

4.3 POPULATION/HOUSING/EMPLOYMENT

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR or DEIR) analyzes the socioeconomic conditions in the City of Chico, including population characteristics, housing, and employment opportunities. Multiple data sources from different years were used for this analysis in order to present existing population trends and to develop reasonable housing and employment projections.

4.3.1 EXISTING SETTING

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population Trends

The City of Chico has grown steadily since 2000. The California Department of Finance (DOF) estimates that Chico's 2008 population is 86,949, an increase of 44 percent from the 2000 population of 60,516. In contrast, the population of Butte County grew by 8.5 percent during the same period, from 203,171 in 2000 to 220,407 to 2008 (DOF, 2008). **Table 4.3-1** details both city and county population trends since 2000. The high rate at which Chico's population has grown can be attributed to Chico's annexations of surrounding unincorporated areas. Annexations can also explain the county's comparatively minimal growth rate. For example, between 2000 and 2008, 12,098 housing units were added to the city, yet 10,568, or 87 percent, of those units were already existing and simply annexed from Butte County between 2000 and 2006. Based on historic growth trends, demographic and economic conditions, and community objectives and desires, the city is expecting 40,262 new residents and a total city population of 139,713 by the year 2030 (City of Chico, 2010).

**TABLE 4.3-1
CITY OF CHICO AND BUTTE COUNTY POPULATION GROWTH**

Year	City of Chico		Butte County	
	Population	Percent Change	Population	Percent Change
2000	60,516	N/A	203,171	N/A
2001	65,100	7.57%	205,150	0.97%
2002	66,975	2.88%	207,662	1.22%
2003	68,547	2.35%	210,235	1.24%
2004	71,207	3.88%	212,393	1.03%
2005	73,614	3.38%	214,280	0.89%
2006	78,787	7.03%	216,351	0.97%
2007	84,491	7.24%	218,312	0.91%
2008	86,949	2.91%	220,407	0.96%

Source: State of California Department of Finance. 2008. Table 2: E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates. Sacramento, California.

While there are several sources that identify population within the Chico city limits, there is no official tracking of population for the area within the greater Chico Sphere of Influence (SOI), which includes the lands within and some land outside, of the city limits. In order to determine the population of both the City of Chico and the city's current SOI, the Department of Finance figure for the 2008 population within city limits (86,949) is added to an estimate of the population living within the current SOI but outside the city limits. In 2008, the population of area within the current SOI was estimated to be 99,451 (City of Chico, 2010).

4.3 POPULATION/HOUSING/EMPLOYMENT

Household Trends and Demographics

The household is the basic unit of analysis in most microeconomic and government reports. According to the U.S. Census, a household includes all the persons who occupy a housing unit. A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied (or if vacant, is intended for occupancy) as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements. People not living in households are classified as living in group quarters (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Between 2000 and 2008, the average number of persons per household decreased in the city from 2.4 persons per household in 2000 to 2.3 persons per household in 2008 (DOF, 2008).

Housing Units

According to the DOF, in 2000 there were a total of 24,386 housing units in the city. By 2008 the total number of units in the city grew by 50 percent to 36,484 units, which was a much higher rate of growth than that experienced by the county at 12 percent (**Table 4.3-2**). As discussed above, a large portion of the growth in the city, as well as the comparative low rate of growth in the County, is due to the city's annexation of existing units from surrounding unincorporated areas. In 2008, the number of housing units within the current SOI was estimated to be 41,438 (City of Chico, 2010).

**TABLE 4.3-2
HOUSING TRENDS
CITY OF CHICO AND BUTTE COUNTY**

Year	City of Chico				Butte County			
	Single-Family Housing Units	Multi-Family Housing Units	Mobile Homes	Total Housing Units	Single-Family Housing Units	Multi-Family Housing Units	Mobile Homes	Total Housing Units
2000	12,819	10,934	633	24,386	54,041	17,287	14,195	85,523
2002	13,720	12,176	1,131	27,027	55,592	17,479	14,290	87,361
2004	15,345	12,339	1,319	29,003	57,881	17,635	14,382	89,898
2006	17,900	13,563	1,401	32,864	59,783	18,242	15,358	93,383
2008	20,160	14,470	1,854	36,484	61,185	18,660	15,847	95,692
Total Change 2000 to 2008	7,341	3,536	1,221	12,098	7,144	1,373	1,652	10,169
Percentage Change 2000 to 2008	57%	32%	193%	50%	13%	8%	12%	12%

Source: State of California Department of Finance. 2008. Table 2: E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates. Sacramento, California.

