

## 4.1 | POPULATION AND HOUSING

This chapter discusses population and housing in Butte County and evaluates the potential impacts associated with General Plan 2030 and the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) override. The following evaluation is based on both a quantitative and spatial analysis, and assesses population growth and the displacement of housing and people that would necessitate the construction of housing elsewhere.

### *A. Regulatory Setting*

This section summarizes key State and County regulations and policies pertaining to population and housing in Butte County.

#### **1. Regional Housing Needs Allocation**

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) identifies the supply of housing necessary to meet the existing and projected growth in population and households in the State, and passes a portion along to each of the State's 38 Councils of Governments (COG). As the local COG, the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) receives a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) that specifies the number of units, by affordability level, that the County and other jurisdictions within the planning area must plan to accommodate during its Housing Element planning period.

Butte County's fair share of housing has been decreasing over time as growth has shifted toward incorporated cities. The RHNA requirements for the unincorporated area of the county for the 2007 to 2014 planning period, including both initial distribution and replacement housing needs for the dilapidated housing stock, is 3,402 units.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Butte County Association of Governments, Butte County Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP), January 1, 2007 through June 30, 2014. December 2007.

## 2. Butte County Housing Element

The most recent Butte County Housing Element was adopted on August 25, 2009 and is intended to satisfy the State's housing requirements. The Housing Element consists of a Housing Needs Assessment, which identifies current and projected housing needs, and a supporting Policy Document, which sets forth goals, policies, and implementation programs that meet the needs of all income segments of the community and of future residents, including the following:

- ◆ Programs that would create affordable housing units.
- ◆ Policy changes intended to facilitate the construction of affordable housing.
- ◆ Designation of sites as potential locations for the construction of new affordable housing units.
- ◆ Policies and programs to encourage and support the production, preservation and rehabilitation of housing affordable to all economic segments of the community, including populations with special needs such as the homeless, elderly, large families, disabled persons, and farmworkers.

Although the Housing Element is a required element of the County's General Plan, this EIR does not cover the Housing Element that was adopted on August 25, 2009 as part of General Plan 2030. The CEQA review of the Final Housing Element was covered in an Initial Study and Negative Declaration published on June 23, 2009 and available for public comment until July 22, 2009. However, as noted in Chapter 3, Project Description, the County has proposed revisions to the Housing Element in order to bring it into conformance with General Plan 2030 and the requirements of State law. This revised Housing Element is based on the proposed land use map that is included in General Plan 2030 and evaluated by this EIR.

## *B. Existing Conditions*

This section discusses the existing conditions pertaining to population and housing within Butte County.

### **1. Population**

According to California Department of Finance (DOF) data, the population of Butte County, including the incorporated municipalities, was approximately 220,700 people in January 2009.<sup>2</sup> The 2009 population reflects an 8.3 percent increase over 2000 State population estimates. The majority of these residents, approximately 136,800 people, live in the incorporated municipalities. The balance of these residents, approximately 83,900 people, lives in the county's unincorporated areas.<sup>3</sup> Table 4.11-1 depicts population and household trends from 1990, 2000, and 2009. Although the total county population has been increasing, the population of the unincorporated portion of Butte County has generally been declining since 1990 due to annexation.

According to BCAG's population projections, unincorporated Butte County will add 30,800 new residents by 2030, reaching a total population of 114,700 residents,<sup>4</sup> which represents a 37 percent increase from the 2009 population. The state as a whole is also expected to grow by 37 percent during the same time period.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, May 2009, E-5 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001 to 2009, with 2000 Benchmark. Sacramento, California.

<sup>3</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, May 2009, E-5 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001 to 2009, with 2000 Benchmark. Sacramento, California.

<sup>4</sup> BCAG, 2006, *BCAG Regional Growth Projections 2006-2030*, available at [http://www.bcag.org/documents/demographics/pop\\_emp\\_projections/Final\\_Regional\\_Growth\\_Projections.pdf](http://www.bcag.org/documents/demographics/pop_emp_projections/Final_Regional_Growth_Projections.pdf), accessed September 15, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census, Interim Projections 2000-2030 based on Census 2000, Table 1: Ranking of Census 2000 and Projected 2030 State Population and Change. <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/projectionsagesex.html>, accessed September 11, 2008.

