

5 HOUSING ELEMENT



Housing in Butte County. Photo courtesy of the Butte County Department of Development Services.

This Policy Document presents the goals, policies and actions that will guide Butte County’s efforts in housing production, rehabilitation, and preservation over the forthcoming five-year Housing Element planning period. This document represents the second of the two documents that comprise the Butte County Housing Element. In addition to this Policy Document, the Housing Needs Assessment first reviews the County’s progress towards implementing the 2004 Housing Element, and then analyzes the current and projected housing needs of the residents of the unincorporated area of Butte County. This Policy Document responds to the findings of the Housing Needs Assessment, by providing an updated set of policies and actions that are

designed to help the County achieve its stated Housing Element goals, as follows:

The goals of the Butte County Housing Element Update include the following:

- ◆ Goal 1: Provide for the County's regional share of new housing for all income groups and future residents as identified in the Housing Needs Assessment.
- ◆ Goal 2: Encourage the provision of affordable housing in the unincorporated area.
- ◆ Goal 3: Partner with property owners to preserve and rehabilitate the existing supply of housing.
- ◆ Goal 4: Collaborate with existing service providers to meet the special housing needs of homeless persons, elderly, large families, disabled persons, and farmworkers.
- ◆ Goal 5: Ensure equal housing opportunity.
- ◆ Goal 6: Promote energy conservation.

A. Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Actions

Goal H-1 Provide for the County's regional share of new housing for all income groups and future residents as identified in the Housing Needs Assessment.

Policies

- H-P1.1 Evaluate the impact on the County's regional share of housing when considering General Plan Amendments.
- H-P1.2 Focus development in the unincorporated areas of the spheres of influence of the cities to accommodate the County's housing allocation.

- H-P1.3 Work to transfer portions of the County’s Regional Housing Needs Allocations to cities in conjunction with annexations and when cities are more able to provide urban services needed by housing.
- H-P1.4 Promote infill development on appropriate sites in existing neighborhoods and re-use underutilized parcels throughout the unincorporated area.
- H-P1.5 Ensure that local land use policies updated as part of Butte County General Plan 2030, and any corresponding changes in zoning, are consistent with accommodating the County's regional share of housing for all income groups.

Actions

- H-A1.1 Provide Adequate Sites for Housing by Expanding Infrastructure: The County shall work with the incorporated cities to expand the supply of developable land, particularly for multi-family housing projects within each City’s sphere of influence.
- a. When requested by an eligible project applicant in order to provide adequate sites for affordable and/or high-density housing, apply for available State and federal funding for water, sewer, and storm drainage improvements.
 - b. Seek financial assistance of developers in preparing community plans or specific plans which can address public service and facilities for new developments.
 - c. Work with the Cities of Chico and Oroville on appropriate financing arrangements to charge reasonable fees on new development to pay for the expansion of water and sewer services within their spheres of influence.

- d. Provide technical assistance to developers interested in establishing the appropriate mechanism to finance needed infrastructure and services where these are financially feasible, at full cost to the developer; and
- e. Identify appropriate areas for high-density housing within existing undeveloped, residentially-focused specific plans, and future specific plans identified under the Butte County General Plan 2030 process which have not yet been approved.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator's Office, Development Services, and Public Works Departments

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Ongoing (County will monitor the availability of funding bi-annually, with a goal to apply for funding at least twice in the planning period)

- H-A1.2 Parking Requirements: The County shall review its parking requirements for multi-family housing and reduce the number of required spaces in order to reduce costs for multi-family housing development. At a minimum, the County will modify the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the parking requirements for studio and one-bedroom units.

