



# CITY OF COLUSA

## PLANNING DIVISION

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**DATE:** October 24, 2007

**TO:** Honorable Mayor MacKaben and Council Members

**FROM:** Randy Johnsen, Interim City Manager  
Eileen Shaw, City Planner

**SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN ADOPTION AND FINAL MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT REPORT CERTIFICATION**

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### **CITY COUNCIL ACTION REQUESTED**

To adopt the General Plan update and certify the Final Master Environmental Impact Report.

### **BACKGROUND**

Colusa's current General Plan, prepared in 1994, is typical of a previous generation of general plans that were written 10 to 25 years ago. The plan substantially met state law requirements for general plans at that time—it included a land use plan, a “statement of overriding goals”, and a set of policies for each required element.

The intent of the current General Plan update has been to take a more detailed approach to comprehensive planning of Colusa, since it proposes to incorporate substantial amounts of undeveloped acreage. Unlike the previous general plan, this draft General Plan incorporates “performance” policies, standards, and implementing actions that provide clear direction for future development in the City.

The efforts undertaken prior to November 2004 provided a first draft land use map, some background data, and information updates from which City staff and the General Plan/Master EIR consultant could “tier off” in order to complete the general plan update and the Master EIR (MEIR). Since then, staff and the consultant have worked with the City Council, Planning Commission, local agencies, developers, and the public to provide a meaningful General Plan that can serve as a development tool rather than remain a shelf document.

### Public Participation and Milestones in General Plan Development and Review

Over the last three years, the City of Colusa has engaged the community and its decision-makers in a series of workshops and public hearings as the General Plan was being drafted. The list below outlines the public hearings and milestones in the General Plan and MEIR development and review process:

- On October 19, 2004, the City Council approved the General Plan scope of work and authorization for staff to proceed to draft the General Plan update and prepare the MEIR.

- On April 12, 2005, the City Council endorsed a preliminary Land Use Diagram and corresponding land use designations that would serve as the basis for the General Plan Update and MEIR.
- On April 11, 2006, following consultant's/staff's presentation and Council/Commission's review of the first draft of the General Plan, the Council approved a schedule that directed consultant/staff to begin a series of public meetings toward finalizing the draft General Plan for circulation with the MEIR.
- On April 26, 2006, the draft Land Use element was presented to the Planning Commission and the public. At the close of the meeting, the Commission directed consultant/staff as to which changes should be made to the draft Land Use element, with an understanding of the effects such changes would have on the remaining General Plan elements and the MEIR.
- On May 5, 2006, the Planning Commission reviewed the checklist of recommended changes to the Land Use element and approved the changes to the draft element. The draft Circulation Element was then presented to the Planning Commission and the public. At the close of the meeting, the Commission continued the hearing on the draft Circulation element to May 24, 2006 to enable further discussion.
- On May 24, 2006, the Planning Commission continued discussions on the draft Circulation Element and considered a staff-recommended Urban Reserve land use designation to be added to the Land Use Map. At the close of the meeting, the Commission directed consultant/staff as to which changes should be made to the draft Circulation element, with an understanding of the effects such changes would have on the remaining General Plan elements and the MEIR.
- On June 7, 2006, the Planning Commission continued discussions on changes to the draft Circulation map, the General Plan's discussion of the Colusa County Airport, and the Urban Reserve land use designation. At the close of the meeting, the Commission directed consultant/staff as to which changes should be made to the draft Circulation element and Land Use element.
- On June 21, 2006, the draft Community Character and Design element and the Safety element were presented to the Planning Commission and the public. At the close of the meeting, the Commission directed consultant/staff as to which changes should be made to these draft elements.
- On July 12, 2006, the Commission received the proposed changes to the Circulation Map and Safety element and discussed with consultant/staff further minor changes required to the Land Use map and flood hazard map. Staff then presented the Noise element, Parks Recreation and Resource Conservation element, and Municipal Facilities and Services element. At the close of the meeting, the Commission directed consultant/staff as to which changes should be made to these draft elements.
- On October 25, 2006, the Commission signed a resolution recommending that the October 2006 *City of Colusa Draft General Plan* update be delivered to the Colusa City Council, with final incorporated changes as directed by the Planning Commission on this date, for the Council's review and consideration. This draft General Plan excluded the Community Character and Design element, which would require further review by the Planning Commission prior to delivery to the City Council.

