

City of Chico 2030 General Plan INITIAL STUDY City of Chico Environmental Coordination and Review

ROUTE TO:

- [X] City of Chico – Building and Development and Planning Services Departments
- [X] State Clearinghouse (15 copies)
- [X] All Trustee and Responsible Agencies

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- A. **Project Name: 2030 General Plan**
- B. **Project Location:** City of Chico, Butte County (see **Figure 1**). The 2030 General Plan Planning Area includes the City of Chico, the City’s Sphere of Influence and areas beyond. The actual Planning Area boundaries have not been changed and are consistent with the currently adopted 1994 General Plan. The Chico Planning Area (Planning Area) for the 2030 General Plan consists of approximately 150 square miles of land located in the west-central portion of Butte County (see **Figure 2**). The Planning Area includes all of the incorporated City of Chico, and surrounding land which may influence, or be influenced by, City policies.
- C. **Type of Application(s):** General Plan Update
- D. **Assessor’s Parcel Number(s):** N/A
- E. **Current General Plan Designation:** N/A
Current City zoning: N/A
- F. **Project Description:** The Chico 2030 General Plan is a comprehensive update of the existing 1994 General Plan. The 2030 General Pan includes the seven required elements of a General Plan (Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Open Space, Noise, and Safety, and Conservation) as well as a Sustainability Element, a Downtown Element, Community Design Element, Parks, Public Facilities and Services Element, Cultural Resources/Historic Preservation Element, and an Economic Development Element.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Draft Guiding Principles for the Chico 2030 General Plan are listed herein. While these principles consider the guiding principles from the 1994 General Plan, the main focus is to address the key issues, priorities, and vision as communicated by Chico residents and stakeholders to date, including but not limited to input from the statistically valid phone survey, the visioning workshops, stakeholder meetings, key issues workshops, GPAC meetings, and Downtown Ad Hoc Committee meetings.

- 1. **Planned and Balanced Growth and Conservation.** The General Plan establishes a citywide land use plan with a healthy balance and mix of land uses that is sustainable for the future of Chico and that maintains or enhances quality of life for Chico residents. The City will balance growth and conservation by reinforcing the City’s compact urban form, establishing urban growth limits, and

managing where and how growth and conservation will occur. Orderly development contiguous to existing developed areas that can be efficiently served by the extension of infrastructure and municipal services in a fiscally responsible manner is a priority for Chico.

2. **Healthy Environment with a Reduced Ecological Footprint.** Cities generally consume far more resources than are produced locally, and produce more wastes than can be assimilated into the local environment. Chico will actively strive to reduce our ecological footprint by using fewer natural resources, relying on locally produced goods and services, actively promoting the use of renewable versus non-renewable resources, and enhancing environmentally friendly strategies to locally assimilate wastes. The City strives to protect our air quality, climate, and human health by reducing all harmful emissions, including greenhouse gases. Chico will lead the way to a healthy environment by providing local government support, partnerships, and innovation in sustainable design principles.
3. **Strong Local Economy with Diversified Employment Base and Reliance on Local Business.** The General Plan will actively promote an appropriate mix of local jobs suited for Chico's residents and local needs, such that future generations will remain in Chico because the City supports their desired lifestyle or career. Encouraging residents to support the local economy by buying locally produced goods and services will create a more robust local economy.
4. **Resource Protection and Enhancement.** The General Plan will conserve, enhance and protect viable agricultural resources, natural resources, and unique natural environments. This Plan outlines strategies for acquisition and preservation of sensitive habitats and creekside greenways and stipulates criteria for development in resource-sensitive areas. The City's open space resources and creeks are the framework for a vast and connected open space network. Historic and cultural resources will be protected and enhanced to serve as significant visible reminders of the City's social and architectural history.
5. **Enhance Chico's Character and Identity.** The General Plan will reinforce the unique identity and character of Chico as a thriving valley town in a natural landscape setting. Promote Chico as the civic, cultural, and economic hub of the region and the North Valley at the same time maintaining the City's small town charm. The General Plan emphasizes the role of Downtown as the heart of the community.
6. **Livable Neighborhoods as Community Foundation.** The General Plan will create and reinforce a pattern well designed and walkable neighborhood environments, from the traditional downtown core to integrated new communities, with places to gather, nearby services for daily shopping needs, and multi-modal access to recreation, jobs, and other community and regional services.
7. **Development Patterns that Offer Alternatives to Automobile Use.** Chico's level topography and mature landscape offer a pleasant environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. The General Plan integrates and locates land uses to reduce distances between uses with a renewed emphasis on traditional street patterns providing easy access for all residents, including bicyclists and pedestrians. The Plan emphasizes development of a balanced, integrated, multi-modal circulation system (streets, trails, sidewalks, bikeways) that is efficient and safe, connecting neighborhoods to jobs, shopping, schools, services, local attractions, and active and passive open space.

8. **Performance Based Service Standards and Resource Allocation for Sustainability.** Sustainability indicators provide guidance in meeting our goal for a Sustainable Chico. The development of sustainability indicators allow us to analyze our progress towards achieving a sustainable community. These indicators can guide future decisions and program development, allowing for continual improvement and reallocation of resources to achieve community goals.
9. **Social Services and Systems for All Chico Residents.** The General Plan will create a community that fosters a strong sense of identity, public safety and the personal well-being of all of Chico's residents. The City will promote community engagement, lifelong learning opportunities and equal access to all community resources. Chico will provide a varied and diverse housing supply to support the needs of Chico's current and future residents.

The 2030 General Plan proposes land use designation changes. **Figure 2** illustrates the Preferred Land Use Alternative for the 2030 General Plan, which was identified by the City Council on November 17, 2008. Actual land use acreages are summarized in **Table 1**.

Table 1 Preferred Land Use Alternative – Acreage		
Land Use Designation		Acres
Rural Residential	RR	2,277.6
Very Low Density Residential	VLDR	3,929.8
Low Density Residential	LDR	5,276.4
Medium Density Residential	MDR	1,110.9
Medium High Density Residential	MHDR	801.2
High Density Residential	HDR	19.3
Residential Mixed-Use	RMU	45.5
Residential Mixed-Use (HDR)	RMUH	24.9
Mixed Use Neighborhood Commercial	MUNC	61.3
Neighborhood Commercial	NC	6.7
Community Commercial	CC	324.1
Commercial Services	CS	200.2
Regional Commercial	RC	400.6
Commercial Mixed Use	CMU	281.5
Downtown Residential Mixed Use	DRMU	26.2
Office Mixed Use	OMU	396.7
Special Mixed Use	SMU	204.7
Manufacturing & Warehousing	MW	1,424.0
Industrial/Office Mixed Use	IOMU	138.3
Public Services and Facilities	PFS	2104.8
Parks	PFS	4107.8
Creekside Greenways	CG	575.6
Open Space-Agriculture & Resource Management	OSA/RM	34,313.3
Open Space-Environmental Conservation & Safety	OSEC/S	32,356.7
Habitat Conservation Plan	RM-HCP	2,601.3
Water		109.5
Road		4,177.7
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>97,296.6</i>
Net SPAs		2,393.9
Total		99,690.5

Source: City of Chico

The proposed 2030 General Plan also includes five Special Planning Areas (SPAs) located both inside of and outside of the existing City Limits and LAFCO approved Sphere of Influence. The SPAs are primarily undeveloped larger areas where future development is anticipated and directed. The SPAs are intended to be complete neighborhoods missing residential, commercial, and office uses, and will require subsequent detailed master planning prior to development. The SPAs include the North Chico SPA, Diamond Match SPA, South Entler SPA, Bell Muir SPA, and Doe Mill/Honey Run SPA. **Table 2** identifies the SPAs land use designations and acreages.