Responsibility: Development Services Department

Funding: No additional staff time would be required

Timeframe: With adoption of Zoning Ordinance Update in March 2011

- H-A1.3 Development of Sites for Multi-Family Housing: The County shall provide developers with information about suitable sites for small-scale multi-family projects located in unincorporated communities that are closest to employment and services. The information will be disseminated by the Butte County

Development Services Department when developers inquire about opportunities to build housing in the unincorporated area. In addition, the County shall offer density bonuses, assist interested developers in acquiring surplus government land suitable for multi-family development, and expedite permit processing, for housing units affordable to lower-income households. The level of project assistance shall be commensurate with the amount of affordable housing provided as well as the level of affordability. The County shall meet with interested developers on a case-by-case basis to discuss project possibilities, with priority given to developers of projects that would include units affordable to extremely low-income households and/or provide affordable studio and/or one-bedroom units.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Ongoing

- H-A1.4 Take All Steps Necessary to Effectuate the Transfer of a Portion of the County's Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) in Conjunction with Annexations: If cities will annex residential sites that would accommodate a portion of the County's current RHNA, the County will work with the affected cities, LAFCo, and BCAG, to transfer an appropriate portion of the County's RHNA to the City.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: In conjunction with annexation proceedings

- H-A1.5 Negotiate Transfer of a Portion of the County's Next Regional Housing Need Allocation: During the next regional housing needs determination process, the County shall

continue to reach agreements with the incorporated areas that can provide urban services. These agreements are intended to transfer to the cities a portion of the County's share of the region's housing needs in unincorporated areas within existing spheres of influence. In this way, the numbers of housing units assigned to Butte County will be reduced, with the difference being accommodated within the cities.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Next regional housing needs determination process

- H-A1.6 Zoning for Single-Room Occupancy Units: The County will amend the zoning regulations to clarify that Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) units are allowed in zoning districts where multi-family housing units are allowed, and to provide appropriate development standards for SROs.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Administrative Overhead

Timeframe: With adoption of Zoning Ordinance Update in March 2011

- H-A1.7 Zoning for Transitional and Supportive Housing Units: The County will amend the Zoning Ordinance to clarify that transitional and supportive housing units are considered a residential use and are subject to the same restrictions as other residential dwellings of the same type in the same zoning district.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Administrative Overhead

Timeframe: With adoption of Zoning Ordinance Update in March 2011

H-A1.8 General Plan Land Use Designations and Zoning for Lower-Income Housing Development: Given that many sites identified to accommodate the County's RHNA for construction of units affordable to lower-income households currently lack appropriate zoning to support high density multi-family development, the County, in conjunction with the 2030 General Plan update, will update General Plan land use designations and amend the Zoning Ordinance as necessary to assign sites numbered 1 through 7 on Table 36 of the Housing Needs Assessment, with a minimum of 72.94 acres and a realistic unit capacity of 1,170 units, zoning designations that will allow high density multi-family residential development by right. At a minimum, these updates will ensure the provision of adequate sites zoned to allow multi-family residential development by right, without a conditional use permit or other discretionary action or approval, allowing densities at a minimum of 20 dwelling units per acre, and permitting a minimum of 16 units per site (except sites 6 and 7), and ensuring that at least 50 percent of the lower-income need is accommodated on sites designated for residential use only. In addition, Program H-A1.9 below will facilitate the subdivision of large parcels included in the inventory into smaller parcels that could be more easily developed for affordable housing. As part of this action, the County will also work with the owner/developer of Parcel #4 in Table 36 of the Housing Needs Assessment (APN #007-010-058) to prioritize the site, which is within the North Chico Specific Plan Area, for infrastructure development to make the site available for multi-family housing as soon as possible within the Housing Element planning period.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Administrative Overhead

Timeframe: General Plan designations to be adopted with General Plan Update in October 2010; conforming zoning amendments by March 2011.

