

**Butte County General Plan 2030 Citizens Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
May 1, 2008**

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) held meeting #4-2D on Thursday, May 1, 2008, the fourth of five CAC meetings in Meeting Series #4 (Selection of a Preferred Land Use Alternative). The meeting was held at Butte College in Oroville. Of the 77 attendees at the meeting, 25 were representatives of the Citizens Advisory Committee and 52 were members of the public.

This fourth CAC meeting focused on a review of the CAC's preliminary preferred land use alternative, and provided the opportunity for the CAC to refine their recommendation by reopening study areas for further discussion and conducting additional straw polls. The meeting ran late, and ended before all of the study areas that were selected for reopening by the CAC were discussed. Therefore, a fifth meeting was scheduled for May 8, 2008, to finish the agenda.

CAC members were presented with a summary of the outcomes of the April 10, 17 and 24 CAC meetings, a table and map displaying the CAC's preliminary preferred land use alternative, a memorandum correcting errata in the Alternatives Evaluation Report, and additional public comment cards and letters that were received after the April CAC meetings.

Introductions and General Plan 2030 Overview

Tim Snellings, Butte County Development Services Director, introduced the meeting and provided an overview of the General Plan 2030 process to date. Mr. Snellings also displayed the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) and Bay Area Economics (BAE) housing and job growth projections, and compared them to the preliminary preferred land use alternative recommended by the CAC at the previous three meetings.

Pia Sevelius asked for clarification regarding the jobs projection. The number of jobs created under the preferred land use alternative is significantly higher than the number of jobs projected as needed for unincorporated Butte County by BAE in the Setting & Trends Report. Ms. Sevelius asked whether the CAC should try to reduce the number of jobs under the preferred land use alternative because such job growth may be unrealistic. Mr. Snellings replied that the CAC's goal should be a balance of jobs and housing, and that the CAC should discuss job creation during the meeting tonight.

Bruce McClintock questioned the formula that was used to determine the number of jobs under the preferred alternative, in part because the formula is not area-specific. John Anderson responded that the formula used (450 square feet per employee for retail uses and 750 square feet per employee for industrial uses) is typical in the industry. Mr. McClintock indicated that the CAC should focus on the correlation between jobs and housing, not just housing alone. Mr. Snellings indicated that staff will provide information about how the jobs and housing figures relate during the meeting tonight.

Scott McNall felt that the CAC's discussions at the past three meetings were rushed, and would prefer to understand the CAC's reasoning behind decisions through further discussion during the meeting tonight.

Todd Hall asked that the meeting tonight have more order than in the past, as sometimes only the loudest people provide the majority of the input.

Presentations: Meeting Overview, Study Area 24 Agricultural Resources, Review of Preliminary Preferred Land Use Alternative

Tanya Sundberg of DC&E presented an overview of the meeting agenda and the materials distributed in the CAC and supplemental packets.

Richard Price, Butte County Agriculture Commissioner, provided a pictorial review of Study Area 24 in response to requests from the CAC and the public. This review included a description of the landcover in this region and the presence of unique farmland for citrus crops. In response to a question from the CAC, Mr. Price confirmed that the area is suitable for vineyards as well.

Ms. Sundberg then presented a review of the preliminary preferred land use alternative, which was developed by the CAC during the previous three meetings in April.

CAC Question and Answer Period

The presentations were followed by time for questions from CAC members. The following is a summary of the information provided in response to these questions:

- ◆ In the Alternatives Evaluation Report, Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 for Study Area 23 should have all received a D for the potential loss of agricultural resources.
- ◆ Alternative 3 in Study Area 27 would allow approximately 2,700 new homes.
- ◆ The BCAG housing growth projection averages 1 percent in the unincorporated area and 2 percent in the total county. The preferred land use alternative housing buildout was compared to the BCAG projection and a 2.5 percent growth rate for the total county.
- ◆ Currently, there are several urban reserve designations in use throughout the county, including the Paradise Urban Reserve, one of the study areas. Staff feels that this designation should be used consistently across the county, and is proposing that the designation prohibit parcelization until the area is annexed by a city or town.
- ◆ The distribution of single family and multifamily housing units was calculated using the assumption that 10 percent of the units in areas that include higher density residential would consist of multifamily units. This assumption uses this low rate due to the rural nature of the majority of the unincorporated county.
- ◆ The number of jobs generated in each study area was calculated through a two-step process. First, the square footage of retail and industrial uses was determined using a 0.3 floor area ratio (FAR) for retail uses and a 0.4 FAR for industrial uses. These FAR assumptions were suggested by BAE based on their professional judgment. Next, the jobs were calculated using an employment density factor for retail and industrial uses of 450 square feet per employee and 750 square feet per employee, respectively. The jobs