Table 2 Special Planning Areas									
North Chico		Diamond Match		South Entler		Bell Muir		Doe Mill/Honey Run	
Land Use	Acres	Land Use	Acres	Land Use	Acres	Land Use	Acres	Land Use	Acres
CG	47.7	CMU	8.3	LDR	23.6	LDR	330.6	CC	29.2
CMU	10.9	HDR	10.8	MDR	38.1			CG	32.5
IOMU	79.6	IOMU	13.5	HDR	20.0			LDR	139.5
LDR	52.2	LDR	14.9	RC	52.0			MDR	57.8
MDR	134.9	MDR	25.9	MW	33.7			MUNC	19.2
MHDR	52.3	OMU	18.7	IOMU	25.5			OSEC/S	123.8
P	8.0	P	10.3	P	30.3			P	638.6
PFS	9.8	RMU	9.2	OSEC/S	29.6			PFS	18.0
RM-HCP	11.9							VLDR	233.1
Total	407.6	Total	111.6	Total	252.8	Total	330.6	Total	1291.7

Source: City of Chico

In addition to the above described Special Planning Areas (SPA's), the project also includes sixteen (16) areas located within the existing City of Chico City Limits described as Opportunities Sites where land use changes have been proposed. The Opportunity Sites are primarily developed sites where opportunities exist for infill development and re-development. The acreages of these areas have been included in the land use totals shown in **Table 1** above. **Figure 2** of this document shows the locations of the Opportunity Sites in the City.

G. Applicant: City of Chico
P.O. Box 3420, 411 Main Street, Chico, CA 95927

H. Initiated By: City of Chico, Planning Services Department
411 Main Street
Chico, CA

Contact: Brendan Vieg, Principal Planner (530) 879-6806

CITY OF CHICO

City Boundary, Sphere of Influence & Planning Area

- City of Chico Sphere of Influence Boundary
- City of Chico Urban Development Boundary
- City/County Greenline
- City of Chico Incorporated Area
- Chico Planning Area & Butte County Unincorporated Area

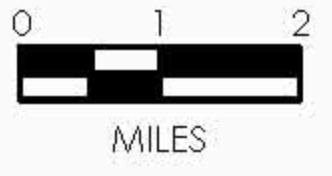
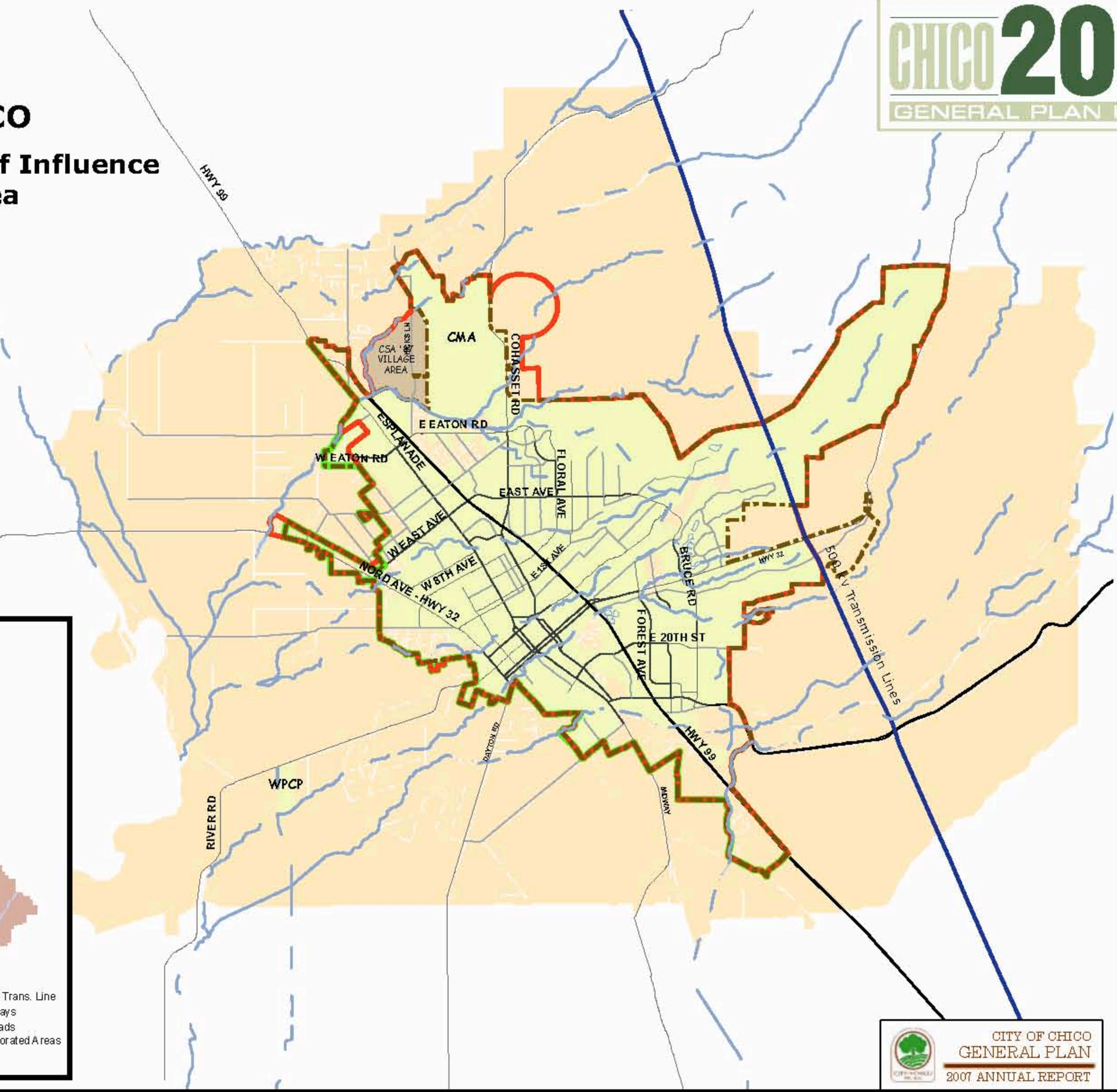
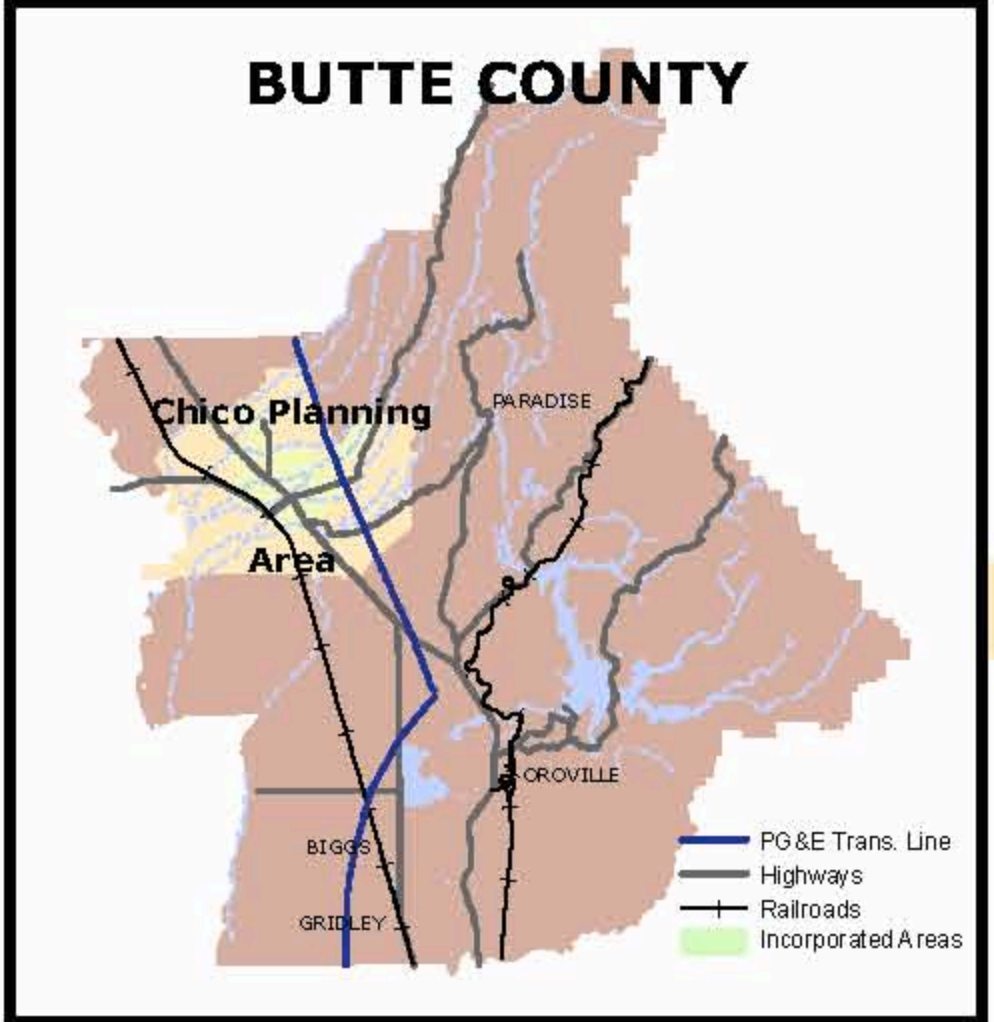