- H-A1.9 Lot Subdivision: The County recognizes that most assisted housing developments utilizing State and federal financial resources include 50 to 150 units. The County will provide technical assistance and incentives to subdivide parcels in the housing sites inventory larger than 15 acres, including sites 2, 4, and 5 in the inventory on Table 36. The County will offer expedited review for the subdivision of larger sites into buildable lots as long as the development is consistent with County land use and environmental regulations, and priority processing for subdivision maps including affordable housing.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: 2010 and ongoing

Goal H-2	Encourage the provision of affordable housing in the unincorporated area.
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Policies

- H-P2.1 Support the development of affordable housing in locations with adequate services and transportation accessibility.
- H-P2.2 Work with other public agencies, developers, the incorporated municipalities, and non-profit housing corporations to make use of State and federal programs for lower- and moderate-income housing, with priority for projects that will include units affordable to extremely low-income households and/or provide affordable studio or one-bedroom units.

- H-P2.3 Consistent with State law, provide density bonuses to homebuilders proposing to include a minimum specified percentage of lower- and moderate-income dwelling units within residential developments.
- H-P2.4 Ensure that developers and county residents are made aware of key housing programs and development opportunities, and offer County assistance as deemed appropriate for affordable housing projects.
- H-P2.5 Work with employers and housing partners to encourage the production of housing units on either employer-owned sites or other areas adjacent to their job sites.
- H-P2.6 Allow secondary dwellings in addition to a primary residence on a parcel to provide additional housing opportunities.
- H-P2.7 Provide technical assistance to agencies and organizations that are involved in the development and construction of housing and/or provide support services.
- H-P2.8 Encourage self-help housing as an appropriate means of providing affordable ownership housing.

Actions

- H-A2.1 Explore Possibilities of Affordable Housing Goals for Large-Scale Residential Developments: Large-scale developments can include a range of residential categories and therefore have the potential to include affordable housing. Although the County cannot initiate development proposals for large-scale development, through the development agreement process, the County can seek commitments from developers that a percentage of dwelling units be affordable to lower-income households.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Ongoing

- H-A2.2 Pursue Funding Under State and Federal Programs: There are a number of State and federal programs that provide low-cost financing or subsidies for the production of low- and moderate-income housing. Butte County will annually pursue funding under those State and federal programs that require its direct participation, such as CDBG and HOME.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator's Office

Funding: Expansion of services provided by existing staff. Requires increase in budget.

Timeframe: Ongoing; apply for funding annually

- H-A2.3 Identify Surplus Government Land for Affordable Housing: The General Services Department shall provide records on surplus County-owned property to the Department of Development Services. From these records, the Department of Development Services will select suitable housing sites and advertise their availability for low-income housing via a developer RFP process, with preference given for developers who commit to provide units affordable to extremely low-income households and/or that address identified special needs, such as young adults transitioning from foster care to living independently.

Responsibility: General Services Department and Department of Development Services will select sites and issue a developer RFP

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Receive list of sites from the General Services Department and issue an RFP in 2010.

H-A2.4 **Work with Cities:** Thus far, all subsidized housing projects, with the exception of the Gridley Farm Labor Housing and the Palm Crest Village Subdivision, which is currently under construction, have been built in the incorporated areas of the County where there is easy access to sewer lines as well as services. County staff will work with Chico and Oroville housing staff to increase the supply of affordable housing in the incorporated cities and their spheres of influence since infrastructure and services are limited in the unincorporated area. The cities and County will consider applying for some State or federal funds together. By working with these cities and the Housing Authority of Butte County, the County will be able to expand its affordable housing activities, for example, by developing a joint down payment assistance program.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator's Office, Department of Development Services

Funding: Depending on the scope of the project, may require additional budget and staff resources

Timeframe: Butte County will set up a meeting to discuss this program with the Cities of Oroville and Chico in the last quarter of 2010

H-A2.5 **Affordable Housing in the Greater Chico Redevelopment Project Area:** Since the Greater Chico Redevelopment Project Area includes both unincorporated areas and areas within the city limits of Chico, the County shall work with the City to use housing set-aside funds to complete the housing goals for the Project Area as outlined in the Five-Year Implementation Plan for the time period 2009-2010 through 2013-2014. To achieve this goal, the County will set a meeting with the Chico Redevelopment Agency in 2011 and outline a strategy

for how the County can assist with housing development in the Greater Chico Redevelopment Project Area.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator's Office