Household Size

Household size refers to the number of persons in a household. As reported by 2008 projections from Claritas (a data firm) and shown in the *City of Chico Housing Element 2009-2014*, Chico's average household size has declined by less than 1 percent since the 2000 U.S. Census, which is a minor

change and reflective of an increasing single population (15 percent) and non-family population (5 percent), which was slightly higher than the growth of family households (16 percent). In 2008, the average household size in the city was 2.41 persons per household (City of Chico, 2009).

Household Income

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) determined, based on the number of persons per household, that the 2008 area median income (AMI) for Butte County was \$54,500. The 2008 AMI for the City of Chico was \$46,350, an increase from the 2000 AMI of \$29,359 (City of Chico, 2009). Household incomes in both Chico and Butte County were less than the California statewide median household income of \$67,800.

Tenure

Tenure describes the proportion of housing unit renters to owners. The majority of households in the city are renter-occupied (58 percent in 2008). The ownership rate in the city in 2008 was 42 percent. **Table 4.3-3** illustrates the ratio of owners versus renters in the City of Chico in 2000 and 2008. As shown in **Table 4.3-3**, the proportion of owner-occupied housing units as compared to the number of available units increased very slightly from 2000 to 2008.

**TABLE 4.3-3
CHICO HOUSEHOLD TENURE**

	2000		2008	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Owner-Occupied	9,269	40%	11,131	42%
Renter-Occupied	14,105	60%	15,389	58%
Total Occupied	23,374	100%	26,520	100%

Source: City of Chico. August 2009. City of Chico Housing Element 2009-2014.

Housing Unit Vacancy

Vacancy trends in housing are analyzed using a “vacancy rate,” which establishes the relationship between housing supply and demand. For example, if the demand for housing is greater than the supply, then the vacancy rate is low and the price of housing will most likely increase. According to the California HCD’s *Raising the Roof, California Housing Development Projections and Constraints, 1997–2020*, the desirable vacancy rate in a community is considered to be 5 percent. Generally, when the vacancy rate drops below 5 percent, the demand for housing exceeds the supply and prospective buyers and renters may experience an increase in housing costs.

The City of Chico had an overall vacancy rate of 3.34 percent in 2008, which was half of the vacancy rate of 6.46 for the County (City of Chico, 2009). **Table 4.3-4** shows the housing vacancy rates in Chico and Butte County from 2000 to 2008. As shown, the city’s vacancy rate decreased slightly between 2007 and 2008 but otherwise remained consistent at 3.73 percent. The county’s vacancy rate has declined steadily every year since 2000.

4.3 POPULATION/HOUSING/EMPLOYMENT

**TABLE 4.3-4
HOUSING VACANCY STATUS
CITY OF CHICO AND BUTTE COUNTY**

Year	Vacancy Rate	
	City of Chico	Butte County
2000	3.73%	6.97%
2001	3.73%	6.87%
2002	3.73%	6.85%
2003	3.73%	6.83%
2004	3.73%	6.79%
2005	3.73%	6.75%
2006	3.73%	6.65%
2007	3.73%	6.65%
2008	3.34%	6.64%

Source: City of Chico. August 2009. City of Chico Housing Element 2009-2014. State of California Department of Finance. 2008. Table 2: E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates. Sacramento, California.

Employment

According to the California Employment Development Department, the labor force for Chico comprised 34,200 people in 2008. In the same year, the unemployment rate in Chico was 7.8 percent, or 2,700 people (EDD, 2008). Major employers in Chico are concentrated in medical, education, food distribution services, and commercial. **Table 4.3-5** shows the number and percentage of jobs by employer in the city.

**TABLE 4.3-5
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY – CHICO**

Employer	Year 2008	
	Number	Percentage
Enloe Medical Center	2,400	29.6%
Chico Unified School District	1,443	17.8%
California State University, Chico	1,000	12.3%
Associated Students California	920	11.4%
City of Chico	518	6.4%
Sierra Nevada Brewery	325	4.0%
Raley's	245	3.0%
Aero Union	240	3.0%
Costco Wholesale Corp.	220	2.7%
Sungard Public Sector	208	2.6%
Association for Retarded Citizens	200	2.5%

Employer	Year 2008	
	Number	Percentage
Addus Healthcare Inc.	200	2.5%
Improvement Direct	185	2.3%

Source: City of Chico. August 2009. City of Chico Housing Element 2009-2014.