Figure 1
Regional Location and Planning Area Map

T:\CS\Work\Chico - City of Chico General Plan Update - 27-0146\FIGURES - December 2007

3. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- Responses to the following questions and related discussion indicate if the proposed project will have or potentially have a significant adverse impact on the environment.
- A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources cited in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g. the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g. the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- All answers must take account of the whole action involved , including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operation impacts.
- Once it has been determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there is at least one “Potentially Significant Impact” entry when the determination is made an EIR is required.
- Negative Declaration: “Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated” applies when the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less than Significant Impact.” The initial study will describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section 4, “Earlier Analysis,” may be cross-referenced).
- Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to tiering, a program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration [Section 155063(c)(3)(D)]. Earlier analyses are discussed in Section 4 at the end of the checklist.
- Initial studies may incorporate references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g. the general plan or zoning ordinances, etc.). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated. A source list attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted are cited in the discussion.
- The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question: and
 - b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

A. Aesthetics: Will the project or its related activities:		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1.	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, including scenic roadways as defined in the General Plan, or a Federal Wild and Scenic River (Big Chico Creek)?	X			
2.	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	X			
3.	Affect lands preserved under a scenic easement or contract?				X
4.	Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings including the scenic quality of the foothills as addressed in the General Plan?	X			
5.	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	X			

DISCUSSION:

Chico lies at the transition between the foothills to the east and the agricultural lands to the west, with numerous creeks and waterways within the City. An aesthetic impact would generally be considered significant if the project results in the conversion of substantial amounts of open space, results in a demonstrable negative aesthetic, or results in a substantial change in community character (i.e., changes in open space patterns, substantial reduction in prominent public visual opportunities, etc.).

A.1

Big Chico Creek has been identified as a scenic resource in the City. The aesthetic quality of any adjacent proposed activity warrants a heightened degree of consideration. Additionally, as the valley floor gradually inclines into the foothills to the east, development within the foothill areas becomes more visual to the valley floor within areas of increasing topography. Implementation of the proposed 2030 General Plan may impact these scenic resources. As a result, impacts to scenic vistas will be further addressed in the EIR.

A.2

There are no state scenic highways in the 2030 General Plan Planning Area. However, there are many oak trees, historic structures and other features in the area that may be lost due to development resulting for implementation of the 2030 General Plan. This impact will be further addressed in the EIR.

A.3

There are no lands within the City or Planning Area that are preserved under a scenic easement. Implementation of the 2030 General plan would have no impact in this area and therefore will not be discussed in the EIR.

A.4

Undeveloped land and areas developed with residential, office, industrial and commercial uses dominate the existing visual character. The proposed project would expand urban development resulting in new roadways and other public and private facilities, and therefore change the existing visual character of the existing open space areas. The change in visual character will be further addressed in the EIR.

A.5

Future residential, office, industrial and commercial development would create new sources of light. The impact to light and glare will be further addressed in the EIR.

B. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	X			
2. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	X			
3. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?	X			

DISCUSSION:

Agriculture has a rich history in the character of the community, development of Chico, and celebration of locally grown produce due to the fertile soils in the area. However, today there are relatively limited amounts of active agricultural lands within the City limits. Important issues in the existing General Plan that will remain significant moving forward include conversion of agricultural lands and the location of the "Greenline" along the western edge of the City.

B.1, B.3

There are areas within the Planning Area that are currently undeveloped and have been used historically for agricultural purposes. Portions of the Planning Area have been classified by the California Department of Conservation as "Prime Farmland" and "Farmland of Statewide Importance." Implementation of the 2030 General Plan would result in the conversion of important farmland to a mix of residential, commercial, and other uses. Therefore, the loss of this land for agricultural production is considered a potentially significant impact and will be further discussed in the EIR.

B.2

Some of the current zoning in the Planning Area conflicts with proposed the land use designations of the proposed project. A portion of the area within the Planning Area is within the jurisdiction of Butte County. Proposed land use changes identified in the proposed project may conflict with the agricultural zoning designations of Butte County. Additionally, while no Williamson Act lands exist within the city boundaries some Williamson Act contract lands exist within the Planning Area. Development of existing vacant land adjacent to Williamson Act contract lands may lead to the conversion of this land to non-agricultural uses. This issue will be further discussed in the EIR.

C. Air Quality: Will the project or its related activities result in:		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1.	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plans (e.g. Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin 1994 Air Quality Attainment Plan, Chico Urban Area CO Attainment Plan, and Butte County Air Quality Management District Indirect Source Review Guidelines)?	X			
2.	Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.	X			
3.	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	X			
4.	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	X			
5.	Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	X			

DISCUSSION:

Pollution potential in the Chico area is relatively high due to the combination of air pollutant emissions sources, transport of pollutants into the area, and meteorological conditions that are conducive to high levels of air pollution. Air quality in the Chico region is considered “moderately” non-attainment for ozone and particulate matter. Emission sources in the Chico area are primarily from automobiles. The primary source of ozone (smog) pollution is motor vehicles, which account for 70 percent of the ozone in the Chico region. Particulate matter is caused by dust, primarily dust generated from construction and grading activities, and smoke which is emitted from fireplaces and wood-burning stoves, and agricultural burning. Implementation of the 2030 General Plan would result in the development of residential, public, commercial and industrial land uses. This development would result in additional criteria pollutants being generated within the project area.

C.1 – C.3.