TABLE 4.11-1 **POPULATION TRENDS IN BUTTE COUNTY**

	1990	2000	2009	% Change 1990-2009
Total Butte County Population	182,120	203,171	220,748	8.7%
Unincorporated Butte County Population	98,461	96,042	83,915	-14.8%
Total Butte County Average Household Size	2.38	2.40	2.33	-2.1%
Unincorporated Butte County Average Household Size	2.56	2.56	2.47	-3.5%

Source: California Department of Finance, 1990, 2000, and 2009 Estimates.

## 2. Housing

According to DOF data, there are approximately 37,000 dwelling units in unincorporated Butte County in 2009, with an overall 9 percent vacancy rate. This represents almost a 10 percent reduction from the number of housing units in 2000, which results from annexation of these units into incorporated jurisdictions, and a slight increase in the vacancy rate in 2000. Of these dwelling units, the majority are detached single-family homes, followed by mobile homes. Table 4.11-2 depicts the housing trends in Butte County between 2000 and 2009.

There are approximately 2.47 persons per household (PPH) in unincorporated Butte County in 2009, which is somewhat higher than that for the whole county, which is 2.33 PPH, as shown in Table 4.11-1. The PPH in unincorporated Butte County remained constant in 1990 and 2000, but has decreased by 3.5 percent in 2009.

TABLE 4.11-2 **HOUSING TRENDS IN UNINCORPORATED BUTTE COUNTY**

	2000	2009	% Change 2000 to 2009
Housing Units	40,758	37,041	-9.20%
Vacancy Rates	8.74%	9.0%	2.97%

Source: California Department of Finance, 1990, 2000, and 2009 estimates.

According to BCAG’s growth projections, there will be an additional 12,700 housing units, for a total of 49,700 dwelling units, in 2030, representing a 34 percent increase.<sup>6</sup>

*C. Standards of Significance*

General Plan 2030 and the ALUCP override would have a significant population or housing impact if they would:

- ◆ Induce substantial unexpected population growth or growth for which inadequate planning has occurred, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).
- ◆ Displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- ◆ Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

---

<sup>6</sup> BCAG, 2006, *BCAG Regional Growth Projections 2006-2030*, available at [http://www.bcag.org/documents/demographics/pop\\_emp\\_projections/Final\\_Regional\\_Growth\\_Projections.pdf](http://www.bcag.org/documents/demographics/pop_emp_projections/Final_Regional_Growth_Projections.pdf), accessed September 15, 2009.

#### *D. Impact Discussion*

The following discussion provides an analysis of potential project and cumulative population and housing impacts that could occur as a result of the projected 2030 buildout of General Plan 2030. Implementation of the ALUCP override would have no population or housing impact in Butte County, and is not discussed further in this section.

##### **1. Project Impacts**

- a. Induce substantial unexpected population growth or growth for which inadequate planning has occurred, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).

The assessment of population growth in this section is based on a quantitative analysis of impacts resulting from the projected 2030 buildout of General Plan 2030. General Plan 2030 is projected to result in the development of approximately 13,700 residential units within unincorporated Butte County by 2030. Additionally, General Plan 2030 is projected to result in the development of approximately 1.1 million square feet of industrial space and approximately 1.8 million square feet of commercial space. The increase of 13,700 residential units would translate to an increase of approximately 33,800 new residents, assuming the average household size of 2.47 residents.<sup>7</sup> The majority of the new residential units are projected to develop within the Spheres of Influence (SOIs) of the incorporated municipalities and in existing unincorporated communities.

The population growth anticipated through implementation of General Plan 2030 would be similar to that anticipated by BCAG in its population projections for unincorporated Butte County. Implementation of the projected

---

<sup>7</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, May 2009, E-5 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001 to 2009, with 2000 Benchmark. Sacramento, California. The increase of 33,800 residents was determined by multiplying 2.47 PPH to the projected 2030 buildout of General Plan 2030 of 13,700 new dwelling units.

buildout of General Plan 2030 would add approximately 33,800 new residents, which is about 2,800 residents more than anticipated by BCAG in its population projections, or about a 9 percent increase.

General Plan 2030 includes several policies that will ensure responsible development within Butte County. Land Use Element Goal LU-2 and its associated policies call for orderly, well-planned, and balanced growth. Policies LU-P2.3 and LU-P2.4 support planning efforts in unincorporated communities through the development of community visions, area plans, urban growth boundaries, community boundaries, and SOIs. In addition, Policy LU-P15.2 requires that new urban development be primarily located in or immediately adjoining already urbanized areas.

