

27 STUDY AREA 27: PACIFIC HEIGHTS ROAD/HIGHWAY 70

Study Area 27, Pacific Heights Road/SR-70, consists of 560 acres located southwest of the City of Oroville that are proposed for a specific plan and annexation into the City of Oroville. Much of this study area is undeveloped, although there are some single-family residential uses along Pacific Heights Road.

- ◆ Alternative 1 follows the existing General Plan, designating the majority of this study area for Rural Residential, allowing approximately 100 new homes. The existing General Plan also designates about 100 acres of Retail along Highway 70.
- ◆ Under Alternative 2, the entire study area would be designated for Agriculture.
- ◆ Alternative 3 calls for residential uses at a variety of densities, allowing about 2,700 new homes, as well as about 30 acres of Retail, 50 acres of Public, and 165 acres of Resource Conservation.

A. *Economics*

1. **Market Viability**

a. **Alternative 1**

With potential for a modest number of new housing units, the residential component of this alternative should not have problems with market viability. On the other hand, market support for 1.3 million square feet of new retail development potential is questionable in this location. As noted for other alternatives that involve development potential of one million feet or more of retail space in the Oroville area, the trade area population is not likely to support such a large amount of retail development within the General Plan time horizon. Additionally, this retail development would be located on the periphery of the Oroville area, while other more centrally-located sites might be stronger competitors for a large retail development. Since the market viability of the retail component is questionable, Alternative 1 receives a C.

b. Alternative 2

Since Alternative 2 does not contemplate new residential or commercial development, market viability is not a concern.

c. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 is probably more viable than Alternative 1, with a more modest (although still significant) amount of retail space and a large number of housing units. Given the General Plan time horizon, this level of residential and retail absorption could be supportable in this location. Alternative 3 receives an A.

2. Fiscal Impacts

a. Alternative 1

This study area lies in a TRA where Butte County receives approximately 15.2 percent of the property tax revenues, a below-average proportion. With a modest number of new single-family homes planned in addition to 1.3 million square feet of retail development, Alternative 1 would likely have sufficient revenue generating potential to offset the slightly low property tax share that the county receives in the study area. Furthermore, with good accessibility, and a location that is within the Butte County Fire Station #72 eight minute travel time range, service efficiency appears good. Considering these factors, Alternative 1 would likely have potential for fiscal benefits, if built out successfully. However, these benefits would be significantly reduced under a more realistic retail absorption scenario, so fiscal benefits are likely to be small or nonexistent. Alternative 1 receives a C.

b. Alternative 2

Because Alternative 2 does not propose significant new residential or commercial development, its fiscal impacts would be neutral, and it receives a C.

c. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 has much less retail development and much more residential development than Alternative 1. Considering the relatively low property tax

share that the county receives in this study area, it may be challenging for this mix of development to generate revenues to cover service costs. Since service costs may outweigh revenues, leading to fiscal deficits, Alternative 3 receives a D.

3. Jobs/Housing Balance

a. Alternative 1

With relatively few new employed residents, and a large potential increase in retail employment, the estimated jobs/housing ratio for Alternative 1 is 23 jobs per employed resident, meaning that it would contribute to an improved jobs/housing ratio in the Oroville area. However, since this large amount of job-generating retail development is probably not feasible, the number of new jobs created would be significantly lower. At the same time, the 100 new homes under Alternative 1 are likely to be fully absorbed, potentially leading to a deficit of jobs relative to housing. Since Alternative 1 would make a slight contribution to Oroville's existing jobs/housing imbalance, it receives a C.

b. Alternative 2

Because Alternative 2 does not plan for any new residential or commercial growth, it would not have an effect on jobs/housing balance.

c. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 has a jobs/housing ratio of zero jobs for every one employed resident, meaning that it would tend to deteriorate the jobs/housing balance in the Oroville area. Alternative 3 receives a D.

B. Public Services

1. Fire and Emergency Services

The Butte County Fire Department and CAL FIRE provide fire protection and emergency services to Study Area 27. In general, there is not adequate staffing to handle more than two serious fire events or several less-serious

emergencies at once in Butte County. Any new development in the county would impact the level of fire protection and emergency services.

There are no fire stations within the boundaries of Study Area 27. The closest fire station is the El Medio Fire District station, which is located less than 3 miles away.

