

## Supervisors vote to tweak General Plan draft

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OROVILLE — Butte County is two days' worth of hearings closer to having a new General Plan.

Thursday was the second all-day hearing on the elements of the Butte County General Plan 2030.

The Board of Supervisors and the Butte County Planning Commission met in joint sessions Tuesday and Thursday in an extended review of the draft plan.

In the process the supervisors asked the county staff and the representatives of the consulting firm Design Community and Environment of Berkeley, to adjust, remove and change language in various of the General Plan's "elements."

All of the votes and decisions taken over the two days were technically referred to as "straw votes" because the supervisors couldn't officially approve the document until other parts of the process are completed.

A final draft of the plan will be returned to the supervisors later this year. The General Plan 2030 will also have to be subject of an environmental review and part of the language additions made this week are to help smooth the EIR process.

Some of the decisions made, while tentative, were meant to chart a clear course for the county's future.

During a period when the public was allowed to

present ideas and requests to the board, Michael Evans of Oroville, a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee that has been working on the General Plan project for nearly four years, asked the supervisors to take an aggressive lead in improving local economic development.

He urged the board to adopt an item in the plan's Economic Development Element that would pledge the county to conduct an inventory of all available commercial and manufacturing properties in the county jurisdiction.

Then he wanted the county to go through that inventory and evaluate the properties to certify which ones would be "shovel-ready" for immediate use.

He said having certified properties would mean the potential "job creators" would not have to waste time looking at parcels that aren't ready to move into.

The supervisors tentatively adopted the proposal.

An item that didn't win approval involved the proposed addition of language to the plan element covering water.

The county consultant had recommended the plan include a paragraph lifted from the preamble of a recently passed state water legislation. In essence, it said the county recognizes the need to identify additional water resources because of the growing demand for water in California.

Chico Supervisor Jane Dolan said she was uncomfortable with the verbiage because it might give someone in Southern California the idea that Butte County was willing to let them come and take "our" water.

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Supervisor Bill Connelly of Oroville, who chairs the board, observed the growing need for water is in Southern California, while the source of water is here.

Just prior to this discussion Chico developer Mo West had urged the board to look into proposals to treat sewage and bring it to a level of purity where it can be used for drinking water.

With that as a background, and on the question of water going south, Connelly said, "I'm willing to put our sewer water into tankers and send it down."

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