Goal LU-8 promotes development near existing infrastructure and services and within already-developed areas. Policy LU-P8.1 directs industry to be located near major transportation facilities. Policy LU-P8.2 requires that the County direct projected growth to areas where the appropriate level of transportation infrastructure is or will be available during the planning period. In addition, Policies LU-P15.3, LU-P8.3, LU-P8.4, and LU-P8.5 promote efficient infill development near public facilities.

Because the population growth under General Plan 2030 would be similar to the level of growth anticipated by BCAG, and because General Plan 2030 includes policies that ensure that population growth is accommodated through responsible development, the proposed project would have a *less-than-significant* population growth impact.

- b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The assessment of housing displacement in this section is based on a spatial analysis of impacts resulting from implementation of General Plan 2030. General Plan 2030 would not result in the displacement of substantial amounts of housing. Overall, General Plan 2030 would allow an increase in the total number of housing units in unincorporated Butte County from

37,000 to 50,600 units, a 37 percent increase. No substantial redevelopment projects are envisioned, and the majority of development proposed by General Plan 2030 would occur as residential and non-residential uses are developed on vacant or underutilized parcels. If redevelopment under General Plan 2030 occurs, there is the potential that it would displace existing residential units. However, all redevelopment of parcels would be voluntary in nature, and no housing units would be displaced without permission of the property owners.

In addition, General Plan 2030 includes policies and actions that reduce impacts of development on existing housing units. Land Use Element Policy LU-P4.1 requires that the integrity and stability of existing residential neighborhoods be promoted and preserved.

Furthermore, the County's existing Housing Element includes additional goals and policies that would help to prevent impacts related to the displacement of housing. Goal H-3 of the 2009 Housing Element and its associated policies and actions aim to preserve and rehabilitate the existing supply of housing. Policies H-P3.2 and H-P3.4 and Action H-A3.2 address funding to rehabilitate existing housing. Policy H-P3.1 and Action H-A3.1 address code enforcement needs in order to maintain housing in adequate condition. These existing policies and actions will help to maintain the existing housing stock.

Because General Plan 2030 would allow a net increase of housing and would not envision substantial redevelopment projects, because General Plan 2030 includes policies and actions that preserve existing neighborhoods, and because housing is protected and preserved under the adopted 2009 Housing Element, the proposed project would have a *less-than-significant* impact related to housing displacement.

- c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The assessment of the displacement of people in this section is based on a spatial analysis of impacts resulting from implementation of General Plan 2030. As discussed in Section D.1.b, implementation of General Plan 2030 is not expected to result in the displacement of a substantial number of housing units. General Plan 2030 would allow an increase in the total number of housing units in unincorporated Butte County from 37,000 to 50,600 units, a 37 percent increase. Furthermore, implementation of General Plan 2030 is projected to result in a net increase of 1.8 million square feet of commercial use and 1.1 million square feet of industrial use, which may serve as places of employment within Butte County.

As a result, General Plan 2030 is not expected to displace substantial numbers of people who either live, work or do both within Butte County. Therefore, the proposed project would have a *less-than-significant* impact regarding the displacement of people.

## 2. Cumulative Impacts

As discussed in Section D.1, General Plan 2030 includes policies and actions to ensure responsible development in Butte County. General Plan 2030 would not cause substantial unexpected population growth and would improve jobs and housing opportunities in the county. Growth would also occur outside of unincorporated Butte County in other nearby cities and counties. These jurisdictions are required by State law to use the General Plan process, as well as other planning processes, such as utility master plans, to plan for and control future growth. As a result, General Plan 2030 would have a *less-than-significant* cumulative impact related to population and housing.

### *E. Maximum Theoretical Buildout*

The maximum theoretical buildout allowed under General Plan 2030 would include significantly more development than the projected 2030 buildout ana-

lyzed in Section D in terms of both the amount and the extent of development. Therefore, the potential for impacts to population and housing would increase. In particular, maximum theoretical buildout would result in substantial population growth. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, it is extremely unlikely that maximum theoretical buildout would ever occur under General Plan 2030. Therefore, an analysis of maximum theoretical buildout is not required by CEQA.

*F. Impacts and Mitigation Measures*

Since there are no significant impacts related to population and housing as a result of General Plan 2030, no mitigation measures are required.