The proposed 2030 General Plan Planning Area is located within the jurisdiction of the Butte County Air Quality Management District (BCAQMD). The BCAQMD has established action-level thresholds, labeled Levels A, B and C, to assist in evaluating the amount of mitigation a project must implement to successfully reduce potential air quality impacts from indirect sources. Level A represents the lowest emissions while Level C generates the most. According to the BCAQMD Indirect Source Review Guidelines (ISRG), all projects with the potential to increase vehicular activity should implement all appropriate standard mitigation measures (SMM). Projects that are expected to exceed Level A thresholds must also implement all feasible best available mitigation measures (BAMM). These measures are intended to reduce reactive organic gas (ROG), nitrogen oxide (NOX) and particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM₁₀) emissions before, during and after construction.

Due to the size and nature of the proposed project, impacts on air quality may be considered potentially significant for the 2030 General Plan. In addition to discussing the potential impacts associated with air basin plans and regulatory and management plans, the EIR will discuss impacts associated with the implementation of the project on greenhouse gas emissions and global climate

change.

C.4

The proposed 2030 General Plan includes changes in many of the existing land use designations and the projected change may increase the emissions of ROG, NO_x, and PM₁₀ above those associated with the current land use designations and may inhibit air quality attainment efforts. Currently, the Planning Area is a mixture of different land uses. The 2030 General Plan intends to change some of the uses from agricultural and undeveloped land to urban uses and may result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Therefore, this issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

C.5

Implementation of the proposed project would result in development consisting of residential, commercial, retail, industrial, and other uses. As implementation of the 2030 General Plan could include new industrial uses potential odors or toxic air contaminants could be generated. Since odors or toxic air contaminants could be created from industrial or intensive adjacent agricultural uses, this issue could be potentially significant. This issue will be addressed further in the EIR.

D. Biological Resources: Will the project or its related activities result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species as listed and mapped in the MEA or in other local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
2. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in the MEA or in other local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service.	X			
3. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	X			
4. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	X			
5. Result in the fragmentation of an existing wildlife habitat, such as blue oak woodland or riparian, and an increase in the amount of edge with adjacent habitats.	X			
6. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances, protecting biological resources?			X	

DISCUSSION:

Butte County consists of five different geographic subregions including the Sacramento Valley in which most of the City of Chico Planning Area is located. The very eastern portion of the 2030 General Plan Planning Area falls within the Cascade Range Foothills subregion. The upper extent of this eastern portion consists of landscape dominated (more than one half) by oak woodland natural communities. The upper elevation range of the oak woodland community varies from about 800 to 1,500 feet above mean sea level. The Sacramento Valley is part of the northern subregion of the Great Central Valley of north-central California that extends from Red Bluff in Tehama County to the Suisun Slough in southwest Solano County.

Significant riparian resources in the Planning Area occur along Butte Creek, Big Chico Creek, and several other smaller drainages. Additionally, there is significant vernal pool habitat within the Planning Area, mostly occurring in the eastern portion. Vernal pools and swales may also support a number of special-status plant species including, but not limited to, Butte County meadowfoam.

According to the Existing Conditions Report completed for the 2030 General Plan, there are 14 general types of biological communities occur in the Planning Area. (Existing Conditions Report, page 7-2) These 14 communities include urban/park, agriculture, grassland, blue oak woodland, blue oak savanna, valley oak woodland, mixed oak woodland, interior live oak woodland, cottonwood-willow riparian, valley oak riparian, mixed riparian, willow scrub, open water (including riverine), and wetlands (including emergent wetland and vernal pool).

D.1 - D.3

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan could substantially affect special-states species, riparian or other sensitive habitats, and federally protected wetlands. The City of Chico General Plan Existing Conditions Report (ECR) determined that many species of special concern occur in the Planning Area. These issues will be discussed further in the EIR.

D.4

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan may interfere with the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites. These issues will be discussed further in the EIR.

D.5

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan may conflict with existing federal, state, and local policies and standards on tree protection, wetlands/vernal pools, or special-status species. According to the ECR, there is approximately 7,011 acres of vernal pool habitat within the Planning Area. Most of the acreage identified in the ECR also contains annual grassland and oak woodland communities. Therefore, the alteration of land where these exist may be a potentially significant impact and will be discussed further in the EIR.

D.6

The City of Chico is located in an area that is in the process of having a habitat conservation plan and natural community conservation plan prepared. The Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) is the lead agency preparing the Butte Regional Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP). The HCP/NCCP includes all areas of western Butte County, including the City of Chico. The anticipated approval date for the HCP/NCCP is mid-2010. Implementation of the General Plan has the potential to conflict with the HCP/NCCP. Therefore, this issue will be further addressed in the EIR.

E. Cultural Resources: Will the project or its related activities:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in PRC Section 15064.5?	X			
2. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to PRC Section 15064.5?	X			
3. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?	X			
4. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	X			

DISCUSSION:

There are 244 known archaeological sites and isolated features/artifacts, including prehistoric and historic sites, within the City of Chico Planning Area. There are 177 prehistoric sites, 53 historic sites, and 11 sites that contain both prehistoric and historic elements. (Existing Conditions Report, page 7-6) The majority of the prehistoric sites are bedrock milling stations and lithic scatters (e.g., areas representing the manufacture of stone tools) that are located along creeks and streams such as Mud Creek and Big Chico Creek. These are areas of high archaeological sensitivity. Many Mechoopda villages were located along these drainages as recently as the late 19th century. For example, the Mud Creek Canyon Archaeological District is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Historic sites in the City primarily consist of residential and commercial buildings, but there are several trails and other linear features (e.g., the Southern Pacific Railroad alignment, historic roads, and wagon wheel ruts) located throughout the Planning Area.

E.1 – E.2

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan could result in significant impacts to historical and/or archaeological resources. There are 497 properties and one historic district in the City of Chico listed in the current Office of Historic Preservation Directory of Properties and an additional 17 properties listed within the vicinity of Chico. The directory identifies 122 properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), 80 properties that are eligible for inclusion in the NRHP, 121 properties that appear eligible for listing in a local historic register and 168 properties that are not eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. Implementation of the 2030 General Plan may adversely affect historical or archeological resources. Therefore, these issues will be discussed further in the EIR.

E.3 – E.4

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan could result in the destruction of a unique paleontological resource or the disruption of human remains. These issues will be discussed further in the EIR.

F. Geology/Soils: Will the project or its related activities:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
a. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	X			
b. Strong seismic ground shaking?	X			
c. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	X			
d. Landslides?	X			
2. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	X			
3. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	X			
4. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	X			
5. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water, or is otherwise not consistent with the Chico Nitrate Action Plan or policies for sewer service control?	X			

DISCUSSION:

Several geologic formations underlie the City of Chico Planning Area. These include the Tuscan Formation, Chico Formation, Red Bluff Formation, and Modesto Formation. The USGS *Swelling Clays Map of the Conterminous United States, Soil Map of California* (Geology.com) identifies regions of expansive soils to exist within the Planning Area. The Central Valley region, in which the Planning Area is located, is an area where soils with slight to moderate swell potential exist. Chico is located within Butte County, an area of low seismic activity relative to other areas of California. There are a number of faults either within Butte County or relatively nearby that could be considered potentially active, based on the fairly restrictive criteria developed by the California Mining and Geology Board.

F.1

There are no Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones identified in the Chico Planning Area. However, the potential for seismic activity affecting the Planning Area does exist. Chico Monocline fault

which extends northwesterly from Chico was considered potentially active in an unpublished 1988 report by the California Geological Survey. Based on its length of approximately 42 miles, this fault could produce at least a magnitude 7.0 earthquake, which would cause major damage in the Planning Area. (Existing Conditions Report, page 7-43). As such, potential impacts as a result of seismic activity will be addressed in the EIR.