were calculated for only the unincorporated portion of the county. These job figures were compared to BAE's job projection in the Setting and Trends Report.

- ◆ BCAG's and BAE's housing and jobs projections were calculated based on a review of building permit data over the past 15 years and discussions with planning staff from each of the jurisdictions. The growth projected under the preferred land use alternative was not calculated using the same methodology.

Public Comment Period

The following is a summary of the public comments received.

Comments from City Representatives

- ◆ Steve Peterson, Chico Planning Director, reiterated that it is important for the County to coordinate with cities at their edges. The BCAG growth projections indicate that Chico will grow by about 20,000 housing units by 2030. The preferred land use alternative should identify appropriate places for this growth around the city limits. All of the study areas that are adjacent to the City of Chico should be considered for possible annexation. Mr. Peterson also requested that the CAC extend the Bell Muir Study Area to Mud Creek. The CAC discussed whether this extension is appropriate given the County Board of Supervisors' direction to not study the Mud Creek area for growth.
- ◆ Craig Sanders, representing the City of Oroville Community Development Department, commented on the study areas surrounding the City of Oroville. For Study Areas 21 and 26, Mr. Sanders expressed appreciation for the CAC's recognition of the City's plans, but requested that appropriate polices also be included that require services and infrastructure that are consistent with City standards and that have established maintenance funding in place in order to provide for a seamless integration during future annexations. Mr. Sanders questioned the need for additional density along Miners Ranch Road in Study Area 23, a deviation from the City's General Plan in that area, noting that there are earthquake hazards. Mr. Sanders also expressed concern about potential traffic problems resulting from the addition of 2,700 new homes in Study Area 24. Mr. Sanders requested an urban reserve designation for Study Areas 25 and 27.
- ◆ Andrea Redamonti, Gridley Community Development Director, and Pete Carr, Biggs City Manager, requested that the study areas around the cities of Gridley and Biggs be designated as urban reserves. Growth is essential to the survival of these communities, and the Cities are concerned that parcelization would impede their ability to survive. Ms. Redamonti also requested that the urban reserve designation address the agriculture buffer issue. The two cities will work collaboratively to address the issue of overlapping planning boundaries.

General Comments

- ◆ Water resources need to be considered and protected in the General Plan. Big Chico Creek and Butte Creek are the largest sources of water for Chico and Durham. Calculations need to consider the growth in and around the City of Chico. There are three types of aquifers in Butte County: fractured rock aquifers in the Paradise region; shallow aquifers on the valley floor, where rain falls and filters into the ground; and the Lower Tuscan aquifer.

- ◆ Does the CAC have a plan for the migrant workers? They are important now and in the future. Living costs are high, and farm workers are exposed to pesticides and chemicals. These chemicals are also transferred to their children when they go home. Many migrant workers don't have medical attention. The Butte County government should work with the State and other agencies to address medical needs. The CAC should also increase the areas designated for agriculture in order to produce more jobs for migrant workers.
- ◆ A representative from Friends of Butte Creek noted that there was an excellent run of salmon in Butte Creek this year. These salmon are naturally spawned in Butte Creek and return to Butte Creek each year, never experiencing a hatchery. This is an important resource and needs to be protected. Development increases impervious surfaces, which impacts salmon populations due to runoff. Significant funds have already been spent to recover salmon populations. To keep improving the populations, limit development in Study Areas 5, 9, 10, 17 and 15.

