

A banner for Butte County's General Plan 2030. It features a dark background with a circular seal on the left containing a landscape scene and the words "BUTTE COUNTY". To the right of the seal, the text "Butte County" is written in a large, white, serif font, and "General Plan 2030" is written below it in a smaller, white, serif font. The bottom of the banner shows a white, curved strip with a faint, grayscale image of a rural landscape including a barn and fields.

Butte County
General Plan 2030

TO: Honorable Chair and Planning Commission

FROM: Tim Snellings, Director, Development Services
Dan Breedon, AICP, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: May 30, 2008 Planning Commission Study Session –Additional Correspondence Received

DATE: May 30, 2008

Attached please find additional correspondence received regarding the Evaluation & Selection of the Preferred Land Use Alternative for your review.

Study Area #3: Bell Muir

Dear Citizen's Advisor Council for the Butte County Planning Commission,

I am writing regarding the Bell-Muir area under consideration in the new General Plan.

As you know Bell-Muir is on the other side of the Green Line from the city of Chico. However, it is a mixed rural area and the property owners have a lot of different goals and needs. Also, it is an area used by neighboring Chico city dwellers and they have an interest in the area's future as well. You probably also know that there is a fair amount of 'under the county radar' growth going on in this area as so many land owners have needs that are not met by the current zoning situation.

It is my purpose to suggest an idea for the future of the Bell-Muir area. As I understand it, there seem to be many concerns about this area. Some property owners want to sell their land and move away on the profits they get. Other property owners would like to stay and to maintain the rural feel of the area, to keep large animals like horses, to keep small agricultural interests like small orchards and farms, and/or to keep the esthetic of larger lots and lots of space. Neighbors, particularly neighbors within city limits and on the other side of the Green Line would like to have this nice rural/country area to walk kids and dogs, jog, bike and generally forget they live in a suburban style neighborhood. My immediate neighbor would probably like to keep his event venue (The Palms) and would probably not be able to do so if the area was developed with mixed use residential. And, if I understood the man from the city, the city wants Bell-Muir for overflow development, what he calls 'urban infill'.

I believe that the best option is to change the zoning so that the lots in Bell-Muir can be divided to not smaller than 1/2 or 1/3 acre and be zoned agriculture and rural/semi-rural residential. (I'm not actually sure what zoning designation you would use here.) The burden of installing sewer and widening roads could be paid for as sub-divided lots are sold and developed. The area should stay as part of the county. The city should concentrate their more dense developments around the outside of the area with the intention that residents are able to enjoy the nearby country area. I also think that there should be pedestrian/equestrian/bicycle throughways through the area and the CUSD property at Henshaw between Guynn and Alamo be developed, and expanded if possible, into a park.

I think this idea addresses several things.

- It delineates who pays for the needed infrastructure.
- It allows land owners especially owners who cannot make their land pay for itself or just want to sell and move, the opportunity to make a reasonable profit and either sub-divide and sell out or sub-divide and keep a lot for themselves without adversely affecting other stakeholders in the area.
- It allows the neighbors of Bell-Muir especially city neighbors, to enjoy its advantages without causing existing landowners more burden.
- It allows landowners who want to stay in the Bell-Muir area because of its esthetic and rural feel to do so without losing the attraction.

- It allows the Palms and other small, home/agriculture business to continue without disturbing the neighbors.
- It would allow those who still want to farm and any who want to move in and farm, to do so without their efforts bothering their neighbors. I'm referring to dust during harvest, spraying and other annoying farm necessities. It may also become a good spot for organic farmers, who work small plots, to remain close to the city and still have the space to do their work.
- It will provide a stable situation for new property buyers. They will buy into the area knowing that their land is what it is and that the areas around it will not change in a manner that undermines the reasons they choose to live here.
- As an added benefit, allowing smaller lots, zoned agriculture/rural residential, might stem the continued inappropriate use of ag building permits as a method for some land owners to profit from their land. This would give them legal ways to do so without ruining the area for others who enjoy it.
- And, while it will not allow the city to 'urban-infill' precisely, as the city does infill areas within their city limits, the Bell-Muir area offers a nearby area for those residents to relax, exercise and enjoy the agricultural aspects of the county without being bothered by agriculture and without impacting/wanting to move into the areas with larger farms.
- By keeping Bell-Muir in the county, while requiring any new development to connect with the sewer, small businesses in the area can continue, like the plant growers and the strawberry stands. Requiring new development to connect to the sewer should also keep ground water safer for everyone.

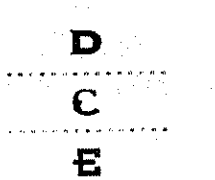
Bell-Muir is not only a unique area in the Chico urban area. It is also a buffer between the more urban part of that area and the large lot agricultural areas beyond its borders. I believe that alternative 2 is a particularly bad idea because it will make Bell-Muir like its neighbors' urban neighborhoods. Then the rural areas that border this new urban area will start to succumb to the haphazard and piecemeal development Bell-Muir has been going through for the last, I don't know how many years. If alternative 2 is chosen, it would start a cycle that I don't think we need to see and deal with every 20 or so years.

