

## 28 STUDY AREA 28: SOUTHERN OROVILLE

Study Area 28, Southern Oroville, consists of 1,515 acres located southwest of the City of Oroville along Highway 70. There is currently some limited industrial development along Highway 70 and single-family residential uses in the interior of the study area. Much of the study area is undeveloped.

- ◆ Alternative 1 follows the existing General Plan, designating the majority of the study area for Very Low Density Residential, allowing approximately 800 new homes, as well as about 440 acres of industrial uses along Highway 70.
- ◆ Alternative 2 would decrease the residential density to Rural Residential, allowing approximately 100 new homes. The 440 acres of Industrial from the existing General Plan would remain.
- ◆ Alternative 3 would increase the residential density to Low Density Residential, allowing approximately 2,600 new homes, and would change the industrial area from the existing General Plan to Resource Conservation.

### A. *Economics*

#### 1. **Market Viability**

##### a. **Alternative 1**

The 800 new homes planned under Alternative 1 would require a very strong competitive performance within the Butte County market in order to achieve market success, but this may be possible given the central location within the county.

The 7.6 million square feet of planned industrial development present an even greater absorption potential challenge. With potential for about 9,200 industrial jobs, this project would need to capture what would likely amount to essentially all of the industrial job growth projected for the entire County (including the cities), through 2030, which is highly unlikely. Since the industrial component faces significant questions, Alternative 1 receives a C.

b. Alternative 2

With only 100 residential homes allowed, Alternative 2 would likely be market viable over the General Plan time horizon and receives an A.

c. Alternative 3

With about 2,600 single-family homes, Alternative 3 would need to capture more than three times the absorption under Alternative 1. This is questionable over the General Plan time horizon. Therefore, Alternative 3 receives a C.

**2. Fiscal Impacts**

a. Alternative 1

The South Oroville study area lies within TRAs where Butte County's share of the property tax revenues is between 14.6 and 17.2 percent of the total, on the lower end of the scale for the unincorporated areas. The residential component of Alternative 1 is exclusively single-family homes, which suggests higher revenue potential; however, the other component of Alternative 1 is a very large quantity (7.6 million square feet) of industrial development. The lower property tax share, the generally lower property values in the Oroville area, and the typical low revenue generation potential of most industrial uses may be offset to some degree by the fact that service provision should be fairly efficient within this study area, due to its proximity to areas of Oroville where the county already provides services. On balance, Alternative 1 is unlikely to generate significant fiscal surpluses. Fiscal neutrality may be more likely, so Alternative 1 receives a C.

b. Alternative 2

Combining the relatively low property tax share, relatively low property valuations, and the cost to provide services to the proposed new residential development, Alternative 2 faces a number of fiscal challenges. However, because South Oroville is in an accessible area where Butte County already provides a range of services, and due to the small number of new residential units planned, Alternative 2 may be considered an "infill" project, and likely has potential to achieve fiscal neutrality. Alternative 2 receives a C.

c. Alternative 3

The 2,600 new residential units under Alternative 3 could overwhelm existing services and create a need to upgrade service standards in this study area. Combining this with the fiscal disadvantages faced by this study area, as discussed under Alternative 1, Alternative 3 is likely to generate fiscal deficits. Therefore, Alternative 3 receives a D.

**3. Jobs/Housing Balance**

a. Alternative 1

The estimated jobs/housing ratio for this Alternative 1 is ten jobs for every employed resident, meaning Alternative 1 would help to improve the jobs/housing balance in the Oroville area if fully built out. Although it is unlikely that the full amount of industrial development would be absorbed, Alternative 1 has some chance of adding new jobs to Oroville, helping to correct the existing jobs/housing imbalance. Therefore, Alternative 1 receives a B.

b. Alternative 2

With only new residential development planned, Alternative 2 would lead to a slight deterioration of the jobs/housing balance and therefore receives a C.

c. Alternative 3

With 2,600 new housing units and no new employment-generating land uses, Alternative 3 would lead to a significant deterioration in the jobs/housing balance in the Oroville area, so it 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 28. In general, there is not adequate staffing to handle more than two serious fire events or several less-serious

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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 28. The closest fire station is the Butte County/CAL FIRE Fire Station 72, a career- and volunteer-staffed station located less than 2 miles away.