- On January 16, 2007, following consultant's/staff's presentation and Council's review of the Planning Commission's recommended draft General Plan, the Council approved a schedule that directed consultant/staff to conduct a series of three public meetings toward finalizing the draft General Plan for circulation.
- On January 23, 2007, consultant/staff presented a summary of the draft General Plan to the City Council and the public, including a history of the City's General Plan update process, a description of the General Plan and MEIR, a description of elements and corresponding goals, and a review of the proposed schedule for General Plan adoption and MEIR certification. Public comments were received.
- On February 27, 2007, the Council directed staff to finalize the draft document for transmittal to the State Clearinghouse, distribution to public agencies, and general release to the public for review and comment. In the interim, the Community Character and Design (CC&D) Element would be finalized and presented to the Planning Commission for recommendation of adoption and to the City Council for final approval.
- On February 28, 2007 and March 28, 2007, the Planning Commission held public meetings on the draft CC&D Element of the General Plan. The Commission considered the staff report, all other evidence in the record, and all oral and written comments presented to it. Based on this information, the Planning Commission recommended that the element be incorporated into the draft General Plan and considered by the Council for adoption.
- On March 21, 2007, the Council directed consultant/staff to make any needed revisions to the draft CC&D Element pertaining to items discussed during the meeting; and transmit the draft CC&D element as amended with the Draft General Plan to the State Clearinghouse, distribute to public agencies, and provide general release to the public for review and comment.
- On May 8, 2007, the Draft General Plan update was transmitted to State Clearinghouse for public/agency review and comment.
- On August 14, 2007, a joint Planning Commission-City Council meeting was held on the General Plan MEIR. At that time, the Commission recommended to the Council that it go forward with adoption of the General Plan and certification of the MEIR, incorporating staff's recommended changes, with the exception of the change in level of service (LOS), for which the Council determined that an additional meeting be held.
- On September 4, 2007, the City Council held a final meeting on the Draft MEIR to continue discussion on staff's recommendation to reduce the proposed LOS C standard to LOS D on state highways. Following discussion among the Council members and clarification from staff, the Council moved to amend the Draft General Plan to allow the proposed LOS C to be modified to LOS D on State highways 20/45 and 20 only (i.e., Bridge Street, Market Street, 10th Street). This change did not result in any additional adverse impacts that were not previously evaluated in the MEIR.

## **FINAL REVISIONS TO GENERAL PLAN**

Staff has prepared a list of revisions to the Public Review Draft General Plan dated May 2007 that incorporates the items listed below (details are provided in *Attachment 1*—

General Plan cut-sheets). Changes to text and graphics have been made to the document as a result of:

- Modifications recommended by the Planning Commission and directed by the City Council, as considered at the August 14, 2007 and September 4, 2007 public meetings.
- Recommendations from the City Attorney's office.
- Modifications needed for internal consistency.
- Mitigation measures proposed in the Draft General Plan and responses to comments.

Modifications are organized by General Plan Element and include a reference to the relevant section, goal, policy, or action, along with a brief explanation of the purpose for the change. NOT included in Attachment 1 are the following items:

- Typographical errors, grammatical errors, formatting, and non-substantive changes, clean-ups, and cross references;
- Updated Table of Contents

The focus of this meeting is not to review the same amendments already considered by the City Council on August 14, 2007 and September 4, 2007. Rather, the focus of this meeting is to acknowledge the recommended modifications have been made in response to public comments, City Council direction, and legal, environmental, and internal consistency evaluation. A summary of key changes is provided below by General Plan Element.

#### General Changes

1. Updated the Acknowledgements page.
2. As shown on the cut-sheets (*Attachment 1*), several goal statements, policy statements, or discussions have either been expanded or clarified to provide the reader with a better understanding of the intent of the policies and programs. These text modifications are consistent with the Planning Commission and Council's direction, and do not result in any changes as to the intent of these General Plan policies or programs.
3. Incorporated all mitigation measures in the Draft and Final MEIR documents.

#### Changes to Graphics

1. Figure 2.1 has been amended to reflect SOI acreage of 3,805 acres, consistent with the MEIR.
2. Figures 2.3, 2.4, 4.1, 6.2, 7.1, 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3 have been revised to remove four parcels from the parcel identified as the Colusa County Golf Club, and to be shown as individual parcels.
3. Figure 2.5 (new) has been added to the Land Use Element to identify the Colusa County Airport's Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) safety zones relative to the City's proposed land uses.
4. Figure 5.2 has been updated to portray more clearly the airport safety zones. (Same as Figure 2.5 above).