Study Area 27 has adequate service levels for rural and very low density residential development, as it is within eight minutes of a first-due unit. None of the study area has adequate service levels for suburban residential, retail or industrial development.

a. Alternative 1

Alternative 1 calls for approximately 100 new homes at a rural density, as well as retail uses, which typically require high fire and emergency service levels because they include assets of high economic value and generate customers that depend on those services. Although the residential development would have adequate fire and emergency service levels, the retail uses would not due to high travel times and a low concentration of fire stations in the immediate area. Because this alternative allows more than a minimal amount of new development, portions of which would not have adequate fire and emergency service levels, it receives a C.

b. Alternative 2

There would be no new development under Alternative 2, so fire and emergency services are not an issue.

c. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 calls for approximately 2,700 new homes at very low and suburban densities, as well as retail uses, which typically require high fire and emergency service levels because they include assets of high economic value and generate customers that depend on those services. The majority of the residential development and the retail development would not have adequate fire and emergency service levels due to high travel times and a low

concentration of fire stations in the immediate area. Moreover, the level of development under this alternative would not support a new fire station, so there would be little opportunity to improve fire protection. Therefore, this alternative receives a D.

2. Sheriff Services

Study Area 27 is served by the Southern Division of the Butte County Sheriff's Office (BCSO). The BCSO is currently understaffed and has limited capacity for expansion of its services. The Southern Division typically has about three to four deputies on duty in the Oroville area. Because Study Area 27 is located near the Oroville area via Highway 70, response times to this location are quick.

There is no police station located within the boundaries of Study Area 27. The Butte County Sheriff Department in the City of Oroville is located within 5 miles from the study area.

a. Alternative 1

Alternative 1 would allow approximately 100 new homes in an area with quick response times. Because this development would not generate the need to hire a new officer, this alternative receives an A.

b. Alternative 2

There would be no new development under Alternative 2, so sheriff services are not an issue.

c. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 would allow approximately 2,700 new homes, generating the need for more than five new officers in an area with quick response times. Therefore, this alternative receives a C.

3. Capacity of School Districts

Study Area 27 is served by the Palermo Union School District (PUSD) (K-8) and the Oroville Union High School District (OUHSD) (9-12).

The PUSD has maintained stable enrollment over the past three to four years. As discussed in more detail under Study Area 26, the District has capacity for approximately 100 additional students, with a new school project underway that would expand capacity by another 300 to 350 students.

The OUHSD has been experiencing declining enrollment. As discussed in more detail under the Concow and Thermalito study areas, the District currently has capacity for approximately 440 additional students, with a project underway that would expand capacity by another 100 students.

a. Alternative 1

Under Alternative 1, Study Area 27 could generate approximately 30 new students within the PUSD, which could be accommodated by the existing capacity. The total amount of development foreseen under Alternative 1 in all of the study areas within the PUSD could generate approximately 4,090 new students, triple the current enrollment and about 3,990 students beyond current capacity.

Under Alternative 1, Study Area 27 could generate approximately 20 new students within the OUHSD, which could be accommodated by the existing capacity. The total amount of development foreseen under Alternative 1 in all of the study areas within the OUHSD could generate approximately 7,250 new students, more than double the current enrollment and about 6,810 students beyond current capacity.

Because the number of new students generated by this study area could be accommodated by the existing capacities, this alternative receives an A.

b. Alternative 2

Under Alternative 2, Study Area 27 would not generate any new students, so schools are not an issue.

c. Alternative 3

Under Alternative 3, Study Area 27 could generate approximately 890 new students within the PUSD, which would exceed its planned capacity by about 440 students. The new students generated from this study area by this alternative could support about one new K-8 school. This would increase the size of the PUSD and require additional administration and other services

The total amount of development foreseen under Alternative 3 in all of the study areas within the PUSD could generate approximately 2,380 new students, about 2,280 students beyond current capacity.

Under Alternative 3, Study Area 27 could generate approximately 440 new students within the OUHSD, which could be accommodated by the existing capacity. The total amount of development foreseen under Alternative 3 in all of the study areas within the OUHSD could generate approximately 3,220 new students, about 2,780 students beyond current capacity.

Because the number of new high school students generated by this study area could be accommodated by the existing capacity, and the number of new K-8 students generated by this study area could support the construction of a new K-8 school, this alternative receives a C.

C. Water

1. Water Supply

Study Area 27 is located within the Sacramento Valley Inventory Unit. As discussed in more detail under Study Area 25, the Valley aquifers typically allow greater recharge and access to groundwater than the foothill and mountain aquifers, and they provide water for municipal, irrigation and domestic wells.

Study Area 27 is located within the North Yuba Inventory Unit. The primary water source for areas not served by the South Feather Water and

Power Agency in the North Yuba Inventory Unit is groundwater, which is used for urban and agricultural water needs. Although Study Area 27 is not served by the South Feather Water and Power Agency, it is adjacent to the western District boundary. The South Feather Water and Power Agency relies on surface water from four major reservoirs, including Sly Creek, Lost Creek, Ponderosa and Miner's Ranch. It may be possible to serve urban development in this study area by connecting to the South Feather Water and Power Agency network.

a. Alternatives 1 and 3

Alternatives 1 and 3 allow residential and retail development. Although this development would currently rely on groundwater, the South Feather Water and Power Agency could expand its district to encompass this development and provide it with surface water. Therefore, these alternatives receive a B.

b. Alternative 2

There would be no new development in this study area under Alternative 2, so water supply is not an issue.