F.2

There are two general types of erosion: geologic and accelerated. Geologic erosion is basically a natural type of erosion that occurs at a very slow rate. This type of erosion is not usually associated with areas where human activity takes place. The process of accelerated erosion is influenced and perpetuated by human disturbance and is therefore an issue of concern for development within the Planning Area. Causes for accelerated erosion include activities such as bulldozing for urban development. Development of the Planning Area may result in increased soil erosion, wind and water erosion, and siltation of local drainage during and after construction from excavation and grading activities. This issue will be further discussed in the EIR.

F.3

The topography of the Planning Area is generally flat, and it is unlikely that any hazards associated with landslides or mudflows would occur. Withdrawal of fluids (e.g., groundwater, natural gas, and oil) can, in some cases, result in subsidence. As currently proposed, the Planning Area may utilize the groundwater resources. Therefore, the chance for subsidence could be significant. In addition, other geologic stability issues may be present in portions of the Planning Area. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

F.4

Expansive soils are common in western and central California, particularly where clay-rich parent materials are present or within seasonally wet basin area. Near-surface expansive clays shrink and swell, particularly in areas subject to seasonal soil moisture variations. Expansive soils can be recognized by the appearance of soil cracks that open during the dry season and close during the rainy season. Structures, pavements, concrete slabs, and other improvements can experience significant damage from this seasonal shrinking and swelling process if not designed to address the presence of expansive soils. Expansive soils can also accelerate landslides and the process of soil creep on slopes.

The USGS *Swelling Clays Map of the Conterminous United States, Soil Map of California* (Geology.com) identifies regions of expansive soils to exist within the Planning Area. As such, the potential for impacts due to expansive soils as a result of implementation of the 2030 General Plan will be addressed in the EIR.

F.5

Some sections of the Planning Area are within the jurisdiction of Butte County. Many of these areas are on existing septic systems and annexation to the City, does not require connection to the City wastewater facility if the septic system is functioning according to City regulations. Therefore, future annexations could result in an impact regarding soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

G. Hazards/ Hazardous Materials: Will the project or its related activities:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	X			
2. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	X			
3. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	
4. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	X			
5. For a project located within the airport land use plan, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	X			
6. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	X			
7. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	X			
8. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	X			

DISCUSSION:

Within the City, various commercial and industrial activities use and/or store hazardous materials for their operations. Medical wastes are another growing source of hazardous wastes in the City. Hazardous materials, used in many household products (e.g., drain cleaners, waste oil, cleaning fluids, insecticides, and car batteries) are often improperly disposed of as part of normal household trash. These hazardous materials could interact with other chemicals which can create risks to people and can also result in soil and groundwater contamination.

Currently, there are 28 hazardous material sites in the vicinity of the Planning Area known to handle and store hazardous materials and are associated with a hazardous material related release or occurrence listed on the State of California Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (also

known as the "Cortese List") or the CAL-SITES (ASPIS) Database. (Existing Conditions report, page 8-14)

G.1 – G.2

Heavy industrial uses could be permitted within industrial land use designations, and potentially hazardous materials may be used as part of commercial businesses and light industrial firms. Due to some current land uses and known contaminated sites within the Planning Area, there may be some hazardous material within the Planning Area, such as pesticides, chemical fertilizers, or waste materials. The impacts related to exposure of persons to hazardous materials would be potentially significant and will be discussed in the EIR.

G.3

Section 17213 of the California State Education Code mandates that a school site must not be located within one-quarter of a mile of a hazardous materials site. Because of this mandate, the impact of hazardous waste sites on schools is less than significant, but will be further addressed in the EIR.

G.4

There are many hazardous materials sites in the Planning Area such as the Humboldt Road Burn Dump and the Chico Municipal Airport. As a result, the sites could create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

G.5

Chico Municipal Airport is located within the Planning Area. Chico Municipal Airport serves the needs of the Northern Sacramento Valley for commercial aviation, general aviation, and air cargo operations as well as provides services for fire-fighting aircraft. Operation of this airport and potential conflicts with new development resulting from implementation of the 2030 General Plan could result in significant impacts to nearby existing and future residents and/or workers. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

G.6

There is one private airport, Ranchoero Airport, located within Planning Area. This airport is located west of the City of Chico, adjacent to the City boundaries. Operation of this airport and potential conflicts with new development resulting from implementation of the 2030 General Plan could result in significant impacts to nearby existing and future residents and/or workers. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

G.7

As a result of future development within the Planning Area, the existing emergency response plan may or may not be suitable to future needs. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

G.8

The Planning Area has areas located near or intermixed with wildlands. These areas are identified as having a moderate, high, and very high risk of fires in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map for Butte County as provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and Butte County Fire Department. (County of Butte) Development of these areas as a result of implementation of the 2030 General Plan would have a potentially significant impact for the exposure of people or structures to wildland fires. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

H. Hydrology/ Water Quality: Will the project or its related activities result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	X			
2. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g. the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted?)	X			
3. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	X			
4. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or off-site?	X			
5. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	X			
6. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	X			
7. Place real property within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	X			
8. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	X			
9. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	X			
10. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X

DISCUSSION:

Stormwater runoff has, at times, created localized flooding problems in the City of Chico and the agricultural area west of the City. Flooding hazards within the Big Chico Creek Watershed are attributed to potential high flows from Lindo Channel, Sycamore Creek, Mud Creek, Rock Creek, Keefer Slough, and Big Chico Creek. Flooding hazards in the Little Chico Creek/Butte Creek Watershed are attributed to potential high flows from Little Chico Creek, the Little Chico Creek-Butte Creek Diversion Channel, Comanche Creek, and Dead Horse Slough. Dam failure, the

collapse or failure of an impoundment that causes significant downstream flooding, is a potential hazard for the City of Chico.

The sole source of domestic water to the Planning Area is groundwater. The California Water Service Company (Cal Water) supplies approximately 25.5 million gallons of water per day to the Chico area. Water quality is generally adequate to meet current demands; however groundwater nitrate contamination could threaten supply in areas with a high density of septic systems. Regulation of non-point source agricultural return water may also become an issue in the near future.

H.1, H.6

Development of the Planning Area would include construction-related activities that could expose soil to erosion during storm events, causing degradation of water quality. Also, after construction, the run-off from urban uses may contribute to the degradation of water quality in the area. These impacts may be potentially significant and will be discussed further in the EIR.

H.2

The Planning Area is currently being served by groundwater. The Groundwater Resource Analysis study (Butte County Water Inventory and Analysis, Camp, Dresser & McKee 2001) evaluated local groundwater and concluded that groundwater resources will support build-out conditions as specified by the 1994 City General Plan through 2012. However, it is unknown at this time how the 2030 General Plan will impact groundwater supply and recharge. This is considered to be a potentially significant impact. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

H.3 – H.5

Implementation of the proposed General Plan would increase impervious surfaces and, as a result, alter drainage patterns. This would result in a potentially significant impact and will be discussed further in the EIR.

H.7 – H.8

Portions of the Planning Area are within the 100-year floodplain of Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, Butte Creek, and Comanche Creek. In addition to being located within the 100-year floodplains listed above, the City is located within the geographical area described by Senate Bill 5 as an area potentially subject to 200-year floodplain mapping and analysis requirements. Preliminary information from the Department of Water Resources (DWR) suggests that a small area within the Planning Area generally located west of Meridian Road and south of the Union Pacific Railroad line but outside of the City Limits or Sphere of Influence may be within a 200-year flood hazard area. Flood hazards and floodplain status issues will be discussed further in the EIR.

