

Meeting Summary
June 16, 2008 Field Trip
Study Area #23: Eastern Oroville/Oroville Foothills

On June 16, 2008 several members of the Butte County General Plan team including Tim Snellings, Chuck Thistlethwaite, and Dan Breedon took a field trip with local landowner Jim Bishop and several others, including Butte County Planning Commissioner Harrel Wilson. This field trip provided an opportunity to view the various specialty agricultural operations that are unique to Butte County General Plan 2030 Study Area #23 (Eastern Oroville/Oroville Foothills).

During their Special Study Session held on June 13, 2008, the Butte County Planning Commission voted to support the Citizens Advisory Committee's recommendations for this Study Area (that recognized Oroville's Preferred General Plan) with the addition of various agricultural uses being protected from frost in the 'Banana Belt' (at approximately 500-1,300 foot elevation) where citrus crops such as mandarins and oranges thrive, along with other specialty agricultural crops. The Planning Commission directed that staff develop appropriate General Plan designations in this agricultural area for implementation through the General Plan 2030 process.

The field trip took the group through the Mt. Ida Road, Naranja Avenue and Circle Drive areas, visiting four unique farm operations along the way, including Harvest Hill, Tri-L Mandarins, Robert Friedman's small orchard of historic and productive "Diller" oranges, and Grey Fox Vineyards. The tour also passed by the Lodestar Farms olive orchards. The group learned how these small operations sustain themselves and their community with family employees and specialty marketing to not only local buyers but sales to places as far as New York City through the use of the Internet.

As the Butte County General Plan 2030 process continues, Development Services staff will develop appropriate land use classifications for these agricultural areas in coordination with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.