## Changes to General Plan Text

To strengthen and clarify the intent of the General Plan, on August 14, 2007 and September 4, 2007, the Council directed staff to make the following edits to the General Plan elements:

### 2.0 LAND USE ELEMENT

1. Move Goal LU-4, along with associated Policy LU-4.1, and Implementing Actions LU-4.1.a and LU-4.1.b (all related to preservation of prime farmland) from Chapter 2.0 (Land Use) to GP Chapter 6.0 (Parks, Recreation and Resource Conservation).
2. *Implementing Action LU-4.1.b: Public/Private Partnerships* Revise to read: "The City will work with Colusa County, non-profit organizations, and landowners to establish and implement policies programs that will protect prime agricultural areas within ¼ to ½ mile of the sphere of influence. Strategies will include a process to implement techniques such as transfer of development rights, purchase of agricultural conservation easements from willing sellers, and cooperative action with farmland trusts. Target acreage replacement ratio will be 1:1."
3. *Goal PRC-8, Policy PRC-8.1 and Implementing Action PRC-8.1.a (Development Review)* Move from Chapter 6.0 (Parks, Recreation and Resource Conservation) to Chapter 2.0 (Land Use), since this is an issue of land use compatibility and the use of agricultural buffers rather than farmland preservation.
4. *Policy LU-4.2:* Require a 200-500 foot residential buffer, based on the type of agricultural use (e.g., field crops, orchards, grazing, etc.) and method of pesticide application (aerial, ground application), as appropriate.
5. *Policy LU-4.3:* Require a combination of a residential buffer, masonry fencing, and tree plantings at the urban edge to mitigate agricultural impacts of noise, dust, trespass, and pesticide/herbicide overspray.
6. *Implementing Action PRC-8.1.a:* Add to the Development Review process that proposals involving the use of agricultural buffers will be reviewed for adequacy of mitigation by the Agricultural Commission, Farm Bureau, and any other recognized authority.
7. *Policy LU-5.4:* More specific language has been added to *Implementing Action LU-5.4.B* to help ensure that "the availability of infrastructure and public services shall be established before annexation can occur." An additional bullet has been added that provides additional assurances through the LAFCO Municipal Services Review process, Environmental Review, Project-Specific Conditions of Approval, 5-year Capital Improvement Program, and Development Agreements.

### 4.0 CIRCULATION ELEMENT

8. *Implementing Action CIR-1.1A (Streets and Roadways Master Plan):* modify to read as follows (added text underlined):  
  
"The City will prepare, adopt, and periodically update a Streets and Roadways Master Plan that establishes LOS C as the minimum acceptable LOS for most city streets and intersections; LOS D, rather than LOS C, will be the acceptable standard on Market Street, Bridge Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Street, and

Main Street. This is consistent with Caltrans LOS standards for state highways through urban areas. If conditions of LOS D or worse are already present, future proposed projects may not cause roadway volumes to increase by five percent or more, and will be accompanied by other mitigation measures intended to reduce trip generation.”

## 6.0 PARKS, RECREATION AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

9. *Policy PRC-6.1:* Since the policy language is intended to be broad, the clause “to the greatest extent feasible” has been deleted. This will strengthen the policy while still leaving some flexibility.
10. *Implementing Action PRC-6.1.a Development Review:* The following text has been added to this proposed implementing action: “Through the development review process, the City will ensure that adverse impacts to sensitive biological resources are mitigated to the maximum extent feasible. Mitigation measures will be specific, feasible actions that will actually improve adverse environmental conditions. A mitigation measure is considered feasible if it is capable of being accomplished within a reasonable period of time, taking into consideration economic, environmental, legal, social and technological factors. The City will encourage measures that will, in order of priority, avoid, reduce, and/or rectify adverse effects. Priority will be given to measures that mitigate impacts on-site and in-kind. Priority will be given to measures that maintain the integrity of habitat areas, preferably on-site.”
11. *Implementing Action PRC - 6.1.c No Net Loss of Wetlands:* The following text has been added: “As part of the development review process, the City will ensure that proposed development projects cause no net loss of wetlands. The term “no net loss” may include mitigation implemented through participation in an off-site mitigation bank or similar mitigation mechanism acceptable to the City and permitting agencies. On a case-by-case basis, the City will consult with permitting agencies regarding the most appropriate mitigation strategy for each development project. Strategies that may be considered include 1) avoidance, 2) acre-for-acre mitigation, in which the acreage of preserved or restored wetlands is directly related to the acreage of affected wetlands, 3) habitat-based mitigation, in which the acreage of preserved or restored wetland habitat is directly related to the acreage of affected wetland habitat, or 4) a combination of these strategies. Wetlands to be preserved and/or restored shall be of the same type as those affected, and shall be located within the same biological region.”
12. *Implementing Action PRC – 6.1.d Native Vegetation List:* An implementing action has been added that states the City will develop a list of native vegetation to be used as a landscape pallet within open space areas (e.g., parks, preserves, etc.). Through the development review process the City will encourage developers to incorporate native plants into landscape plans for new development. The City shall implement a public education program to encourage citizens to incorporate native plants in residential and commercial landscaping throughout the City.
13. See #1 and #3 under LAND USE above.