H.9

Dam failure, the collapse or failure of an impoundment that causes significant downstream flooding, is a potential hazard for the City of Chico. Paradise and Magalia Reservoirs, owned and operated by the Paradise Irrigation District (PID), are located on Butte Creek, above Paradise. Failure of Paradise Dam would overtop Magalia Dam and result in temporary flooding in the Planning Area along Butte Creek. (Butte County Flood Mitigation Plan, Appendix D, 2006). Dam failure will be discussed further in the EIR.

H.10

The Planning Area is not located in an area that would be affected by a seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. Therefore, development of the project would result in no impact regarding inundation and will not be discussed further in the EIR.

I. Land Use and Planning: Will project or related activities be inconsistent with	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. General Plan or Specific Plan policies or zoning regulations?	X			
2. Physically divide an established community?			X	
3. Conflict with any applicable Resource Management or Resource Conservation Plan?	X			
4. Result in substantial conflict with the established character, aesthetics or functioning of the surrounding community?	X			
5. Be a part of a larger project involving a series of cumulative actions?				X
6. Result in displacement of people or business activity?				X
7. Conversion of viable prime agricultural land and/or land under agricultural contract to non-agricultural use, or substantial conflicts with existing agricultural operations? (Viable agricultural land is defined as land on Class I or Class II agricultural soils of 5 acres or greater, adjacent on no more than one side to existing urban development.)	X			

DISCUSSION:

The City of Chico encompasses 32 square miles of land between the Sierra Nevada foothills to the east and agricultural lands of the Central Valley to the west. The current land use mix and distribution includes approximately 54 percent residential land, 20 percent parks and open space, 14 percent industrial, and the remaining 12 percent commercial, office, and mixed uses.

Given the City's historic development patterns and multiple annexations (26 in recent years), the City is focused on ensuring compatibility in the interface between residential and non-residential development. As described in the Project Description, the 2030 General Plan Preferred Land Use Alternative proposes land use designation changes, which are illustrated in **Figure 2**. The proposed 2030 General Plan also includes five Special Planning Areas (SPAs), identified in **Table 2**.

In addition to the Special Planning Areas (SPA's), the project also includes sixteen (16) areas located within the existing City of Chico City Limits described as Opportunities Sites where land use changes have been proposed, are also shown in **Figure 2**.

I.1

Implementation of the General Plan may conflict with the City's existing zoning ordinance as well as general plan provisions of adjoining jurisdictions (Butte County). This issue would be discussed further in the EIR.

I.2

The implementation of the General Plan would not physically divide an established community. This impact would be less than significant and will not be discussed further in the EIR.

I.3

The City of Chico is located in an area in the process of preparing a habitat conservation plan and

natural community conservation plan. The Butte County Association on Governments (BCAG) is preparing the Butte Regional Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP). The HCP/NCCP includes all areas of western Butte County, including the City of Chico. The anticipated approval date for the HCP/NCCP is mid-2010. Implementation of the 2030 General Plan may conflict with the HCP/NCCP. Therefore, this issue will be further addressed in the EIR.

I.4

Undeveloped land and areas developed with residential, office, industrial and commercial uses dominate the existing visual character. The proposed project would expand urban development resulting in new roadways and other public and private facilities, and therefore may conflict with the established character, aesthetics or functioning of the surrounding community, which could be considered a significant impact. The conflicts with existing character will be further addressed in the EIR.

I.5

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan would result in necessary changes to the existing zoning ordinance, however, the General Plan, by nature, is the predominate governing document for a jurisdiction. All subsequent activities tier off the General Plan and are required to be consistent with the General Plan. As such, while additional actions may be required with implementation of the 2030 General Plan, these actions will be a part of the whole of the process. Therefore the proposed project would have no impact with regard to being a part of a larger project involving a series of cumulative actions.

I.6

Implementation of the proposed project does not provide goals, policies or land use changes which would result in the displacement of persons or businesses as those persons or businesses have the right to continue the use of their dwelling or business until such time that they wish to quit that dwelling or business even if General Plan land use changes result in a re-designation of their land for a different use. This would have no impact and will not be discussed further in the EIR.

I.7

Implementation of the proposed project would allow development in, or adjacent to, areas of designated prime agriculture lands which may result in the conversion of the agricultural use to a non-agricultural use. This is considered a potentially significant impact and will be further discussed in the EIR.

J. Noise: Will the project or its related activities result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Exposure of residents in new hotels, motels, apartment houses, and dwellings (other than single-family dwellings) to interior noise levels (CNEL) higher than 45 dBA in any habitable room with windows closed?	X			
2. Exposure of sensitive receptors (residential, parks, hospitals, schools) to exterior noise levels of 60 dBA L or higher?	X			
3. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	X			
4. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
5. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
6. For a project located within the airport land use plan, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	X			
7. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	X			

DISCUSSION:

The Existing Conditions Report identified several sources of noise that could affect the City of Chico. These sources include noise generated from stationary activities (e.g., recreational, commercial and industrial uses), aircraft and railroad operations, and traffic on major roadways and highways. Based on monitoring conducted, hourly-average daytime noise levels within the City generally range from the low 50s to the low 70s, dependent primarily on distance from area roadways. Ambient noise levels during the quieter nighttime hours are typically five to ten dBA less than daytime noise levels. Major stationary noise sources noted within the City of Chico are commercial and industrial land uses and the Silver Dollar Speedway. Major transportation related noise sources in the City are Chico Municipal Airport, Enloe Medical Center Heliport, and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

J.1 – J.5

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan would result in the potential to create a substantial increase in stationary and transportation noise from the existing levels. Any new development could cause a significant impact in noise and/or generate excessive levels of groundborne vibrations. Additionally, any future development could permanently increase ambient noise levels. These issues will be discussed further in the EIR.

Chico Municipal Airport is located within the Planning Area. Any future development adjacent to or near the airport could potentially expose residents or workers to excessive noise levels. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

J.7

There is one private airport, Ranchoero Airport, located within Planning Area. This airport is located west of the City of Chico, adjacent to the City boundaries. Operation of this airport and potential conflicts with new development resulting from implementation of the 2030 General Plan could result in significant noise impacts to nearby existing and future residents and/or workers. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

K. Open Space/Recreation: Will the project or its related activities:		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1.	Affect lands preserved under an open space contract or easement?				X
2.	Affect an existing or potential community recreation area?	X			
3.	Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	X			
4.	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	X			

DISCUSSION:

Abundant parkland, open space, and recreation facilities are available in the City and the Planning Area. The Chico General Services Department, Parks Division and Chico Area Recreation District (CARD) provide park and recreation facilities and services in the City and Planning Area.

Chico General Services Department, Parks Division is responsible for maintaining City parks, street trees, landscaping within public rights-of-way, and developing and maintaining Bidwell Park. Bidwell Park totals approximately 3,670 acres and is one of the nation’s largest municipally owned parks. Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park is a three-story, 26-room Victorian House Museum that stands as a memorial to John and Annie Bidwell. The Silver Dollar Fairgrounds and Speedway offer a wide variety of racing events as well as other exhibitions. Lindo Channel (Sandy Gulch) Greenway is approximately 156 acres in size and stretches over 5.5 miles. Other greenways include Little Chico Creek and Comanche Creek totaling approximately 41 acres.

Chico Area Recreation District (CARD) is a special district that was formed in 1948 and includes the City of Chico and the areas immediately surrounding the City. CARD’s 255-square-mile service area includes a large portion of the Planning Area and extends north to the Tehama County border. CARD is responsible for the acquisition, development, and operation of community parks, as well as recreation programs, indoor recreation areas, and management of various facilities in the Chico area. Their facilities include the 20th St. Community Park, Oak Way Park, Pleasant Valley Community Center and Pool, Rotary Park, Hooker Oak Recreation Area, and the recently completed Phase I of DeGarmo Park, which is a collaborative effort between the City of Chico and CARD to provide recreation opportunities to the rapidly expanding north Chico community.