Study Area 3 Bell Muir

- ◆ Growth is appropriate in this study area. However, the requirement that development occur by the City of Chico and/or in close coordination with the City of Chico should be eliminated. The County and City have been talking about this area since the 1980's, but neither agency will take responsibility for the area. This requirement could continue this condition for another 20 years. A significant portion of Bell Muir is already parcelized to 1 acre or less; agriculture is not sensible or viable due to conflicts with residential uses. Support Alternative 2 without the requirement for coordination with the City of Chico.

Study Area 5 Magalia/Paradise Pines

- ◆ Consider an urban reserve designation. 400 homes would be too many for this area due to its constraints.

Study Area 8 Berry Creek

- ◆ Consider Alternative 4, a plan that represents the consensus of the elected leadership in Berry Creek. This plan redefines the study area to the natural boundaries formed by the Feather River; the Fire Safe Council uses this same boundary. This plan also establishes a Rural Residential designation where development is appropriate, and Agriculture/Timber elsewhere. This plan also includes up to 20 acres of retail uses to be distributed along Bald Rock Road and Oro Quincy Highway, as well as 50 acres for public uses.

Study Area 10 Skyway/Neal Road

- ◆ Reconsider the preferred alternative for this study area. In August, ridge residents will be presenting guidelines for scenic polices for the Skyway to the CAC, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. If the Board approves Alternatives 2 or 3, the land use map would be in conflict with the scenic guidelines. Instead, support Alternative 1 so that any development would need to be conducted in accordance with the scenic corridor guidelines.
- ◆ Reconsider Study Area 10, because there is not an underlying designation for the golf course.
- ◆ The Tuscan Ridge Golf Course allows Butte College to use their facilities for the golf program, helping the College to form a viable golf program. Please support the Golf

Course and allow them to proceed with the residential development in order to stay viable.

- ◆ The General Manager of the Tuscan Ridge Golf Course described a petition that was circulated to the CAC. This petition includes 463 signatures of golfers and supports the plan for residential development. Without houses, the golf course will have a difficult time surviving. The golf course is important to the community, providing a men's and women's club and access to local school and college golf teams.

Study Area 13 South Paradise/Pentz Road

- ◆ A representative of the property owner of this study area expressed concern about the information that was produced regarding this study area. Alternative 1 does not represent the existing General Plan, which allows for development. A tentative map was approved for subdivision in the 1980's, but has since expired. This area is appropriate for development, as it is within the Paradise Sphere of Influence, and also designated by the Town for development. The area is within a water district. The first phase of the project has already been developed. The property owner has been working with the County to monitor groundwater in preparation for development, as well as addressing access issues. Support Alternative 3.

Study Area 14 Nance Canyon/Highway 99

- ◆ Research and business parks provide jobs. Research uses require large areas for development. The research and business park zoning requires a minimum of 200 acres and a maximum buildout of 10 percent of the land. The County has already identified Study Area 14 as an appropriate location for a research and business park.
- ◆ Consider research and business park use for the portion of this study area along Highway 99. The property owners have been working with the County for years about potential development of a research and business park, an appropriate use for this site. This development could occur under the County auspices, and the property owner is proposing a 2,000-foot buffer to the landfill.

Study Area 15 Hamlin Canyon/Highway 99

- ◆ A remote business park does not make sense due to the increasing gas prices.
- ◆ The preferred land use alternative should remain as the CAC voted on April 24, allowing a research and business park. This area has great potential to showcase Butte County's features. The development area would be situated to avoid viewshed impacts.
- ◆ Reconsider the preferred alternative for this study area, and designate it for Agriculture. The buttes should be a gateway to Butte County, not development.

Study Area 17 Durham

- ◆ There is adequate water in Durham for development. The Durham Dayton Nelson plan does not allow 5-acre parcels. The preferred land use alternative should be consistent with the Durham Dayton Nelson Plan.

Study Area 19 Durham Pentz/Highway 99

- ◆ The CAC approved industrial development for Study Area 15, but left Study Area 19 as Agriculture, even though they are located across the street (Durham Pentz Road) from

each other. By developing both Study Area 15 and 19, Durham Pentz Road will have improvements on both sides. This study area has 2 miles of road frontage, which is appropriate for development. Industrial development at the same intersection has been thriving for 20 years.