## **GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

A General Plan Implementation Program (GPIP) has been included as *Attachment 3*. The GPIP is a description of the implementing actions listed in the General Plan by element; it describes the action, the City department responsible for leading the effort to implement the action, key participating departments or agencies, and the general time frame within which the action will begin and be completed. Extensive collaboration and direct partnership with the broad array of public and private entities in Colusa County will be required to implement these actions.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

The Draft Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) for the City of Colusa General Plan was released for public and agency review on July 24, 2007. Consistent with State law, the Draft MEIR was circulated for comments regarding the adequacy of its analysis for a minimum of 45 days (until September 7, 2007). The City Council and Planning Commission held a joint public meeting on August 14, 2007 to receive comments regarding the adequacy of the Draft MEIR.

The Draft MEIR is a public informational document that assesses the potential environmental effects associated with the implementation of the City of Colusa General Plan and subsequent development projects at a program level. The Draft MEIR also identifies mitigation measures and alternatives to the General Plan that could reduce or avoid adverse environmental effects. The information and determinations in the Draft MEIR do not oblige the City Council to either reject or adopt the General Plan, but rather are to be used in the consideration of action on the General Plan.

The City received 14 comment letters regarding the General Plan Draft MEIR. As required by law, staff has prepared written responses to those comments received by the close of the public comment period on September 7, 2007. The comments received on the Draft MEIR, along with responses to comments, have been incorporated into the Final MEIR (under separate cover). Subsequent to publication of the Final MEIR, the City received a comment letter from the Colusa County Airport Land Use Commission. Staff has concluded that all comments have been addressed in the MEIR, as applicable, and that none of the comments received would require recirculation of the environmental document pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5.

All mitigation measures in the Draft and Final EIR that direct amendments to or incorporation of new policies and actions into the General Plan have now been recommended for incorporation into the General Plan to create a self-mitigating document. Mitigation measures not previously included in the General Plan are stated in Chapter 3 Errata of the Final MEIR.

## **MITIGATION FINDINGS PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15091**

With respect to mitigation of significant and potentially significant impacts of the proposed General Plan, staff recommends that the City Council make each of the findings set forth below. References to the page of the Draft MEIR (or "DMEIR") and Final MEIR on which identification and discussion of the relevant impact commences are provided below. In many cases, as identified for each impact in this Section A, the Draft MEIR identifies General Plan goals, policies, and action items that help reduce the potential for the relevant impact in question to occur. The goals, policies and implementing action are listed in full in the in the Draft MEIR:

## **4.1 Land Use**

**Impact 4.1.2** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update could lead to inconsistency with other land use plans, particularly the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) for the Colusa County Airport. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

**Finding:** This General Plan Land Use Element includes a comprehensive land use update based on anticipated changes in land use that are proposed within the CLUP safety zones; the clear zone, approach/departure zone and over flight zone. Mitigation measures that can reduce this impact to less than significant are to restrict parks, recreation, and open space uses that result in congregation of less than 10 persons per acre. Similarly, residential density within the over flight zone would need to be restricted to no more than one dwelling per five acres, in contrast to the four to eight dwellings per acre that are proposed with the land use map. Specific economic, legal, social, technological and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

**Rationale:** No comments were received from Colusa County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) regarding the proposed General Plan Land Use Map. The CLUP map is currently under review due to a proposal to Colusa County for a low-to-high density project within the over flight zone. All specific projects within the CLUP safety zones will be reviewed by the ALUC, and by the City of Colusa or County of Colusa, as applicable, for consistency with the CLUP and compatibility with surrounding land uses in accordance with the City or County's development review process. A project within these zones may be denied approval by the lead agency (i.e., City or County) if the proposed project is found to be inconsistent with the CLUP.

**Impact 4.1.5** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would result in the loss of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance, as designated under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

**Mitigation Measure 4.1.5** As part of the Development Review process associated with Implementing Action LU-2.1.a, the City shall review development projects to mitigate for loss of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland of Local Importance by: (1) granting a farmland conservation easement to or for the benefit of the City and/or a qualifying entity approved by the City, at a 1:1 ratio for each acre developed, (2) if the City adopts a farmland conservation program, by payment of an in lieu fee as established by the farmland conservation program, which shall be reviewed and adjusted periodically to ensure that the fee is adequate to offset the cost of purchasing farmland conservation easements at a 1:1 ratio, or (3) other form of compensation at a 1:1 ratio, such as improvements to existing agricultural land, that is acceptable to the City and conserves the farmland in perpetuity. The City shall prepare guidelines identifying requirements for conservation easements, including timing of conservation easements, location of land to be preserved, land mitigation ratio and quality, and minimum standards for conservation easements.