Public trails and corridors provide opportunities for expanded and varied hiking, mountain bicycling, jogging, bicycling, equestrian, and other recreational experiences. There are approximately 80 miles of trails within Bidwell Park available for one or more of these activities.

Additionally, there are a number of neighborhood parks and three community parks as well as 994 acres of area designated as open space/greenway within the City. There are over 4,870 acres of parkland, open space and recreational facilities in the City.

K.1

The City of Chico does not currently control any lands preserved under an open space contract or easement, however the City does own in fee-title approximately 307 acres of land (Foothill East Preserve and Potter/Warfield Preserve) that are protected for conservation purposes (Butte County

Meadowfoam) and which have protective covenants on the property. No changes have been proposed on these properties. In addition, the City owns an approximately 760-acre property that is currently not protected for conservation or open space purposes, but which is being studied for such purpose. No changes have been made to the city-owned properties that would affect lands preserved under an open space contract or easement. Therefore, this issue will not be discussed in the EIR.

K.2 – K.3

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan would generate additional population that would require construction of new recreational facilities. Therefore, development of the Planning Area may result in a significant impact regarding recreation and will be discussed further in the EIR.

K.4

The 2030 General Plan will include policies that will likely promote the development of recreation facilities. These policies may create an adverse physical effect on the environment by initiating the implementation of additional recreational facilities in the Planning Area. This issue will be discussed in the EIR.

L. Public Services:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Will the project or its related activities have an effect upon or result in a need for altered governmental services in any of the following areas:				
1. Fire protection?	X			
2. Police protection?	X			
3. Schools?	X			
4. Parks and recreation facilities? (See Section K Open Space/Recreation)	X			
5. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads, canals, etc.?	X			
6. Other government services?	X			

DISCUSSION:

The Chico Fire Department provides fire suppression, emergency medical, rescue, hazardous materials response, public assistance, and fire prevention/life safety services to the City of Chico and the unincorporated areas within the City's Sphere of Influence through the Chico Urban Area Fire and Rescue Agreement. In 2006, the City of Chico Fire Department provided 480 automatic aid responses and received 1,264 automatic aid responses. The City of Chico currently charges a Fire Impact Fee, which is used to fund buildings and equipment, on all new development.

The Chico Police Department provides police protection services to the City of Chico. Chico Police patrol teams are responsible for providing uniformed patrol coverage and answering emergency and routine calls for service 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Currently 157 people are employed at the Chico Police Department. Of these, 102 are sworn Police Officers. The remaining personnel hold positions within the Department as Dispatchers, Community Service Officers, and other support staff. Within the Planning Area, outside of existing Chico city limits, law enforcement activities are provided by the Butte County Sheriffs Office and the California Highway Patrol. Butte County Sheriffs Office is responsible for law enforcement, criminal investigation, marijuana eradication, and crime prevention in the unincorporated areas of the county including the unincorporated portions of the Planning Area. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) provides law enforcement services, primarily traffic control, for the State roads and roads in the unincorporated portions of the Planning Area. This City of Chico has mutual aid agreements with the Butte County Sheriffs Office to provide police protection services to areas outside of the existing city limits if requested.

Chico is rich in educational institutions. California State University (CSU), Chico was founded in 1887 and is the second oldest institution of higher learning in the California State University system. Today, CSUC boasts more than 16,000 students. Butte College is located south of Chico and opened a local community college center in 2004. Butte College's total student population today is more than 14,000 students. Chico is also home to the Cal Northern School of Law and a branch campus of the University of Phoenix. Additionally, the Chico Unified School District (CUSD) provides K-12 level educational facilities to residents of the City of Chico and surrounding areas. Currently, CUSD operates 23 school site facilities consisting of 13 elementary school sites, three junior high school sites, two high school sites, and various special education and alternative education facilities.

L.1

The Chico Fire Department would serve the area within the city limits. The Butte County Fire Department and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) would serve the remainder of the Planning Area outside of the incorporated areas of the City of Chico. Development of the Planning Area would increase the population, thereby resulting in the probable

need for additional fire resources. The potential lack of adequate fire protection is a potentially significant impact that will be addressed in the EIR.

L.2

The Chico Police Department would serve the incorporated area within the city limits. The Butte County Sheriff's Department would serve the remainder of the Planning Area that excludes the incorporated areas of the City of Chico. Implementation of the 2030 General Plan would increase the population for the area and, thus, increase the demand on the personnel and time of the Chico Police Department as well as the County Sheriff's Department. The potential reduction of services to the area may be a potentially significant impact that will be addressed further in the EIR.

L.3

The City is served by the Chico Unified School District. The increase of students to this district may have an adverse impact on school services. This is a potentially significant impact that will be discussed further in the EIR.

L.4

Development of the proposed project would generate additional population that would require construction of new recreational facilities. Therefore, development of the Planning Area may result in a potentially significant impact regarding recreation and will be discussed further in the EIR.

L.5

Government service providers would serve the proposed project. Because the proposed project may add to the current population, the need for these services, including the potential maintenance of public facilities, including roads and canals, would increase from the existing level. The need would create a potentially significant impact that will be discussed further in the EIR.

M. Population and Housing: Would the project or its related activities:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	x			
2. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
3. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
4. Conflict with General Plan population growth rates for its planning areas in conjunction with other recently approved development?			X	

DISCUSSION:

City of Chico 2008 population has been established by the California Department of Finance (DOF) at 89,949 and housing units at 36,484. Regional and state growth projections predict the City to grow at approximately two percent annually, resulting in an additional 40,262 residents and approximately 16,376 additional housing units by the year 2030.

M.1

The implementation of the 2030 General Plan would increase the population of Chico. The City has not adopted any type of management program to control residential growth. Thus, this impact is potentially significant and will be discussed further in the EIR.

M.2 – M.3

The Planning Area does contain some houses that may be displaced at full buildout. However, the number of houses and persons displaced would not be considered significant. Additionally, the project would create additional residential homes and increase the overall housing stock in Chico. Therefore, development of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact on displacement of houses and will not be discussed further in the EIR.

M.4

Implementation of the proposed project, which is the updating of the City's General Plan, would not conflict with the population growth rates in the General Plan as the proposed project would establish new population growth rates. This issue will not be discussed in the EIR.

N. Transportation/Circulation Factors: Will the project or its related activities result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Traffic volumes which exceed established Level of Service (LOS) standards on roadway segments or at intersections, or which do not meet applicable safety standards? Based on General Plan policies, significant impacts would generally result if traffic exceeded LOS C on residential streets, LOS D on arterial and collector streets/intersections, and (under specific circumstances) LOS E in built-out areas served by transit.	X			
2. The absence of bikeway facilities in the general locations identified in the General Plan, consistent with guidelines in the <i>Chico Urban Area Bicycle Plan</i> , or failure to meet applicable design requirements and safety standards?			X	
3. Travel characteristics which are not consistent with standards established in the <i>Butte County Congestion Management Plan</i> (CMP), or other General Plan policies related to Transportation Systems Management (TSM)?	X			
4. Substantial impact on existing or proposed public transit systems including rail and air traffic?	X			
5. Effects on existing parking facilities or demand for new parking not provided for by the project?	X			
6. Increase traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrian or other traffic?	X			
7. A change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	X			

DISCUSSION:

As in most communities, the Chico General Plan establishes a traffic operation Level of Service (LOS) measure as a capacity performance threshold for various roadway typologies/classifications. The measure applies to both roadway segments and intersection performance. Currently, the City has adopted a LOS C threshold for local residential streets and LOS D or better for arterial and collector streets. Level of Service E may be permitted in fully developed areas of the City (e.g., Downtown) served by transit with specific findings. According to traffic counts collected on roadway segments in 2007, the City's roadways operate at acceptable levels during the PM peak hour with the exception of four roadway segments along Nord Avenue, East Park Avenue, Skyway, and Mangrove Avenue. The most recent intersection traffic counts (conducted in 2005) identified 37 intersections in the City that were operating at or near the adopted LOS threshold. Roadway Segment and Intersection traffic counts will be conducted as part of the General Plan Update.