Study Area 28 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 800 new homes at a very low density, as well as industrial uses, which typically require high fire and emergency service levels because they include assets of high economic value. Although the residential development would have adequate fire and emergency service levels, the industrial uses would not due to high travel times. Therefore, this alternative receives a C.

b. Alternative 2

Alternative 2 calls for approximately 100 new homes at a rural density. This development would have adequate fire and emergency service levels. Because this alternative allows more than a minimal amount of new development, all of which would have adequate fire and emergency service levels, it receives a B.

c. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 calls for approximately 2,600 new homes at a suburban density. This development would not have adequate fire and emergency service levels due to high travel times and/or 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 28 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 28 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 28. 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 800 new homes and significant industrial development, generating the need for three to five new officers in this area with quick response times. Therefore, this alternative receives a B.

### b. Alternative 2

Alternative 2 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.

### c. Alternative 3

Alternative 3 would allow approximately 2,600 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 28 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

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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 28 could generate approximately 260 new students within the PUSD, which would exceed its current capacity. However, the new school that is under construction could accommodate these additional students. 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 28 could generate approximately 130 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 and planned capacities, this alternative receives a B.

b. Alternative 2

Under Alternative 2, Study Area 28 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 2 in all of the study areas within the PUSD could generate approximately 360 new

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students, about 260 students beyond current capacity, but within the planned capacity for the new school that is under construction.

Under Alternative 2, Study Area 28 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 2 in all of the study areas within the OUHSD could generate approximately 2,040 new students, more than double the current enrollment and about 1,600 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.

c. Alternative 3

Under Alternative 3, Study Area 28 could generate approximately 860 new students within the PUSD, which would exceed its planned capacity by about 410 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 28 could generate approximately 420 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 28 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.

More than half of this study area is served by the South Feather Water and Power Agency, which provides water for agricultural, residential and commercial purposes using surface water from four major reservoirs, including Sly Creek, Lost Creek, Ponderosa and Miner's Ranch. Although the South Feather Water and Power Agency does not use groundwater, there are some pockets of land within the District that have independent private wells.

Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 allow residential and industrial development. A portion of this development would be served by the South Feather Water and Power Agency. The remaining development would be adjacent to this provider, and it may be possible in the future for the service to expand to provide water to these areas. Therefore, Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 receive a B.

**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. Alternatives 1 and 3

Alternatives 1 and 3 allow significant residential and industrial development in this region that may serve as a moderate or high potential recharge area, and therefore receive a D.

b. Alternative 2

Alternative 2 allows minor residential development in this region that may serve as a moderate or high potential recharge area, and therefore receive a C.

*D. Wastewater*

There is currently no publicly managed sewer service in Study Area 28. The current wastewater treatment method is individual septic systems.

Study Area 28 is adjacent 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. Alternatives 1 and 3

Alternatives 1 and 3 call for approximately 800 and 2,600 new homes, respectively, at very low and low densities. Alternative 1 also calls for industrial uses. The amount of development under Alternatives 1 and 3 could create the ability to expand the sewer system.

Although development under Alternatives 1 or 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, Alternatives 1 and 3 receive a C.

b. Alternative 2

Alternative 2 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.

*E. Circulation*

Study Area 28 is served by four major regional roadways: Lincoln Boulevard, Palermo Road, Ophir Road, and Highway 70.

**1. Proximity to Freeways and Major Roadways**

Four major regional roadways travel through or adjacent to Study Area 28. Lincoln Boulevard forms the eastern boundary, Palermo Road runs along a portion of the southern boundary, and Ophir Road runs along the northern boundary to the study area. Highway 70 provides the study area's western boundary. Palermo Road and Ophir Road provide connections to Highway 70. This study area receives an A for access proximity to major roadways.

**2. Bicycle Circulation**

Within Study Area 28, planned bicycle facilities are located along Lincoln Boulevard, Palermo Road, and Ophir Road. The location of the study area adjacent to the City of Oroville allows for bicycle access to jobs, schools, and services in Oroville. Due to the study area's high level of access to planned bicycle facilities and location adjacent to the Oroville urban area, the study area receives a B.

### 3. Transit Service

Transit service is currently provided along Lincoln Boulevard, Palermo Road, and Ophir Road in the study area. This receives an A.

#### *F. Airport Compatibility Zone Conflicts*

Study Area 28 is not located within an Airport Compatibility Zone. Therefore, airport compatibility issues would not affect development under Alternatives 1, 2 or 3.

#### *G. Potential Loss of Agricultural Land*

In Study Area 28, there are approximately 10 acres identified as Farmland of Statewide Importance. The majority of the study area, approximately 1,310 acres, is identified as Grazing Land. The Farmland of Statewide Importance is located centrally, in small pockets within the study area.