Finding: Even with the implementation of the above mitigation measure, which is incorporated into the General Plan as a measure that will be applied to subsequent development, this impact remains significant. Presently there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the General Plan project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: The planning staff of the County of Colusa, cities within the County, and Colusa County LAFCO are actively working on drafting an agricultural land mitigation program that would preserve farmland located within the County, but outside the urban areas (coterminous with the SOIs) through the private purchase of conservation easements. This program, if adopted by the cities and the County, will facilitate the implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1.5.

Impact 4.1.6 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update could lead to inconsistency with the policies of the Colusa County LAFCo regarding agricultural preservation.

Mitigation Measure 4.1.5 As part of the Development Review process associated with Implementing Action LU-2.1.a, the City shall review development projects to mitigate for loss of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Farmland of Local Importance by: (1) granting a farmland conservation easement to or for the benefit of the City and/or a qualifying entity approved by the City, at a 1:1 ratio for each acre developed, (2) if the City adopts a farmland conservation program, by payment of an in lieu fee as established by the farmland conservation program, which shall be reviewed and adjusted periodically to ensure that the fee is adequate to offset the cost of purchasing farmland conservation easements at a 1:1 ratio, or (3) other form of compensation at a 1:1 ratio, such as improvements to existing agricultural land, that is acceptable to the City and conserves the farmland in perpetuity. The City shall prepare guidelines identifying requirements for conservation easements, including timing of conservation easements, location of land to be preserved, land mitigation ratio and quality, and minimum standards for conservation easements.

Finding: Even with the implementation of the above mitigation measure, which is incorporated into the General Plan as a measure that will be applied to subsequent development, this impact remains significant. Presently there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the General Plan project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: The planning staff of the County of Colusa, cities within the County, and Colusa County LAFCO are actively working on drafting an agricultural land mitigation program that would preserve farmland within the County, but outside the urban areas (coterminous with the SOIs) through the private purchase of conservation easements. This program, if adopted by the cities and the County, will facilitate the implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1.5.

## 4.2 Population and Housing

Impact 4.2.1 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update could result in a substantial increase in population and the number of housing units. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

While there are no specific mitigation measures to reduce the level of this impact, the MEIR contains, in the relevant sections of the Draft MEIR, mitigation measures, where appropriate, to reduce or eliminate potentially significant impacts associated with specific environmental issues associated with population growth and related development, such as increased demand for water supply, treatment of wastewater, and loss of agricultural land. Refer to Sections 4.1 and 4.3 through 4.12 for a discussion of environmental effects associated with population growth and related development allowed under the proposed General Plan Update and mitigation measures, where necessary and feasible. However, even with implementation of General Plan policies and mitigation measures, as noted in Section 8.0, implementation of the General Plan and its associated growth is expected to result in several significant and avoidable effects to the environment.

Finding: There are no mitigation measures that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. There are no feasible alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and still provide for planned urban uses. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Substantial new residential development is being proposed by property owners and developers adjacent to the City of Colusa's city limits. The City is better equipped than the County to extend municipal services to these developments. Furthermore, the City desires that new residents of these future developed areas be considered an integral part of the urbanized community, and the City can better accomplish this through annexation of these areas into the City. General Plan policies and programs will mitigate this impact to some extent by providing for a phased, logical growth pattern, ensuring that municipal services are available to serve these new residents without creating adverse impacts on existing residents. These include a land use plan, a circulation plan, and a community character and design element that would promote alternative modes of transportation (bicycle and pedestrian access) to city services, mixed use development (i.e., housing in close proximity to retail and employment centers), and efficient use of vacant land.