Chico is celebrated as one of the most bike-friendly communities in the nation, with more than 61 miles of bikeways throughout the City. The current General Plan and 2007 Bicycle Plan express a strong commitment to enhancing the existing system, improving connectivity, and addressing constraints to bicycle mobility into the future.

Chico offers three public transportation services: public bus, paratransit, and commercial transit. Butte County Transit (B-Line) currently runs 20 bus routes (including trips to Paradise and Oroville)

and serves approximately 850,000 riders annually. Commercial transit (bus and rail) to other areas in the region is offered by Greyhound and Amtrak.

N.1, N.3

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan could substantially increase the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity ratio on roads, and the congestion at intersections. It could also exceed LOS standards and result in traffic impacts within adjoining jurisdictions (Butte County). Additionally, increased growth could present travel characteristics which are not consistent with standards established in the *Butte County Congestion Management Plan*. These impacts are potentially significant and will be discussed further in the EIR.

N.2

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan would not conflict with the *Chico Urban Area Bicycle Plan* or fail to meet applicable bicycle design requirements and safety standards as the project would be the guiding document on which the Bicycle Plan is based as well as the guiding document for bicycle facility design requirements and safety standards. This issue will not be discussed in the EIR.

N.4

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan would potentially increase area population. This increase in population may require additional public transit services. This impact is potentially significant will be discussed further in the EIR.

N.5, N.6

Implementation of the 2030 General Plan could potentially create hazards due to design features, inadequate emergency access, and parking capacity issues. These impacts are potentially significant and will be discussed further in the EIR.

N.7

The proposed project does not include any land use changes that would interfere with the air traffic in the region. However, an increase in population as a result of implementation of the 2030 General Plan may increase the number of flights to serve this additional population and increase air traffic levels in the region. Therefore, the proposed project would have a potentially significant impact on air traffic levels. This issue will be discussed in the EIR.

O. Utilities: Will the project or its related activities have an effect upon or result in a need for new systems or substantial alterations to the following utilities:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Water for domestic use and fire protection?	X			
2. Natural gas, electricity, telephone, or other communications?	X			
3. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	X			
4. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
5. Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
6. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	X			
7. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	X			
8. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	X			
9. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

DISCUSSION:

The California Water Service Company (Cal Water) currently provides potable water to the City of Chico and its residents. The City works cooperatively with this company to provide an acceptable level of service to City residents. The California Water Service Company has recently completed documentation satisfying the requirements of SB610 and SB221 documenting an available and safe potable water supply for its client base. Groundwater is the sole source of the City's domestic water supply.

The City of Chico Water Pollution Control Plant provides an advanced secondary level of wastewater treatment for the City. That Plant operates under a valid Certificate of Compliance from the State of California and meets all discharge requirements associated with the permit. The City is currently undertaking an effort to expand the Water Pollution Control Plant to accommodate growth projections established in the existing 1994 General Plan. New development is charged a Water Pollution Control Plant Capacity Impact Fee, as well as service and facilities fees for the sewer system.

The City does not have a formal storm drainage service area but does provide for and require storm drainage facilities adequate to accommodate the storm drainage needs of existing and new development. The City operates in compliance with Phase II regulations of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and charges a Storm Drainage Impact Fee for all new

development within the City.

Solid waste services for the City are provided by North Valley Waste Management and Norcal Waste Systems and include curbside recycling services. Solid waste is disposed of at the Neal Road Sanitary Landfill. Seasonal leaf collection services are also provided to City residents. Additionally, the City operates a "greenwaste" composting facility to assist in the implementation of waste stream reduction requirements.

O.1, O.3, O.4

Any new development in the Planning Area would require additional water and wastewater facilities or the expansion of existing facilities as well as exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board. As such, this could result in a potentially significant impact. These issues will be discussed further in the EIR.

O.2

SBC provides telephone services and Pacific Gas & Electric provides electric and natural gas services to the City. An increase in population and development may require an expansion of existing service facilities from these suppliers. These impacts are potentially significant and will be discussed further in the EIR.

O.5

Any future development in the Planning Area would create new impervious surfaces that would increase the runoff to downstream areas and the need for additional drainage facilities. This is considered to be a potentially significant impact. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

O.6

Groundwater is the sole source of the City's domestic water supply. The California Water Service Company has recently completed documentation satisfying the requirements of SB610 and SB221 documenting an available and safe potable water supply for its client base. However, land use changes which would be implemented as a result of project adoption would increase the potential population of the City and thereby increase the potential water demand. As development occurs, groundwater usage could increase, and supply may not be sufficient enough to meet the demand. New water sources may be necessary to serve the Planning Area. This is considered to be a potentially significant impact. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

O.7

Increased population as a result of the proposed project could impact wastewater services and capacity to serve the City. This is considered to be a potentially significant impact. Wastewater service issues will be discussed further in the EIR.

O.8

North Valley Waste Management and Norcal Waste Systems provide solid waste, recyclable materials, and greenwaste services to the City's residents and businesses. Solid waste generated in the city is disposed of at the Neal Road Sanitary Landfill, which is owned by Butte County and operated by the Butte County Public Works Department.

A 2006 municipal services review conducted by the Butte County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) determined that remaining capacity in the Neal Road Landfill is adequate to accommodate planned growth in the City's SOI, recent island annexations, and the Northwest Chico Specific Plan. However, this determination was based on land use designations identified in the 1994 General Plan. As the proposed project would increase the population and development potential in the City, it is no longer assured that the Neal Road Landfill will have adequate capacity to accommodate future growth of the City. This is considered to be a potentially significant impact. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

4. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Pursuant to Section 15382 of the State EIR Guidelines, a project shall be found to have a significant effect on the environment if any of the following are true:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. The project has the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.	X			
2. The project has possible environmental effects which are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. (Cumulatively considerable means that the incremental effects of an individual project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past, current and probable future projects.	X			
3. The environmental effects of a project will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.	X			

DISCUSSION:

- a) Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project does have the potential to eliminate animal and plant habitats, to reduce or restrict the range of endangered species, and to eliminate important prehistorical resources. This will be discussed further in the EIR.
- b) Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project does have impacts that would be cumulatively considerable. These issues will be discussed further in the EIR.
- c) Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project does contain environmental effects that would either directly or indirectly affect human beings. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

REFERENCES:

California Department of Finance (DOF). 2008. Table E.5 Population and Housing Estimates. Available at: http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/estimates/e-5_2001-06/

City of Chico. 1994. *City of Chico General Plan*. Available at: http://www.chico.ca.us/common/_mod_resource.asp?p=179&f=54

City of Chico. 1999. *Master Environmental Assessment for Chico General Plan*.

City of Chico. 2008. *Existing Conditions Report. February 2008*. Available at: <http://www.chicogeneralplan.com/library.html#GeneralPlanBackgroundDocuments>

County of Butte. 2008. *Proposed Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA*. Available at: <http://buttefire.org/Fireprevention/protplan/newsrafhszmap.pdf>