Funding: Administrative Overhead

Timeframe: September 2011

H-A2.6 Affordable Housing Program: The County shall investigate the feasibility of using incentives and partnerships as a means of providing affordable housing units.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator's Office

Funding: Depending on the scope of the project, may require additional staff resources

Timeframe: 2011

H-A2.7 Delivery of Housing Element to Water and Sewer Providers: The County shall deliver the completed Housing Element to all area Water and Sewer Providers within one month of adoption in accordance with Government Code Section 65589.7. The Code requires the providers to give priority to proposed housing projects that will include units affordable to lower income households when capacity is limited.¹

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: October 2010

¹ Senate Bill 1087, Effective 1087, Effective January 1, 2006. "Water and Sewer Service Priority for Affordable Housing to Low Income Households" http://www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/memo_sb1087.pdf. Accessed on May 2, 2008.

Goal H-3 Partner with property owners to preserve and rehabilitate the existing supply of housing.

Policies

- H-P3.1 Inspect residential buildings and identify code violations.
- H-P3.2 Continue to apply, when feasible, for State and federal assistance for housing rehabilitation for low-income households. Require that rental housing that is repaired with government assistance remain affordable to low-income households for a specified period of time.
- H-P3.3 Require the abatement or demolition of substandard housing that is not economically feasible to repair.
- H-P3.4 Seek the private rehabilitation of substandard dwelling units (as identified through code enforcement) and provide financial assistance, when available, to owners of dwelling units occupied by low-income households. In applying this policy, the County shall seek to avoid the displacement of low-income households.

Actions

- H-A3.1 Code Enforcement and Abatement: Continue to enforce the Nuisance Abatement Ordinance that authorizes the County to initiate appropriate action against owners of properties with public nuisances. A component of this Ordinance calls for the case-by-case removal of dilapidated dwellings. Another component of this Ordinance requires the property owners to pay for the costs of abatement.

Responsibility: Development Services Department

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Ongoing

H-A3.2 Rehabilitation of Substandard Dwelling Units: The County already uses its CDBG funds for rehabilitation of owner- and renter-occupied housing units. However, there are still several hundred dwelling units in need of rehabilitation, with around 750 units in need of repair or replacement in the Census block groups identified in the 2008 Housing Survey completed as part of the Housing Element Update needs assessment. Therefore, the County should seek additional funding for rehabilitation.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator's Office

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Ongoing

Quantified Objective

H-O3.1 To encourage rehabilitation, the County will utilize its CDBG funds fully and apply for additional public funds, such as HOME, that can be used for housing rehabilitation, and will use these funds to rehabilitate five units annually.

Goal H-4 Collaborate with existing service providers to meet the special housing needs of homeless persons, elderly, large families, disabled persons, and farmworkers.

Policies

H-P4.1 Provide referrals for housing and services to homeless persons.

H-P4.2 Partner with service providers to accommodate the needs of the homeless population in the Unincorporated Area.

H-P4.3 Encourage transitional housing as a bridge between homeless facilities and independent living.

- H-P4.4 Continue to facilitate efforts of individuals, private organizations, and public agencies to provide safe and adequate housing for farmworkers.
- H-P4.5 Support appropriate amounts of farmworker and farm family housing in agriculturally zoned areas where it promotes efficiency in the farming operation and has a minimal impact on productive farmland.
- H-P4.6 Promote increased housing opportunities for the elderly, large families, young adults exiting the foster care system, and disabled persons.
- H-P4.7 Encourage alternative living arrangements for seniors, including market rate retirement communities and affordable rental housing.
- H-P4.8 Encourage developers of rental units to build units for large families, and studio and one-bedroom units to facilitate independent living for persons with mental illness.
- H-P4.9 Provide reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities to ensure equal access to housing.