2. Groundwater Recharge Potential

Study Area 27 is located within the Valley Inventory Unit. It may serve as a moderate or high potential recharge area.

a. Alternative 1

Alternative 1 allows minor residential development in this region that may serve as a moderate or high potential recharge area, and therefore receives a C.

b. Alternative 2

There would be no new development in this study area under Alternative 2. Therefore, this alternative receives an A.

c. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 calls for significant development in this region that may serve as a moderate or high potential recharge area, and therefore receives a D.

D. Wastewater

There is currently no publicly managed sewer service in Study Area 27. The current wastewater treatment method is individual septic systems.

Study Area 27 is located in close proximity to the City of Oroville, which provides wastewater collection services to its residents. The City is also part of a Joint Powers Agreement with the Sewerage Commission – Oroville Region (SC-OR), which handles wastewater treatment and disposal.

It is possible that, in the future, this study area may be connected to Oroville’s municipal sewer system if the City were to annex this study area. The City of Oroville’s wastewater collection system is sufficient to meet current demands. The City’s Draft Steering Committee General Plan, released in February 2008, includes a policy requiring that adequate wastewater facilities be available to serve development within the City’s Sphere of Influence before new development is approved.

Recently, SC-OR has indicated that their connection fee structure does not adequately cover the costs of providing sewer service to the new development.

a. Alternative 1

Alternative 1 calls for approximately 100 new homes at a rural residential density. This development can effectively be served by septic because of the low density and amount of development. Therefore, this alternative receives a B.

b. Alternative 2

There would be no new development under Alternative 2, so wastewater would not be an issue.

c. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 calls for approximately 2,700 new homes at a variety of densities, as well as retail uses. This amount of development could create the ability to expand the sewer system.

Although development under Alternative 3 could create the ability to expand the sewer system, SC-OR's connection fees do not adequately cover the costs of providing service to new development. Therefore, this alternative receives a C.

E. Circulation

Study Area 27 is served by one major regional roadway, Highway 70.

1. Proximity to Freeways and Major Roadways

One major regional roadway travels through or adjacent to the Pacific Heights Road/ Highway 70 study area. Highway 70 runs adjacent to the southeastern boundary to the study area. The study area is served by an existing limited local roadway network. This study area receives an A for access proximity to major roadways. Since Alternative 2 does not include any new development, proximity to roadways is not an issue.

2. Bicycle Circulation

Within the Pacific Heights Road/ Highway 70 area, a bicycle facility is planned along Pacific Heights Road. Due to the study area's high level of access to bicycle facilities and location within 1 mile of an urban area, the study area receives B. Since Alternative 2 does not include any new development, bicycle circulation is not an issue.

3. Transit Service

Transit service is currently provided along Palermo Road, which is within 1 mile of the study area. Thus, this study area receives a C for access to

transit service. Since Alternative 2 does not include any new development, transit service is not an issue.

F. Airport Compatibility Zone Conflicts

A portion of the Pacific Heights Road/ Highway 70 study area is located within Airport Compatibility Zone D.

The land uses assigned under all alternatives are compatible with the 2000 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Therefore, airport compatibility issues would not affect development under Alternatives 1, 2 or 3.

G. Potential Loss of Agricultural Land

Approximately 560 acres, encompassing all of Study Area 27, is identified as Grazing Land.

a. Alternatives 1 and 3

Under Alternative 1, the entire study area is designated for non-agricultural use, which would convert the 560 acres of Grazing Land to non-agricultural uses. Alternative 3 would convert approximately 400 acres of Grazing Land to non-agricultural uses. Therefore, Alternatives 1 and 3 receive a D.

b. Alternative 2

Alternative 2 preserves the entire area in Agriculture. Therefore, Alternative 2 receives an A.

H. Biological Resources

Study Area 27 is within the Butte Regional Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) area. The predominant land cover types are grassland, blue oak woodland

and savanna in the north and along the western edge, and grassland with vernal swale complex.

There are no plant or animal occurrences in the study area.

There is Butte Regional Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP)-modeled habitat in this study area for the following 16 species:

- ◆ Ahart's dwarf rush
- ◆ Bald eagle
- ◆ Conservancy fairy shrimp
- ◆ Greene's tuctoria
- ◆ Hairy Orcutt grass
- ◆ Hoover's spurge
- ◆ Northwestern pond turtle breeding habitat in pond
- ◆ Peregrine falcon
- ◆ Swainson's hawk
- ◆ Tricolored blackbird
- ◆ Valley elderberry longhorn beetle
- ◆ Vernal pool fairy shrimp
- ◆ Vernal pool tadpole shrimp
- ◆ Western burrowing owl
- ◆ Western spadefoot
- ◆ White-tailed kite

There are Vernal Pool Core Recovery Areas throughout the study area.