## 4.3 Transportation and Circulation

Impact 4.3.1 Implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in increased traffic volumes and a decrease in LOS on area roadways. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Mitigation Measure 4.3.1a Project applications considered prior to adoption of the Streets and Roadways Master Plan, the Capital Improvement Program update, and the Development Impact Fee Program update, shall provide for the infrastructure improvements, as determined to be feasible by the City, necessary to mitigate the fair-share of significant traffic impacts identified in this MEIR. This shall occur either through payment of a fair-share percentage of the total cost for the necessary

improvement as approved by the City or through construction of the necessary improvement, whichever approach is determined to be appropriate by the City. Fair-share calculation shall be determined based on the amount of traffic associated with an individual project on an impacted facility, a percentage of the total new traffic projected over the time horizon anticipated for the Capital Improvement Program, or other time horizon acceptable to the City.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.1b Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS on Fremont Street. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Widen Fremont Street to a four-lane facility from 10th Street to Bridge Street
- Modify the Circulation Diagram to promote other east-west routes such as Sunrise Boulevard and the Railroad Collector.
- Create a one-way couplet of Fremont Street and Sioc Street.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.1c Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS on Sioc Street. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Widen Sioc Street to a four-lane facility from 10th Street to Bridge Street.
- Modify the Circulation Diagram to promote other east-west routes such as Sunrise Boulevard and the Railroad Collector.
- Create a one-way couplet of Fremont Street and Sioc Street.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.1d Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS on Colus Avenue. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Configure Colus Avenue without on-street parking and stripe turn lanes.
- Modify the Circulation Diagram to promote other east-west routes such as Sunrise Boulevard and the Railroad Collector.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.1e Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS on the Farinon Road Extension. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Widen Farinon Road to a four-lane arterial street.
- Modify the GPU Circulation Diagram to promote other east-west streets, such as Sunrise Boulevard.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.1f Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS on

Wescott Road between the Cynthia Avenue and the Railroad Collector. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Re-designate Wescott Road as a two-lane arterial street in this area and re-construct accordingly.
- Modify Circulation Diagram to reduce traffic volume on Wescott Road by extending Sunrise Boulevard to Wescott Road and prohibiting northbound traffic on Wescott at Tenant Drive.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.1g Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS on Will S Green Avenue. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Add auxiliary lanes to the segments of Will S Green Avenue north and south of SR 20 and to the SR 20/Will S Green intersection to include separate right turn, through, and left turn lanes approaching SR 20.
- Re-designate the portion of Will S Green immediately north and south of SR 20 as a four lane arterial street.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.1h Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS on the Proposed East Collector. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Re-designate the East Collector as an arterial street and construct accordingly as development occurs.

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: The General Plan policies and implementing actions provide for maintaining LOS C or better on all local roadways, and LOS D or better on State highways and intersections—in accordance with Caltrans standards for state highways in urban areas. Traffic impact analyses will be undertaken with all new development projects that could potentially result in adverse impacts on roadways within the City limits. Implementation of General Plan mitigation, coupled with site-specific mitigation that would be required for all approved development projects, would provide service levels consistent with the City's LOS standards. However, potential issues with funding, right-of-way acquisition, the effect of regional traffic through the City, the timing for obtaining required permits, and coordination with Colusa County and Caltrans could result in delays in delivering roadway improvements prior to deficient LOS conditions having developed in the interim period. The proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions attempt to establish similar timing for development and the provision of roadway improvements. However, for the aforementioned reasons, the City cannot ensure that these improvements will be timely in all circumstances.

Impact 4.3.2 Implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in increased traffic volumes and a decrease in LOS on state highways (SR 20 and SR 45). *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Mitigation Measure 4.3.2a Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS on SR 20 segments to the extent feasible. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Widen SR 20 to a four-lane facility on 10th Street, Market Street and Bridge Street.
- Widen SR 20 to a six-lane facility through the new eastern commercial area.
- Modify the Railroad Collector alignment to draw more traffic away from SR 20 through Wheatland.
- Develop an access management plan for SR 20 that denotes the locations of auxiliary lanes.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.2b The City shall investigate mechanisms for future development to participate in a “fair share” in the costs of improving roads outside the City limits, specifically segments of SR 20 and SR 45 that would be impacted by development under the proposed General Plan. Also, the City shall coordinate coordination with Caltrans and other interested agencies, such as Colusa County and the City of Williams, to develop a fair-share mechanism to address impacts of new development to the State highway system.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.2c Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS on SR 45 to the extent feasible. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Re-designate SR 45 north of Market Street as a four-lane arterial and widen SR 45 north of Market Street to four lanes.

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: The General Plan policies and implementing actions provide for maintaining LOS C or better on all local roadways, and LOS D or better on State highways and intersections—in accordance with Caltrans standards for state highways in urban areas. Traffic impact analyses will be undertaken with all new development projects that could potentially result in adverse impacts on roadways within the City limits. Implementation of General Plan mitigation, coupled with site-specific mitigation that would be required for all approved development projects, would provide service levels consistent with the City’s LOS standards. However, potential issues with funding, right-of-way acquisition, the effect of regional traffic through the City, the timing for obtaining required permits, and coordination with

Colusa County and Caltrans could result in delays in delivering roadway improvements prior to deficient LOS conditions having developed in the interim period. The proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions attempt to establish similar timing for development and the provision of roadway improvements. However, for the aforementioned reasons, the City cannot ensure that these improvements will be timely in all circumstances.