Under Alternative 1, the entire study area is designated for non-agricultural uses, which would convert the 10 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance and the 1,310 acres of Grazing Land to non-agricultural uses. Alternatives 2 and 3 would convert about 910 acres of Grazing Land to non-agricultural uses, assuming the land designated for non-agricultural uses is directed to non-agricultural land. Therefore, Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 receive a D.

#### *H. Biological Resources*

This study area is located on the valley floor south of Oroville; it is within the Butte Regional Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) area. The predominant land cover types are grassland with vernal swale complex, grassland, open ranchettes.

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One special-status plant, Slender Orcutt grass, is known to occur at two sites in vernal pools in the south of the study area. No occurrences of special-status animals are recorded 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 (ponds)
- ◆ 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 is no Critical Habitat or other protected lands in the study area.

Grassland with vernal swale complex is the predominant land cover type in the study area, and many individually mapped vernal pools occur in the grasslands. A small area of emergent wetlands and willow scrub are associated with the Feather River valley at the north end of area. A patch of blue oak woodland is located in the north of the study area.

There is no deer herd habitat in the study area.

**1. Alternative 1**

Under Alternative 1, a 440-acre area along Highway 70 would be designated for industrial purposes. Because this study area supports sensitive vernal pool habitat, with known occurrences of a special-status plant and potential habitat for several vernal-pool and grassland associated special-status species. Therefore, this alternative receives a D for Special-Status Animal and Plant Species, an A for Critical Habitat and other protected lands, a D for Sensitive Habitats, and an A for Deer Herd Habitat.

**2. Alternative 2 and 3**

Under Alternatives 2 and 3 the study area designated as industrial under Alternative 1 would be designated Resource Conservation. Under both alternatives, the remainder of the study area would be designated either Rural Residential (under Alternative 1) or Low Density Residential (under Alternative 2). This study area also supports sensitive vernal pool habitat and potential habitat for several vernal-pool and grassland associated special-status species. Therefore, these alternatives receive a D for Special-Status Animal and Plant Species, an A for Critical Habitat and other protected lands, a D for Sensitive Habitats, and an A for Deer Herd Habitat.

*I. Safety and Hazards*

**1. Fire Hazards**

Study Area 28 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**

A very small portion of Study Area 28 is included in the 100-year FEMA flood zone.

a. Alternative 1

Flood hazards could affect approximately 3 acres of land that is designated for development under Alternative 1. Therefore, Alternative 1 receives a C.

b. Alternatives 2 and 3

Under Alternatives 2 and 3, development would not be limited by flood hazards. Since both alternatives include 480 acres of resource conservation, it is assumed that development within the study area could be configured to avoid floodplain areas. Therefore, Alternatives 2 and 3 receive a B.

**3. Geologic Hazards**

The majority of the study area has slight erosion potential but approximately 40 acres of land in the north of the study area have severe erosion potential. There is potentially significant subsidence potential in the southwest portion of the study area. Study Area 28 has zero to low landslide potential, mostly moderate potential for soil expansion, and low to moderate potential for liquefaction. There are no faults located within Study Area 28 or within a 50-foot radius.

a. Alternative 1

Under Alternative 1, approximately 40 acres of land designated for development have severe erosion potential and some 520 acres have significant subsidence potential. Alternative 1 receives a D.

b. Alternatives 2

Since Alternatives 2 includes 480 acres of resource conservation, it is assumed that development in this alternative could be configured to avoid the portion of the site that is constrained by the potential for severe erosion and subsidence. Alternative 2 receives a C.

c. Alternative 3

Since Alternatives 3 includes 480 acres of resource conservation, it is assumed that development in this alternative could be configured to avoid the portion of the site that is constrained by the potential for severe erosion and

subsidence. However, approximately 40 acres of development would still be subject to significant subsidence potential. Alternative 3 receives a B.

### *J. Cultural Resources*

Study Area 28 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, one cultural resource site has been recorded in Study Area 28, a historic standing structure. This study area lies within a valley region that appears to have been settled historically. This, coupled with the previously recorded site, indicates that this study area is of medium sensitivity for cultural resources.

#### **1. Alternative 1**

Alternative 1 does not include any designated Resource Conservation land uses. Despite the low density of the residential development, because of the moderate sensitivity of the study area, the extensive industrial development, and the lack of Resource Conservation land uses that could be used to protect cultural resources, Alternative 1 receives a B.

#### **2. Alternative 2**

Because of the very low density of development and the designated Resource Conservation land use areas that could be used to protect significant cultural resources, Alternative 2 receives a B.

#### **3. Alternative 3**

Despite the designated Resource Conservation areas that could be used to protect significant cultural resources, because of the higher density of residential development throughout the rest of the study area, Alternative 3 receives a D.

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*K. Notes*