Actions

- H-A4.1 **County Housing Coordination:** The County shall encourage staff in various County departments and outside agencies and organizations to coordinate housing activities. Coordination will be encouraged among the Department of Behavioral Health, the Community Action Agency of Butte County, and the Housing Authority of Butte County, among others, to operate Butte County's housing programs. The County Administrative Office will be charged with making affordable housing a more visible and important issue within the

County, improving housing program coordination for special needs groups.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator's Office

Funding: Expansion of services provided by staff. Requires increase in budget.

Timeframe: Ongoing

- H-A4.2 Funding Program for Accessibility Improvements: The County shall consider funding a program to make accessibility improvements to rental units to be occupied by persons with disabilities. The County could use a portion of the CDBG Program Income or apply for additional CDBG funds.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator's Office

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: 2010

- H-A4.3 Reasonable Accommodation: The County shall adopt a Reasonable Accommodations Ordinance with rules, policies, practices, and procedures that ensure equal access to housing, in accordance with State law.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: No additional funding needed

Timeframe: With adoption of Zoning Ordinance Update in March 2011

- H-A4.4 Homeless Task Force: The County shall work with the Homeless Task Force to address the needs of the homeless in Butte County and collaborate in providing financial resources to local agencies serving homeless persons.

Responsibility: Department of Behavioral Health

Funding: Administrative Overhead; annual funding for the Homeless Task Force's Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP)

Timeframe: Continue annual funding for the Homeless Task Force

- H-A4.5 Need for Homeless Services: In order to plan for homeless services, Butte County shall continue to participate in the annual Butte County Continuum of Care Point in Time Homeless County Report.

Responsibility: Department of Behavioral Health

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Annually

- H-A4.6 Emergency Shelters: The County shall amend the Butte County Zoning Ordinance to allow homeless shelters as a permitted use in the Light Industrial zoning district, to provide sites where the unmet demand for shelters within the unincorporated area can be accommodated without the need for discretionary approvals. The County will establish development standards that will encourage and facilitate the use and only subject shelters to the same development and management standards that apply to other allowed uses within the identified zone.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Administrative Overhead

Timeframe: With adoption of Zoning Ordinance Update in March 2011

- H-A4.7 Farmworker Housing: The County shall amend the Butte County Zoning Ordinance to allow agricultural employee housing for six persons or less as a permitted use in all zones

that allow single-family housing by-right. Clarifying language will also be added to the Butte County Zoning Ordinance to specify that the agricultural zones allow housing by-right for up to 12 farmworker families or group quarters with up to 36 beds in compliance with *Health and Safety Code section 17021.5*.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Administrative Overhead

Timeframe: With adoption of Zoning Ordinance Update in March 2011

- H-A4.8 Additional Farmworker Housing: The County will provide technical support and offer incentives to developers who wish to complete applications for funding for farmworker housing including the Housing and Community Development Department's Joe Serna Jr. Farmworker Housing Grant Program. Incentives may include expedited permit processing, plan checking, and inspections.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator's Office, Department of Development Services

Funding: Administrative Overhead

Timeframe: Ongoing (County will monitor the availability of funding bi-annually, with a goal to assist in the application of funding for at least two projects in the planning period)

- H-A4.9 Rehabilitation of Existing Farmworker Housing: The County will support the efforts of the Housing Authority of Butte County to rehabilitate the existing Gridley Farm Labor Housing facility, including providing expedited permit processing, plan checking, and inspections. In addition, the County will assist the Housing Authority with support such as available data, letters of support, or similar assistance in the

event that the Housing Authority requires County assistance in pursuing grant funding or other financial assistance for this project.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator’s Office, Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Ongoing assistance as requested by Housing Authority

H-A4.10 Farmworker Preference in New Affordable Housing: For new affordable housing projects developed with County assistance, incentives, and/or subject to County requirements, the County will require that the developer give qualified farmworker households a preference for 15 percent of the new units. Should demand from farmworker households be insufficient to fill the set-aside units, the units will be made available to other qualified households.