Impact 4.3.3 Implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in increased traffic volumes and a decrease in LOS at street and roadway intersections. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3a Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS at the SR 20/Sunrise Boulevard intersection. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Signalize the SR 20/Sunrise Boulevard intersection, widen SR 20 to a four-lane section through the intersection and provide separate left turn lanes on each approach.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3b Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS at the SR 20/Wescott Road intersection. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Signalize the SR 20/Wescott Road intersection, widen SR 20 to a four-lane section through the intersection, and provide separate left turn lanes on each approach.
- Signalize the SR 20/Wescott Road intersection, widen SR 20 to create a northbound left turn lane and a separate southbound right turn lane (with overlap) on SR 20, and provide separate left turn and right turn lanes on the Wescott Road approach.
- Install a roundabout at the SR 20/Wescott Road intersection.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3c Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS at the SR 20/Sioc Street intersection. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Widen SR 20 to a four-lane roadway through the intersection.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3d Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS at the Bridge Street (SR 20)/Market Street intersection. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Signalize the Bridge Street (SR 20)/Market Street intersection; provide left-turn lanes on each approach and a separate right-turn lane with overlap on eastbound Market Street.
- Install a roundabout at this intersection.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3e Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS at the Market Street/5th Street intersection. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Signalize the Market Street/5th Street intersection.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3f Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS at the Lurline Avenue/13th Street and 13th Street/Market Street intersections. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Signalize the Lurline Avenue/13th Street intersection and prohibit northbound left turns from 13th Street.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3g Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS at the 10th Street/Market Street intersection. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Install a traffic signal at the 10th Street/Market Street intersection.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3h Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS at the 10th Street (SR 20)/Fremont Street intersection. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Signalize the 10th Street (SR 20)/Fremont Street intersection and widen SR 20 to a four-lane section through the intersection.
- Signalize the 10th Street (SR 20)/Fremont Street intersection, create a separate northbound right turn lane on SR 20, and provide separate left turn lanes on the Fremont Street approaches.

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3i Transportation improvements considered as part of the Capital Improvement Program required under *Implementing Action CIR-1.3a: Capital Improvement Program* shall include measures to provide acceptable LOS at the SR 20/Will S. Green Avenue intersections. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Signalize the SR 20/Will S. Green Avenue intersection, widen SR 20 to a four-lane section through the intersection, provide separate right-turn lanes on the SR 20 approaches, and provide three lanes (i.e., separate left turn, through and right turn lanes) on the Will S Green Avenue approaches.

**Finding:** There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

**Rationale:** The General Plan policies and implementing actions provide for maintaining LOS C or better on all local roadways, and LOS D or better on State highways and intersections—in accordance with Caltrans standards for state highways in urban areas. Traffic impact analyses will be undertaken with all new development projects that could potentially result in adverse impacts on roadways within the City limits. Implementation of General Plan mitigation, coupled with site-specific mitigation that would be required for all approved development projects, would provide service levels consistent with the City's LOS standards. However, potential issues with funding, right-of-way acquisition, the effect of regional traffic through the City, the timing for obtaining required permits, and coordination with Colusa County and Caltrans could result in delays in delivering roadway improvements prior to deficient LOS conditions having developed in the interim period. The proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions attempt to establish similar timing for development and the provision of roadway improvements. However, for the aforementioned reasons, the City cannot ensure that these improvements will be timely in all circumstances.

#### **4.4 Noise**

**Impact 4.4.3** Demolition of existing structures and construction activities associated with development under the proposed General Plan Update would temporarily increase noise levels at existing noise-sensitive receptors. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

**Mitigation Measure 4.4.3** Prior to adoption of the updated Noise Ordinance, the City shall condition development projects to mitigate construction noise to the maximum extent feasible. Construction noise mitigation measures include:

- Construction, as well as landscaping and park activities, shall be limited to the hours stipulated in the Chapter 11A Noise Regulations of the City of Colusa Code.
- All internal combustion engines used in conjunction with construction and landscaping shall be muffled according to the equipment manufacturer's requirements.
- Construction staging areas shall not be proximate to residential areas.