I don't know which alternative 1 or 3 is more like what I'm trying to describe here but, whichever one works, that's the one I'd like to see written into the general plan.

I am one of the landowners who want to stay in this area. However, I know some of my neighbors who want to move on or for whom farming has become a real pain because of the balancing act between doing what they need to do to have a viable crop and keeping the neighbors happy. I don't want my continued enjoyment of the area to be built on their backs so-to-speak. I also don't want the area to turn into another large planned urban area, just another annex to the city. So, I am offering this idea for your consideration. Thanks.

Beth Johnson
 Old Nord Ave
 Chico, CA

Study Area #6: Upper Stilson Canyon



1625 SHATTUCK AVENUE
SUITE 300
BERKELEY, CA 94709
TEL: 510 848 3815
FAX: 510 848 4315

MEMORANDUM

DATE May 30, 2008
TO Planning Commission
FROM DC&E
RE **Alternatives Evaluation Report Errata**

Since the Planning Commission packet was distributed on May 19, 2008, two errors in the Alternatives Evaluation Report related to Study Area 6 have been identified.

1. **Water Supply.** The Alternatives Evaluation Report erroneously stated that there are no water service providers operating within or near Study Area 6. The Buzztail Community Services District provides water service to approximately 70 parcels, relying on groundwater drawn from a single well. The District boundary encompasses a portion of Study Area 6. Because Alternatives 1 and 3 allow development that would be located near a water supplier, Alternatives 1 and 3 should receive a B. As correctly indicated in the Alternatives Evaluation Report, water supply is not an issue under Alternative 2 because there would be no new development.
2. **Flood Hazards.** The Alternatives Evaluation Report erroneously indicated that approximately 15 acres of land would be developed within the 100-year FEMA flood zone under Alternative 2, and assigned a score of C. There would be no new development under Alternative 2, and this alternative should have received an A.

Design Community & Environment - Attention: Tanya Sundberg
Butte County General Plan 2030 - Attention: Dan Breedon

16 May 2008

Regarding: Request for factual correction of Alternatives Evaluation for Study Area 6

Having reviewed the Study Area 6 chapter (Upper Stilson Canyon) of the Butte County General Plan Alternatives Evaluation, I find that there are a number of factual errors and inaccurate assumptions in the chapter that I hope can be amended through an Errata memo prior to the document being presented to the Butte County Planning Commission. Those items are as follows:

1. **Water Supply** – In the Evaluation there is a statement that there are no water service providers operating within or near the Study Area. This is incorrect. The Buzztail Community Service district, approximately 1000 acres in size, lies within the heart of the study area and provides domestic water, agricultural water for Doe Mill Vineyards and has an 80,000 gallon storage tank for fire protection. With additional capital, this system can be expanded to known sources of water elsewhere the project. This should change the grade for alternative 1 and 3.
2. **Market Viability, Alternative 3** – Apparently an acres/retail footage factor was employed by DC&E to convert the proposed 30 acres of commercial to nearly 400,000 sq. ft. of retail space **that the analysis concluded**. Our proposed 30 acres of retail consists of professional offices, a winery and convenience facilities set in a vineyard/rural setting with walkways and picnic areas. The 392,000 square feet of retail and office space that the Evaluation suggested has not, is not and will not ever be proposed or developed.
3. **Fiscal Impacts, Alternative 3** - The analysis missed the existence of the Buzztail Community Service District. This is Butte County's only CSD and all parcels within the district pay ADDITIONAL assessment taxes to the county on their tax statements (as well as property taxes). This 1000-acre district pays for ALL ROAD AND WATER FACILITIES maintenance throughout the CSD as well as for 3 miles of paved road and bridges through the rest of the project to Highway 32.
4. **Public Services, Fire** – The above mentioned CSD has, in its charter, the ability to increase assessment taxes and build a Fire or Sherriff station.

5. **Flood Hazards** -- DC&E suggests that the project has "approximately 15 acres" of designated flood zone along the lower portion of Little Chico Creek. It appears that most if not all of the 15 acres is not on the project site. If some of the FEMA flood plain is in the project development will avoid it, meriting a "B" grade by definition. Otherwise the boundary lines of the project will be redrawn to avoid the floodplain. This would qualify for an "A" grade.
6. **Loss of Agricultural Land** – Grazing is a use that occurs on only a portion of the Study Area and all of the Study area is not suitable for grazing. The forested areas and dense chaparral areas in the northern portion of the Study Area are not suitable for grazing at all. The areas that are used for grazing only support a marginal number of animal units, less than is required for property taxes for the portions of land used. The grade for alternatives 1 and 3 should be re-analyzed with this in mind.

Thanks you for your consideration of our request. Please feel free to call myself (530-534-1429 x130) or Howard Isom (530-891-6474) with any questions, comments or clarification.