Study Area 23 Eastern Oroville/Oroville Hills

- ◆ There are productive and unique farmlands in this region, as well as historic farm buildings. Protection of these resources is important to our economy, food supply, tourism industry and quality of life. Local food is becoming even more important given the constraints to transporting food. It is shortsighted to sacrifice agricultural land for subdivisions. Please follow the Guiding Principles and designate the agricultural lands for Agriculture.
- ◆ Food prices and the environment are front page news. The oversight of agricultural land in the Alternatives Evaluation Report suggests the need for additional consideration by the CAC. The majority of small farmers in this study area don't support the CAC's recommendation. Instead, we would like the importance of small farmlands recognized.
- ◆ A small winery/vineyard owner in this study area described how every weekend she has visitors from Chico who never knew about the small farms in Oroville. The small farms help to raise awareness about these resources. The annual Sierra Oro Farm Trail Passport weekend brings in people from other communities and educates them about farming. Events like this bring money to the community while maintaining an agricultural setting. The mistake in the Alternatives Evaluation Report needs to be corrected.
- ◆ High density development will threaten the agricultural uses in this area, and would potentially constitute a leapfrog development pattern.
- ◆ The CAC's preliminary preferred land use alternative is appropriate. This alternative brings in opportunities for economic development and job creation, and is mostly consistent with the City of Oroville's General Plan for this area. The mixed use development along Miners Ranch Road would be viable. The anxiety about this preferred alternative in this region is unfounded. However, the resource conservation designation on the south edge of the study area should be changed. A project application is already pending for a development within this resource conservation designation, and would lead to a nonconforming use.
- ◆ Development in outlying areas does not make sense due to the increasing gas prices.

Study Area 24 Stringtown Mountain

- ◆ The preferred land use alternative does not provide an underlying designation.

Study Areas 31, 33 and 34 Biggs Area, South of Biggs, and North of Gridley

- ◆ Support the urban reserve designation suggested by City staff. This area has already been designated for growth by LAFCO. Also support removal of the agriculture buffer requirement in these growth areas.

Large Group Discussion: Reopening Study Areas

Dan Breedon, Principal Planner with the Butte County Department of Development Services, explained the process for reopening study areas. CAC members may nominate study areas for additional discussion, providing a brief argument for why they should be reopened. Then a straw

poll will be conducted of the CAC to determine how many members support reopening each study area. Study Areas for which ten or more CAC members support reopening will be reopened for discussion.

The following study areas were reopened for discussion, listed in the order they were nominated (which is also the order in which the CAC discussed them):

- ◆ Study Areas 31, 33 and 34 – Biggs Area, South of Biggs, and North of Gridley
- ◆ Study Area 8 – Berry Creek
- ◆ Study Area 15 – Hamlin Canyon/Highway 99
- ◆ Study Area 9 – Doe Mill/Honey Run
- ◆ Study Area 23 – Eastern Oroville/Oroville Hills
- ◆ Study Area 5 – Magalia/Paradise Pines
- ◆ Study Area 27 – Pacific Heights Road/Highway 70
- ◆ Study Area 14 – Nance Canyon/Highway 99
- ◆ Study Area 10 – Skyway/Neal Road
- ◆ Study Area 17 - Durham
- ◆ Study Area 18 – Durham Dayton/Highway 99

Mr. Breedon facilitated the CAC discussion of each of the study areas listed above. The goal of the discussion was to allow further deliberation by the CAC and refinement of their recommendation for these study areas. In general, Mr. Breedon began the discussion by summarizing the preliminary preferred alternative of the CAC. One or more CAC members proposed specific alternatives that they felt should be supported. In some cases, CAC members chose the same alternatives that were considered at the previous meetings, while in others, CAC members proposed new alternatives. CAC members deliberated on the pros and cons of the alternatives. Mr. Breedon would then conduct a straw poll to gauge CAC input.

The following summarizes the outcomes of the large group discussion:

Study Areas 31, 33 and 34 Biggs Area, South of Biggs, and North of Gridley

The CAC discussed the City staff recommendation for an urban reserve designation and the removal of agriculture buffer requirements, as well as a buffer between the two communities. The CAC decided to conduct two straw polls to address the urban reserve designation and the community buffer issues separately.