4.3.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970

The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, is a federal law establishing minimum standards for federally funded programs and projects that include the acquisition of real property or displacement of persons from their homes, businesses, or farms. The act applies to the acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of real property for federal or federally funded projects. Regulations implementing the act are found at 49 CFR 24.

Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act provides minimum requirements for federally funded programs or projects when units that are part of a community's low-income housing supply are demolished or converted to a use other than low- or moderate-income housing.

Section 104(d) requirements include:

- Replacement, on a one-for-one basis, of all occupied and vacant occupiable low- or moderate-income housing units that are demolished or converted to a use other than low- or moderate-income housing in connection with an activity assisted under the Housing and Community Development Act, and
- Provision of certain relocation assistance to any lower-income person displaced as a direct result of the following activities in connection with federal assistance:
 - Demolition of any housing unit, or
 - Conversion of a low- or moderate-income housing unit to a use other than a low- or moderate-income residence.

STATE

California Relocation Statute – Government Code Section 7260

California Government Code section 7260 et seq., establishes policies for the fair treatment of, and relocation assistance for, persons displaced as a result of programs or projects undertaken by a public agency. Regulations implementing these policies are found at 25 CCR section 6000 et seq.

Housing Element Law – Article 10.6 of the Government Code, Sections 65580–65589.8

The California Legislature has declared the attainment of affordable housing and a suitable living environment for every Californian to be of vital importance. Attaining the state's housing goals requires efforts from all sectors including the private sector and all levels of government. Each local

4.3 POPULATION/HOUSING/EMPLOYMENT

government has power to facilitate the improvement and development of housing for all economic segments of the community accounting for economic, environmental, and fiscal factors as well as community goals and regional housing needs. One tool used by local governments to achieve these goals is the housing element of the general plan. The housing element identifies and analyzes existing and projected housing needs and presents goals, policies, quantified objectives, and programs to address those needs. Housing elements also provide implementation measures for these programs. Housing elements must be updated at least every five years. The current City of Chico Housing Element was adopted by the city in August 2009.

Redevelopment Housing Set-Aside

State law requires the Chico Redevelopment Agency to set aside a minimum of 20 percent of all tax increment revenue generated from redevelopment projects for affordable housing. The agency's set-aside funds must be used for activities that increase, improve, or preserve the supply of affordable housing. Current redevelopment law requires that all new or substantially rehabilitated housing units developed or otherwise assisted with the Redevelopment Agency's set-aside funds must remain affordable to the targeted income group for at least 55 years for rentals and 45 years for ownership housing. The Chico Redevelopment Agency anticipates generating \$7,452,209 by Fiscal Year 2013–2014 for the Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund (LMIHF). The LMIHF will primarily be used for the First-Time Homebuyer Program, assistance to at-risk units, assistance to new construction of affordable units, and other eligible housing activities.

LOCAL

Regional Housing Needs Plan

California Government Code Section 65584 requires the State Department of Housing and Community Development, in consultation with local councils of governments, to determine each region's existing and projected housing needs. Each council of governments is then required to adopt a Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP) that allocates a share of the regional housing need to each city and county. The RHNP, setting forth the allocation of the City of Chico's fair share of regional housing, is developed by the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG). The RHNP allocates fair share needs based on household income groupings over the five-year planning period for each specific jurisdiction's housing element.

The intent of the RHNP is to ensure that local jurisdictions address the needs of their immediate areas and have the ability to provide their share of housing needed for the entire region.

Regional Housing Needs Plans are also intended to assure that every community provides an opportunity for a mix of affordable housing to serve all economic segments of its population. Housing elements are required to demonstrate that there are adequate sites and appropriate zoning to address existing and anticipated housing demands during the planning period and that market forces are not inhibited in addressing the housing needs for all facets of a particular community.

BCAG assigned Chico a Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation of 5,716 units for the 2007–2014 planning period. According to Table 1 of the Chico Housing Element, 2007 to 2014 Regional Housing Needs Plan, the allocations by income level were extremely low income – 780 units; very low income – 780 units; low income – 1,007 units; moderate income – 960 units; and above moderate income – 2,189 units (City of Chico, 2009).

