



PLANNING SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

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**CITY OF CHICO
PLANNING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
FOR THE CITY OF CHICO 2030 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE (SCH# 2008122038)**

January 28, 2011

Name of Project: Chico 2030 General Plan Update

Location: The City of Chico consists of approximately 22 square miles in the central portion of northern California in Butte County. The City of Chico 2030 General Plan Planning Area (Planning Area) includes the City of Chico, the City's Sphere of Influence, and certain, identified unincorporated areas in Butte County. The Planning Area boundaries are the same as those used in the current 1994 General Plan. The Planning Area consists of approximately 150 square miles of land located in the west-central portion of Butte County.

Description of Project: The proposed project is the adoption and implementation of an updated General Plan for the City of Chico. The Chico 2030 General Plan is a comprehensive update of the existing 1994 General Plan. The 2030 General Plan includes the seven State-required elements of a General Plan (Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Open Space, Noise, Safety, and Conservation) as well as the following additional Elements: Sustainability, Downtown, Community Design, Parks, Public Facilities and Services, Cultural Resources/Historic Preservation, and Economic Development.

The proposed General Plan Update includes a Land Use Diagram which depicts the location and distribution of land use designations in the Planning Area, including several new mixed-use land use designations not present in the 1994 General Plan. In addition, the Land Use Diagram identifies several areas with special land use considerations. Areas identified for potential change include 15 Opportunity Sites and five Special Planning Areas. Opportunity Sites represent those areas in the city that are expected to be the focus of improvement, change, and revitalization over the next 20 years. These strategic infill and redevelopment areas include underutilized transportation corridors, regional retail centers, areas in the City's core, and other residential, light industrial, and mixed-use areas that can accommodate growth. The Special Planning Areas identify areas with significant new growth potential requiring more detailed subsequent land use planning in the form of a specific plan, planned development, or other comprehensive plan. The Special Planning Areas are to be developed as connected and complete neighborhoods with a mix of housing types, employment, services, and shopping opportunities, along with parks and open space. Additionally, as part of this proposed General Plan Update, the Land Use Diagram includes a Resource Constraint Overlay for those areas with known sensitive environmental resources that may reduce development potential.

Environmental Review: The City has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that provides a programmatic review of the potential environmental impacts that could arise from implementation of the proposed General Plan Update through development of the land uses within the Planning Area, as regulated and guided by General Plan policies and actions. The Draft EIR will be used to evaluate subsequent projects (public and private) under the proposed General Plan Update consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines.



The Draft EIR is a focused analysis of the following environmental issue areas that may be impacted by the project:

- Land Use
- Agricultural Resources
- Population/Housing/Employment
- Human Health/Risk of Upset
- Transportation and Circulation
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Geology and Soils
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Palentological Resources
- Public Services and Utilities
- Visual Resources
- Energy and Climate Change
- Cumulative Impacts
- Long Term Implications

The Draft EIR was released for public and agency review from September 30, 2010 through November 30, 2010 (a 60-day review period). During the public review period, the City received comment letters from agencies, interest groups and the public regarding the Draft EIR. A Final EIR has been prepared, which responds to the comments received on the Draft EIR. The Final EIR also includes certain revisions to the Draft EIR.

The Final EIR will be available for public review starting Friday, January 28, 2011.

Where Documents Are Available for Review:

The Final EIR and supporting materials may be reviewed at the City of Chico Planning Services Department, 411 Main Street, Chico; the Butte County Library, Chico Branch, 1106 Sherman Avenue, Chico; and the Meriam Library, Special Collections, 3rd floor, CSU, Chico. ***The Final EIR is also available on the City's website at <http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/>*** Please feel free to contact Brendan Vieg at (530) 879-6806 or at bvieg@ci.chico.ca.us with any questions.

Anticipated Significant Impacts:

The implementation of the proposed General Plan Update has the potential to generate 15 significant and unavoidable impacts. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires an EIR to discuss unavoidable significant environmental effects, including those that can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Of these impacts, eight are the result of the proposed General Plan Update, six are the result of General Plan Update combined with other cumulative development in the larger region, and one is considered an impact of both the proposed General Plan Update and cumulative development.

The significant and unavoidable project impacts are in the following topic areas: Agriculture (one significant and unavoidable impact), Traffic and Circulation (two significant and unavoidable impacts), Air Quality (two significant and unavoidable impacts), Noise (one significant and unavoidable impact), Visual Resources and Aesthetics (one significant and unavoidable impact), and Energy and Climate Change (one significant and unavoidable impact).

The cumulatively considerable and significant and unavoidable impacts are in the following topic areas: Agriculture, Traffic and Circulation, Air Quality, Noise, Biological Resources, Visual Resources and Aesthetics, and Energy and Climate Change.

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