Twenty-three (23) supported an urban reserve designation for these study areas, which would prohibit parcelization until the Cities annex the area. There were no CAC members opposed to this designation.

Four (4) supported an urban reserve policy that would require a buffer between the two communities; the remainder of the CAC was opposed to this requirement.

Study Area 8 Berry Creek

The CAC discussed the community plan that was presented by the Berry Creek Community Association, asking for additional information from the Association representative, Roger Cutler.

The CAC also discussed the Board of Supervisors' decision during Meeting Series #2/3 to not proceed with the larger boundary of this study area.

Sixteen (16) supported the Berry Creek community plan as presented by the Community Association, which would expand the study area boundary to the Middle and North Forks of the Feather River; designate approximately 20 acres of Retail distributed along Bald Rock Road and Oro Quincy Highway; designate approximately 50 acres of Public; designate Rural Residential in areas appropriate for development, allowing approximately 300 new homes; and designate the remainder for Agriculture.

Five (5) supported Alternative 2, which received the most support by the CAC at the April 17 meeting and designates the majority of the study area for Agriculture.

One (1) supported Alternative 1, which designates the study area for Agriculture, Very Low Density Residential, and Retail, allowing approximately 300 new homes.

Study Area 15 Hamlin Canyon/Highway 99

Several CAC members expressed concern about the biological resources present in this study area, as well as its groundwater recharge potential. Other CAC members did not support maintaining the area as grassland, indicating that the developers will be subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Thirteen (13) supported Alternative 4, which also received the most support by the CAC at the April 24 meeting and designates 400 acres for a research and business park along Highway 99 and leaves the remainder as Agriculture.

Two (2) supported a modified Alternative 1, which designates the majority of the study area for Agriculture, but maintains the existing Industrial designation on an approximately 50-acre parcel along Highway 99.

Seven (7) supported Alternative 1, which designates the entire study area for Agriculture.

Study Area 9 Doe Mill/Honey Run

The CAC discussed the biological resources present in and around the site, and whether high density development would be appropriate. The CAC also discussed whether the specific plan development would be most appropriate under the auspices of the City of Chico or Butte County.

Sixteen (16) supported the Specific Plan designation for 1,500 new homes under the auspices of the County, with Agriculture as the underlying designation. This alternative also received the most support by the CAC at the April 24 meeting.

Seven (7) supported the same Specific Plan designation, but under the auspices of the City of Chico.

Study Area 23 Eastern Oroville/Oroville Hills

The CAC discussed the substantial public comments pertaining to this study area, including the concerns about agricultural preservation. Many CAC members felt that the CAC's preliminary

preferred alternative does support rural character in the eastern portion of the study area, although they recognized that the buildout figures appear to be substantial.

The CAC unanimously agreed that there is not a need to conduct another straw poll for this study area, and that their input from the April 17 meeting is adequate.

Study Area 5 Magalia/Paradise Pines

The CAC discussed the correction to the buildout figures for this study area, as well as the constraints to development, such as water supply and fire hazards.

Twenty-three (23) supported Alternative 4, which is similar to Alternative 3, the alternative that was supported by the majority of the CAC members at the April 10 meeting, but only allows up to 400 new homes.

Study Area 27 Pacific Heights Road/Highway 70

The CAC discussed the City of Oroville's General Plan and how it relates to this study area. Some felt that the development proposed under the City's General Plan is part of an overall strategy by the City, and is necessary to fund the rest of the General Plan projects. The CAC also discussed traffic issues along Highway 70 and biological resources present on the site.

Fourteen (14) support Alternative 3, which would allow the construction of up to 2,700 new homes under a Specific Plan designation and which is consistent with the City of Oroville's General Plan.

Eight (8) support Alternative 2, which received the most support at the April 17 meeting and designates the entire study area for Agriculture.

Study Areas 14, 10, 17 and 18

Nance Canyon/Highway 99, Skyway/Neal Road, Durham and Durham Dayton/Highway 99
CAC discussion on Study Areas 14, 10, 17 and 18 was delayed until a May 8 meeting.