City of Chico General Plan Housing Element

The Housing Element was adopted in August 2009 and serves as Chico's primary policy document regarding the development, rehabilitation, and preservation of housing for all economic segments of the population within its jurisdiction. The Housing Element identifies and analyzes existing and projected housing needs of Chico and states goals, policies, and actions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing. The Housing Element also identifies sites for housing development that are adequate to accommodate the city's allocation of the regional housing need. The goals, policies, and actions are classified into seven different categories as follows:

- Equal housing opportunity
- Provide affordable housing
- Range of housing choices
- Provide special housing needs
- Improvement, rehabilitation, and revitalization/reinvestment of existing housing
- Increase the homeownership
- Energy-efficient resources in new/existing housing

4.3.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15131(a), economic or social effects of a project are not treated as significant effects on the environment. If the proposed project were to cause physical changes as a result of economic or social changes, then the physical effects (for example, the destruction of habitat resulting from housing construction to accommodate increased population) could be considered significant. This analysis evaluates the project's impacts on population and housing based on the standards of significance identified in the State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G. A population and housing impact is considered significant if implementation of the project would:

- 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).
- 2) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- 3) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

METHODOLOGY

Demographic and housing conditions were determined utilizing existing documents and other information sources. Information was gathered and reviewed from the U.S. Census Bureau, the California Department of Finance, the California Employment Development Department, and the Butte County Association of Governments. The City of Chico Website and Housing Element were

4.3 POPULATION/HOUSING/EMPLOYMENT

additional sources of information on housing and socioeconomic conditions as well as on city housing policy. The BAE City of Chico General Plan Update Market Opportunity and Land Absorption Projections Report (2008) was also utilized in this analysis.

The proposed General Plan Update includes development assumptions for build-out of the Land Use Diagram. The methodology used is intended to provide an accurate estimate of future development without overstating impacts by establishing estimated average future development assumptions, rather than simply calculating maximum development potential and corresponding capacity.

The land use assumptions were applied to acreage figures by land use designation (including special assumptions for the Downtown and transit corridors) and development type (e.g., new growth area, infill, underutilized opportunity sites, and existing conditions with no change assumption). For example, the majority of mixed-use designations allow, rather than require, a combination of uses, so for the Commercial Mixed Use designation, the land use assumptions presume that some commercial mixed-use sites would be developed exclusively with commercial uses and others would involve some integration of residential and/or office uses. This estimates the average distribution.

Utilizing the development assumptions about land use mix and distribution, site development considerations, and employment factors, the proposed General Plan Update provides average housing and employment factors by development type (e.g., new growth versus infill). Specifically, the proposed General Plan Update develops estimated average density, employment, and floor area ratio factors for each General Plan land use designation in new growth areas, infill, underutilized sites, and existing development. Furthermore, the proposed General Plan Update estimates the percentage of gross land that would be removed from development potential for major infrastructure (roads and utilities). Depending upon land use type and location, this number varies in order to provide a realistic build-out condition.

As further described in Section 4.0, Introduction to the Environmental Analysis and Assumptions Used, the proposed General Plan Update is not expected to reach build-out until after the year 2030. Build-out under the proposed General Plan Update would result in the following conditions (see **Table 3.0-1** for further details on build-out conditions):

- Total residential dwelling units: 62,933
- Total population: 151,039
- Total nonresidential square feet: 41,604,485
- Total employees: 68,466

The following proposed General Plan Update policies and actions address population, housing, and employment:

Policy LU-1.2 (Growth Boundaries/Limits) – Maintain long-term boundaries between urban and agricultural uses in the west and between urban uses and the foothills in the east, and limit expansion north and south to produce a compact urban form.

Action LU-1.2.1 (Greenline) – Retain the Greenline.

- Policy LU-1.3 (Growth Plan) – Maintain balanced growth by encouraging infill development where City services are in place, and allowing expansion into Special Planning Areas.*
- Action LU-1.3.1 (Public Investment in Infrastructure) – When setting priorities for public infrastructure spending, consider improvements which will support development and redevelopment of the designated Opportunity Sites.*
- Policy LU-5.1 (Opportunity Sites) - Facilitate increased density and intensity of development and revitalization in the following Opportunity Sites:*
- *Central City Opportunity Sites - Downtown, South Campus, and East 8th and 9th Street Corridors.*
 - *Corridor Opportunity Sites - North Esplanade, Mangrove Avenue, Park Avenue, Nord Avenue, and East Avenue.*
 - *Regional Center Opportunity Sites - North Valley Plaza, East 20th Street, and Skyway.*
 - *Other Opportunity Sites - The Wedge, Vanella Orchard, Pomona Avenue, and Eaton Road.*
- Action LU-5.1.1 (Incentives for Opportunity Site Development) – Utilize City incentives identified in Action LU-2.3.1 to promote infill development, redevelopment, rehabilitation, and mixed-use projects in the designated Opportunity Sites.*
- Action OS-5.2.1 (Agricultural Buffers) – Require buffers for development adjacent to active agricultural operations along the Greenline to reduce incompatibilities.*
- Policy CD-2.2 (City Edge) – Maintain a clear City edge and establish a sense of entry and arrival to the City.*

