculture by growing near existing urbanized areas. At one point, a show of hands revealed 27 people in the audience who supported this concept. A number of commenters said that Butte County has so far done a good job of protecting the

valuable visual and natural resources that make the County a beautiful and unique place where people enjoy living. Another consistent thread through many of the comments was the need to distinguish between “smart growth” and “no growth,” with several people expressing support for some growth in the County, as long as it is carefully planned, respects natural systems and avoids or mitigates impacts. One commenter observed that planning for large landholdings provides a unique opportunity to mitigate impacts, such as by planning for new schools or fire stations as part of new development.

Mixed use and high density residential development received some support, while others pointed out the importance of allowing lower-density residential development to provide homes for people seeking a rural lifestyle and to protect the character of existing rural residential areas. A few participants said that water is crucial and should be carefully considered.

Although the Town Hall discussion focused on Countywide issues, some participants did discuss specific study areas. Separate comments supported Alternative 2 in Study Area 3 (Bell Muir), and opposed development in Study Areas 6 (Upper Stilson Canyon), 14 (Nance Canyon/Highway 99), 15 (Hamlin Canyon/Highway 99), 16 (Oroville Chico Highway/Highway 99), 18 (Durham Dayton/Highway 99), and 19 (Durham Pentz/Highway 99). Other comments supported some smaller amount of development in Study Areas 14 and 15. Scott Belyea from JKB Homes stated that his firm is planning a sustainable, mixed use development in Study Areas 27 (Pacific Heights Road/Highway 70) and 28 (Southern Oroville). One person stated that any development in Study Area 9 (Doe Mill/Honey Run) would have to rely on City of Chico sewer service because septic systems would not be conducive to septic systems.

Arlene Ward, member of the Mechoopda Tribe, described a number of issues regarding the cultural resources analysis in the Alternatives Evaluation Report. The methodology of counting, reporting and recording archaeological sites over the past four decades has left a great deal of room for human error, resulting in records that are incomplete and incorrect. Therefore, Ms. Ward believes these records are not a sufficient basis for determining the sensitivity of a study area for cultural resources, as the report attempted to do.

Input on Study Areas

During the Open House sessions from 5:00 to 6:00 PM and from 7:30 to 8:30 PM, participants were encouraged to circulate among Issue Stations, staffed with County or DC&E facilitators, and Study Area Stations, also staffed with County facilitators. Each Study Area Station included maps of the three alternatives in a given study area, along with an enlarged copy of the Alternatives Evaluation Report Summary Table for that

study area. The Study Area Station also included a large sheet of butcher paper for participants to provide comments. The text below summarizes input received (for the Paradise/Magalia/Butte Valley/Concow region) not only from the Study Area Station, but also from workshop comment cards and letters sent to the County.

Study Area 5: Magalia/Paradise Pines

Approximately 8 separate comments were received. Most of these supported Alternative 1 or 2 in this area, and cited concerns about inadequate infrastructure, water supply, evacuation routes, and fire and sheriff services as reasons why additional growth should not be allowed. Two commentors also stated a desire to maintain very low density, rural development patterns.

Study Area 7: Concow

Two commentors suggested this area should be expanded to include Yankee Hill, and that the Yankee Hill area would benefit from smaller minimum parcel sizes. There were no comments on the existing Study Area 7.

Study Area 10: Skyway/Neal Road

About 12 separate comments were received. Most commentors supported Alternative 1 in this area, focusing on the need to preserve open space here. Specific issues that should preclude development here include visual impacts, blue oak woodlands, steep topography, deer range, and water recharge areas.

Study Area 11: Paradise Urban Reserve

Three comments were received. One stated that blue oak woodlands in this area should be protected, one preferred Alternative 1, and one preferred Alternative 2.

Study Area 12: Southeast Paradise Specific Plan

Three comments were received: coordinate development of SE Paradise Specific Plan with Town planning staff; choose smart growth; and choose Alternative 2 and add more open space.

Study Area 13: South Paradise/Pentz Road

About 9 comments were received. The majority opposed 200 or 400 additional homes in this area. Several stated a preference for Alternative 1. The main reasons given for opposing new development were concerns about water supply, emergency access, increased traffic on dangerous roads, sheriff and fire response times, and impacts to wildlife. In addition, NorthStar Engineering submitted a letter (included in the CAC packet) and gave input at the Study Area Station on behalf of the landowner. These comments state that a revised Alternative 3 should be considered that would allow 420

new homes on 150 acres, with 170 acres remaining undeveloped. The letter also states that concerns about sewer service, biological resources, cultural resources, landslide potential and wildland fire risks, highlighted in the Alternatives Evaluation Report, could be addressed through appropriate design of homes and infrastructure.

Study Area 20: Highway 191 (Clark Road)/Durham Pentz

Approximately 6 comments were received. Most comments supported Alternative 1 and cited concerns about sprawl and lack of infrastructure, as well as a desire to maintain the minimum 5-acre zoning in the area. However, one commenter supported retail in this area, with a reconfigured retail area in the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of the 191/Durham-Pentz Road intersection.