Responsibility: Chief Administrator’s Office

Funding: Expansion of existing services provided by staff

Timeframe: Policy will take effect upon adoption of the Housing Element

Goal H-5 Ensure equal housing opportunity.

Policies

H-P5.1 Continue to promote housing opportunities for all persons regardless of age, race, religion, gender, marital status, national origin, disability, or other barriers that prevent choice in housing.

H-P5.2 Continue to work with other public and local private organizations to provide referral services to individuals with

housing discrimination complaints and to remedy instances of housing discrimination.

Actions

- H-A5.1 Fair Housing Information will be available at the County Department of Development Services, and at other public locations in the County as deemed appropriate by County staff.

Goal H-6	Promote energy conservation.
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Policies

- H-P6.1 Continue to implement State energy-efficiency standards.
- H-P6.2 Provide energy conservation assistance to low-income households.

Actions

- H-A6.1 **Building Code Standards:** The County will stay informed of the impending regulations related to green building as the State government enacts laws in accordance with the Building Energy Efficiency Standards, Part 11 of Title 24 of California's new Green Building Standards Code. The codes were adopted in 2008, and the currently voluntary standards will become mandatory for all new construction, both residential and nonresidential, in 2011.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: 2011

H-A6.2 Energy Conservation Assistance: Substantial energy conservation and reduced utility payments can be realized from weatherizing and insulating older dwelling units. Many low-income households and owners of rental units lack the financial resources, however, to undertake such home improvements. There are several programs that can provide financial assistance to low-income homeowners and rental unit owners whose tenants are low income. The County’s website will provide links to these funding programs.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Ongoing

H-A6.3 Develop site design guidelines for energy conserving development patterns.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: 2011

H-A6.4 Energy Efficiency Incentives: The County shall promote increased energy conservation by encouraging builders to exceed California Title 24 standards. As an incentive to exceed Title 24 requirements, the County will offer priority processing for projects that will improve upon Title 24 requirements by at least 10 percent.

Responsibility: Department of Development Services

Funding: Use existing staff and budget

Timeframe: Ongoing

Quantified Objective

H-O6.1 To facilitate energy conservation, the County will direct five low-income households annually towards programs of other agencies that provide financial assistance to improve the energy efficiency of their dwelling units.

B. Summary of Quantified Objectives for the Housing Element Planning Period (July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2014)

The quantified objectives represent the number of housing units that are likely to be rehabilitated, preserved, and produced as a result of the policies and actions in the Butte County Housing Element Policy document.

1. Rehabilitation of Existing Housing Stock

These objectives are based upon the use of CDBG, HOME funds and other resources as described in Objectives H-O3.1 and H-O6.1.

Income Category	Unit Objective
Extremely Low	20
Very Low	10
Low	10
Moderate	<u>10</u>
TOTAL UNITS	50

2. Preservation of Assisted Units at Risk of Conversion

No units in the unincorporated area are at-risk of conversion in this Housing Element planning period, thus there is no quantified objective for preservation.

3. Production of New Housing Units

These objectives are based upon the number units targeted for construction pursuant to the actions listed under Goals H-1 and H-2. These numbers vary from the RHNA. While the RHNA states the number of housing units that

the County must accommodate through provision of appropriate zoning for housing development to be undertaken by the private sector, these quantified objectives express the County’s goals for housing production in certain housing developments where it would take a more active role in planning and facilitating the projects to meet certain County housing goals.

Income Category	Unit Objective
Extremely Low	40
Very Low	40
Low	90
Moderate	150
Above Moderate	<u>300</u>
TOTAL UNITS	620