The impact analysis provided below utilizes these proposed policies and actions to determine whether implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would result in significant population, housing, and employment impacts. The analyses identify and describe how specific policies and actions as well as other City regulations and standards provide enforceable requirements and/or performance standards that avoid or minimize significant impacts.

PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Substantial Increase in Population and Housing (Standard of Significance 1)

Impact 4.3.1 Subsequent land use activities associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would accommodate anticipated residential and employment anticipated by the year 2030 as well as additional growth capacity beyond the year 2030. This is considered a **less than significant** impact.

As part of the development of the proposed General Plan Update, a projection of residential and nonresidential (retail, commercial, office, industrial, and other uses) demands for the city for the year 2030 based on a continued two percent growth rate was conducted (BAE City of Chico General Plan Update Market Opportunity and Land Absorption Projections [2008]). A comparison of year

4.3 POPULATION/HOUSING/EMPLOYMENT

2030 demands and total growth potential under the proposed General Plan Update is provided in **Table 4.0-1**. As demonstrated in **Table 4.0-1**, the proposed General Plan Update growth capacity would exceed the city's anticipated needs for year 2030 for both residential and nonresidential growth. Specifically, proposed General Plan Update growth capacity would exceed the city's anticipated housing needs by 31 percent, or 5,119 units, and nonresidential employment needs by 23 percent, or 4,730 employees. However, it is important to note that the proposed General Plan Update does not include any policy provisions that require that its build-out potential be attained and that additional land capacity beyond the projected need provides a land supply "buffer" to address the fact that not all of the identified land will be available for development at any given time based on landowner willingness to sell or develop, site readiness, environmental constraints, market changes, and other factors.

Furthermore, as identified in Section 3.0, Project Description, the intent of the proposed General Plan Update is to accommodate anticipated growth through compact, walkable, infill, new complete neighborhoods and mixed-use development, as well as focusing redevelopment along transit corridors and at other key locations. The proposed General Plan Update and its Land Use Diagram would provide for this growth, minimize outward expansion of the city's boundaries, and retain the current Butte County Greenline along the western boundary of the city. The Land Use Element of the General Plan requires the city to maintain the long-term boundaries between urban and agricultural uses in the west and between urban uses and the foothills in the east and to limit expansion north and south to produce a compact urban form. Given that a compact urban form seeks to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and public services and to provide higher densities and intensities of development, this approach to accommodating the city's future growth would reduce the environmental effects of that growth by directing new population towards existing developed areas, public facilities, and transit, thereby reducing vehicle miles travelled and air pollution. There are also policies throughout the General Plan that provide incentives to encourage infill and redevelopment, which is required in order to reach the goal of accommodating future housing and job needs within a compact urban form. For example, the Land Use Element requires the city to maintain a tiered development fee program where different types of development have different impacts and to provide city incentives to promote infill development such as priority project processing, deferral of development impact or permit fees, flexibility in development standards such as parking, setbacks, and landscaping requirements, density bonuses, and support for infrastructure upgrades. In addition, by requiring the city to maintain clear urban boundaries, the Land Use Element also ensures that the growth effects of sprawl development patterns, such as the loss of biological resources and the conversion of agricultural lands, are reduced.

In addition to these policy provisions, the proposed General Plan Update Land Use Diagram upholds the Greenline along the perimeter of the Planning Area (see **Figure 3.0-3** of Section 3.0, Project Description). The Greenline is intended to restrict development on the prime farmlands west of Chico and preserves this area for agricultural production. The use of the Greenline would continue to ensure the long-term ability of agricultural uses to serve as an Urban Growth Boundary, which is coordinated by both the City of Chico and Butte County, in order to provide a boundary between agricultural land uses and urban land uses.