Best regards,

Bruce Hall

Study Area #10: Skyway/Neal Road

Breedon, Dan

From: Mike Kruger [mkruger@onemain.com]

Sent: Monday, May 26, 2008 6:24 AM

To: Breedon, Dan

Subject: Tuscan Ridge

I feel the Tuscan Ridge Golf housing development will be a great asset to our county. The owners of the golf / development have shown in the past to have the betterment of the community in mind with there fair pricing and constant improvement of a facility that can be one of the finest in northern Calif. This could be another feather in Chico's hat. Thank you for your support.

Phillip Kruger
7490 Crosacountre Rd.
Oroville Ca 95966

Breedon, Dan

From: EJTalavera@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, May 08, 2008 9:49 PM
To: Breedon, Dan
Subject: Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors

I am writing this letter to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors of Butte County to ask that you agree with Tuscan Ridge Golf Course and allow them to go ahead with their plans to build housing on the golf course. Tuscan Ridge is a beautiful place and the improvements would make it even more so. From Skyway it is a beautiful green landscape and housing on the course would enhance the view. It is a place for the high schools in the area and Butte College to hold fund raisers and tournaments. I wholly support Tuscan Ridges housing plan to improve and beautify the course. I have been a member for some time now and have seen it improve tremendously. The new improvements would make it a first class course bringing golfers from many areas to play and possibly live. Thank you, from a very appreciative member.

Ernie Talavera

Wondering what's for Dinner Tonight? [Get new twists on family favorites at AOL Food.](#)

Study Area #13: South Paradise/Pentz
Road

Breedon, Dan

From: Ted Reece [TedReece@comcast net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 14, 2008 5:05 PM
To: Breedon, Dan
Subject: May 16 PC Meeting - Study Area 13

Attention Butte County Planning Commission:

It has come to my attention that the Planning Commission will be discussing a proposed development in Study Area 13 of the General plan 2030 at a meeting on May 16th and was told to direct comments to you for their consideration.

I have attended meetings where the developer presented plans and I am concerned that the plans are not consistent with either the current zoning or the land use designation currently proposed in the General Plan 2030. I am also concerned about the potential impacts of the proposed development to the neighboring areas.

Specifically:

- The area is currently zoned for minimum one acre to twenty acre lots, the developer is proposing lots of one quarter acre or less
- The General Plan Alternatives Evaluation Report gives the area a "D" grade for any development with respect to the issues of: Fire/Emergency Service, Waste Water, and Fire Hazard.
- The Citizens Advisory Board voted unanimously to designate the area as Resource Conservation
- I support the recommendation of the CAB

If development were allowed:

- The development should use Lindenbaum Lane for access to Pentz Road. It should not use Lago Vista Way.
- Existing dangerous traffic safety concerns at the intersections with Pentz Road would need to be adequately addressed
- Lot sizes of less than one acre should not be allowed so that the rural nature of the area is preserved
- The number of lots should also be limited to maintain the rural nature of the area
- Much of the area should be maintained as a Resource Conservation area
- Water supply concerns should be addressed to assure adequate supplies for existing as well as new homes during low water conditions

Please keep me posted on developments in this study area or let me know where I can find information on your web site. I was unable to find the agenda for the May 16 PC meeting.

Ted Reece

Study Area #23: Eastern
Oroville/Oroville Foothills

MAY 28 2008

28 May 2008

Butte County Planning Commission
7 County Center Drive
Oroville, CA 95965

DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES

Regarding: Butte County General Plan Study Area 23—Designation of Agricultural Lands

Several letters and public presentations have previously emphasized the fact that there are valuable agricultural lands in Area 23, making the key points that:

- Long established groves, orchards, vineyards, and gardens thrive in the unique climate.
- Local food production is very important and will become even more so over time.
- Agriculture at small scale here is very viable, as has been demonstrated in ongoing practice.
- Foothill agriculture is economically important and is supporting rapidly rising agri-tourism activity.

The more immediate point here is how the agricultural lands should be treated (a question raised at the May 9th meeting by Planning Commissioner Nelson).

The land-use designation most appropriate for the Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and much of the Grazing Land is "agricultural". Agricultural designation will best protect and enhance the agricultural potential of those areas, with the benefits being:

- Retaining minimum parcel sizes conducive to agricultural production
- Recognized agricultural status will strengthen the position of such landholders in retaining the supply of irrigation water from the agencies providing water.
- Those buying such lands will be more likely to understand, accept, support and continue the agricultural productivity of those areas.

Very viable commercial agricultural operations currently take place on parcels of a few acres to a dozen or so acres. The overlying zoning should set minimum parcel sizes of a few acres to preserve the viability of those small-scale farming operations—a proven viable minimum parcel size is 3 acres.

The areas adjoining the agricultural lands should be compatible with that use, and provide a transition to the more densely populated residential areas. An appropriate land use in those immediately adjacent lands could be "rural residential".

We respectfully request the Planning Commission to recommend and apply these land uses in Area 23. And we ask that whatever form the final land-use and accompanying zoning take, that it meets the goals outlined above and ensures that these valuable agricultural lands are "protected, maintained, promoted and enhanced" as called for by Guideline #8 of the General Plan.

Sincerely,



Jim and Katie Bishop, 1144 Mount Ida Road, Oroville, CA 95966