Grassland with vernal swale complex is present within the grasslands in the study area. Blue oak woodland and savanna are also present.

There is no deer herd habitat in the study area.

a. Alternatives 1 and 3

There is Vernal Pool Recovery Area and a large number of Butte Regional Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP)-modeled habitats and potential for special-

status species present in this study area. Therefore, these alternatives receive a C for Special-Status Animal and Plant Species, a D for Critical Habitat and other protected lands, a C for Sensitive Habitats, and an A for Deer Herd Habitat.

b. Alternative 2

Even though Alternative 2 would designate the entire study area for agriculture, this would still result in a significant impact on sensitive biological resources through the conversion of sensitive habitats supporting a number of special-status species if grazing land were converted to any more intensive type of agriculture. Therefore, this alternative receives a C for Special-Status Animal and Plant Species, a C for Critical Habitat and other protected lands, a C for Sensitive Habitats, and an A for Deer Herd Habitat.

I. Safety and Hazards

1. Fire Hazards

The Pacific Heights Road/ Highway 70 study area is located in a moderate fire hazard severity zone. Fire hazards would not affect development under Alternatives 1, 2 or 3, therefore, these alternatives receive an A.

2. Flood Hazards

Northwest and southeast parts of the Pacific Heights Road/ Highway 70 study area are included in the 100-year FEMA flood zone.

a. Alternatives 1

Alternative 1 calls for development on approximately 10 acres within the 100-year FEMA flood zone, therefore, this alternative receives a C.

b. Alternative 2

Since there is no land designated for development, Alternative 2, receives an A.

c. Alternative 3

Under Alternative 3, development would not be limited by flood hazards. Although 10 acres of the site are within the 100-year flood zone, it is assumed that development would be located on the portion of the site that is not constrained by flood hazards. Therefore, this alternative receives a B.

3. Geologic Hazards

The majority of the Pacific Heights Road/ Highway 70 study area has slight erosion potential, but approximately 130 acres along the north and west edges and in the center of the study area have severe erosion potential. There is potentially significant subsidence potential in the south part of this study area. The Pacific Heights Road/ Highway 70 study area has low to moderate landslide potential, no earthquake faults, and low to moderate potential for liquefaction. The majority of the study area has moderate potential for soil expansion.

a. Alternative 1

Under Alternative 1, approximately 130 acres of land designated for development have severe erosion potential and 40 acres are subject to subsidence hazards. Alternative 1 receives a D.

b. Alternative 2

Under Alternative 2, there would not be any development so Alternative 2 receives an A.

c. Alternative 3

Under Alternative 3, since there would be 165 acres of resource conservation, it is assumed that development would be located to avoid the 130 acres of land designated for development that have severe erosion potential, and the 230 acres subject to subsidence. Alternative 3 receives a B.

J. Cultural Resources

The Pacific Heights Road/ Highway 70 study area lies within the Palermo USGS 7.5' quadrangle. Approximately 25 percent of the land in the Palermo Quadrangle has been surveyed for cultural resources. To date, six cultural resources sites have been recorded in the Pacific Heights Road/ Highway 70 study area. These resources are all historic, and include two foundations, one structure, two mining activity sites and one road or trail. This study area lies within in a valley region, and is near the Feather River to the west, but has no local water source. This coupled with the lack of previously recorded prehistoric sites, indicate that this study area is of low sensitivity for prehistoric cultural resources, but the presence of historic features indicates that sensitivity is high for historic resources.

1. Alternative 1

Alternative 1 designates most of the study area for Rural Residential development and 101 acres for Retail development. There are no designated Resource Conservation land use areas under Alternative 1. Despite the low density of development, because of the lack of Resource Conservation and the high sensitivity of the study area for cultural resources, Alternative 1 receives a C.

2. Alternative 2

Alternative 2 designates the entire study area for agricultural use, specifically grazing. Grazing is not particularly destructive for most types of cultural resources. Despite the high sensitivity of the study area for cultural resources, because of the low potential of impacts to cultural resources posed by grazing Alternative 2 receives an A.

3. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 is the only alternative that provides for designated Resource Conservation land use. This alternative also designates almost half of the study area for medium or high density residential development. Despite the higher density of development and the high sensitivity of the study area,

BUTTE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN 2030
ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION

STUDY AREA 27: PACIFIC HEIGHTS ROAD/HIGHWAY 70

although designated Resource Conservation could be used to protect some significant cultural resources, Alternative 3 receives a C.

K. Notes