Given that the General Plan policy framework supports a compact urban form and maintains urban boundaries, and that the Land Use Diagram upholds the Greenline, environmental impacts associated with population growth in the Planning Area are considered to be **less than significant**. The environmental effects of build-out under the proposed General Plan Update are addressed in the technical sections of this Draft EIR.

Displacement of a Substantial Number of Persons or Housing (Standards of Significance 2 and 3)

Impact 4.3.2 Subsequent land use activities associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would not result in the displacement of substantial numbers of housing or persons. This is considered a **less than significant** impact.

As discussed under Impact 4.3.2 above, the intent of the proposed General Plan Update is to accommodate anticipated growth through a compact urban form that seeks to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and public services, thus minimizing the need for new or significantly expanded infrastructure that could be the impetus for the removal of housing units and/or businesses. Where new infrastructure will be required, roadway sizing and alignments set forth in the proposed General Plan Update were designed to largely avoid impacts to existing developed areas.

In addition, while implementation of the proposed General Plan Update does not directly result in the construction of any new development, the proposed General Plan Update would change land use designations in some areas not currently designated for growth (Special Planning Areas) and would allow for infill and redevelopment in the Downtown, along transit corridors, and at other key locations in the city. While new development and infill development would not result in displacement of housing or people, redevelopment of existing developments has the potential to result in some displacement of persons or housing. However, this displacement would be minimal and, as the proposed General Plan Update growth capacity would exceed the city's anticipated needs for year 2030 for both residential and nonresidential growth, it is unlikely that substantial numbers of housing or people would be permanently displaced or that such displacement would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update will not displace substantial numbers of housing units or people and will not necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No demolition or substantial change in land use designation that would result in the displacement of residents is proposed in the General Plan Update. Therefore, impacts associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan relative to displacement of a substantial number of persons or housing are considered **less than significant**.

4.3.4 CUMULATIVE SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

CUMULATIVE SETTING

The cumulative setting condition includes the unincorporated rural communities surrounding the City of Chico, as well as the larger Butte County region, including the cities of Biggs, Chico, Gridley, and Oroville, the Town of Paradise, and the County of Butte (see regional growth projections under **Table 4.0-2** and **4.0-3**). Presented in **Table 4.0-2** and **4.0-3** are housing and population projections that the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) anticipates within Butte County by the year 2030. The cumulative setting also includes the proposed and approved large-scale development projects listed in **Table 4.0-4**.

The cumulative impact analysis herein focuses on whether the project's contribution to projected regional population growth would result in a cumulatively considerable environmental impact. The project's impact would be cumulatively considerable if, when considered with other existing, approved, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable development in the cumulative setting, it would contribute to substantial regional population growth.

4.3 POPULATION/HOUSING/EMPLOYMENT

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Cumulative Population and Housing Increases (Standard of Significance 1)

Impact 4.3.3 Subsequent land use activities associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in addition to existing, approved, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable development, could result in a cumulative increase in population and housing growth in the City of Chico as well as in the surrounding Butte County region, along with associated environmental impacts. However, implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would accommodate anticipated residential and employment growth in an efficient and compact manner. This is a **less than cumulatively considerable** impact.

BCAG anticipates that growth within Butte County as a whole will occur at an annual rate of 2 percent. As discussed under Impact 4.3.1, the proposed General Plan Update would provide capacity to meet and potentially exceed the city's anticipated 2030 housing and employment needs. However, it is important to note that the proposed General Plan Update does not include any policy provisions that require that its build-out potential be attained and that additional land capacity beyond the projected need provides a land supply "buffer" to address the fact that not all of the identified land will be available for development at any given time based on landowner willingness to sell or develop, site readiness, environmental constraints, market changes, and other factors. Furthermore, population growth in the city would be accommodated via infill and redevelopment at strategic locations throughout the City, as well as in Special Planning Areas to be developed as connected and complete neighborhoods with a mix of residential densities, employment, services, and retail, parks and open space. The proposed General Plan Update policy provisions and its Land Use Diagram would provide for growth with minimal outward expansion of the city's boundaries and would retain the current Greenline along the western boundary of the city. Thus, growth accommodated under the proposed General Plan Update would be confined to the immediate Chico area and would avoid the growth effects of sprawl development patterns or induced growth in the larger Butte County region. Thus, this impact is considered **less than cumulatively considerable**.

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