**Finding:** Even with the implementation of the above mitigation measure, the impact remains significant because it is not likely that excessive construction noise levels can be fully mitigated in all circumstances, and there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level while, at the same time, be able to meet the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Construction activities associated with buildout under the proposed General plan would expose existing and future residents to excessive noise levels, depending on the timing of the buildout of the various Special Planning Areas and other vacant land that could be subject to development. The General Plan specifies an update of the City's Noise Ordinance that will establish noise level performance standards for stationary noise exposure and maximum transportation noise exposure; mitigation of noise created by proposed non-transportation noise sources, to the extent feasible; limiting construction activity to certain hours, where in proximity to sensitive receptors; and mitigation of new transportation noise sources, to the extent feasible. However, despite implementation of this mitigation measure and site-specific mitigation with individual development projects, this impact would remain significant given that construction activities are sometimes required immediately adjacent to noise-sensitive land uses with little or no ability to provide buffers or noise barriers (e.g., infrastructure upgrades in existing residential areas).

Impact 4.4.4 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update could place new noise-sensitive land uses near the Colusa County Airport. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Finding: Even with the implementation of General Plan policies and implementing actions, coupled with project-specific mitigation measures, there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level while, at the same time, meet the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Special Planning Area (SPA) #5 is located within the safety zones (i.e., clear zone, approach/departure zone, and overflight zone) of the Colusa County Airport's Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). The General Plan Land Use Map provides for the annexation and development of this area as low-density residential (LDR) on the western portion of the site; commercial-professional (CP) along the SR 20/45 corridor; and parks, recreation and open space (P/OS) within the CLUP clear and approach/departure zones. The City and the CLUP will require that an acoustical analysis and project-specific noise mitigation be prepared as a part of the City's Development Review process for all development within the Colusa County Airport safety zones. The project will also be subject to review and comment by the Colusa County Airport Land Use Commission. Noise contours will be considered in the acoustical analyses to help determine what mitigation may be required to reduce noise levels to meet the noise level performance standards of the City's Noise Ordinance (to be updated as part of the General Plan implementation). Land uses adjacent, or in proximity, to the airport will be subject to siting, use, and height restrictions, as specified in the CLUP and recommended in the noise analysis. Additional mitigation may include measures such as noise insulation to reduce interior noise levels, disclosure to purchasers of new residents within the Colusa County Airport safety zones, and the use of aviation easements, as appropriate. However, implementation of these mitigation measures would not fully mitigate single-event aircraft noise issues or the current conflict between SPA #5 and the existing CLUP. Consequently, this impact would remain significant.

Impact 4.4.5 Implementation of the General Plan, in combination with existing, approved, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable development, would contribute to a cumulative increase in traffic noise. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Finding: This impact remains significant because it is not likely that cumulative traffic noise levels can be fully mitigated, and there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level while, at the same time, be able to meet the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Traffic noise associated with buildout under the proposed General plan would expose existing and future residents to excessive noise levels. The General Plan specifies an update of the City's Noise Ordinance that will establish noise level performance standards for stationary noise exposure and maximum transportation noise exposure; mitigation of noise created by new transportation noise sources, to the extent feasible. However, despite implementation of this mitigation measure and site-specific mitigation with individual development projects, this impact would remain significant given that some of the increased noise will occur adjacent to existing noise-sensitive land uses with little or no ability to provide buffers or noise barriers due to lack of adequate buffer area or the infeasibility to retrofit existing residences with effective noise barriers.

#### **4.5 Air Quality**

Impact 4.5.2 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would increase air pollutant emissions from land use activities within the City. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: The General Plan's land use plan, circulation plan, and Community Character and Design element would help to reduce project impacts on air quality by promoting alternative modes of transportation (bicycle and pedestrian access) to city services, mixed use development (i.e., housing in close proximity to retail and employment centers), and efficient use of vacant land. Furthermore, site-specific mitigation would be required for all approved development projects to further reduce the project's impacts on air quality.

Impact 4.5.4 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would increase traffic volumes that would potentially increase concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO) along streets and near intersections. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

**Rationale:** The General Plan's land use plan, circulation plan, and Community Character and Design element would help to reduce project impacts on air quality by promoting alternative modes of transportation (bicycle and pedestrian access) to city services, mixed use development (i.e., housing in close proximity to retail and employment centers), and efficient use of vacant land. Furthermore, site-specific mitigation would be required for all approved development projects to further reduce the project's impacts on air quality.

#### **4.10 Visual Resources/Light and Glare**

**Impact 4.10.3** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update may result in the obstruction of scenic vistas at the existing edges of urban development. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

**Finding:** There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

**Rationale:** Development that could occur under this General Plan could obstruct scenic vistas from existing development, primarily at the urban edge. On the eastern edge, proposed development east of SR 20/45 could obstruct views of the Sutter Buttes, while development along the western and northern edges of the City could impair views of the Coast Ranges. The policies contained in the General Plan's Community Character and Design Element, coupled with the element's implementing actions that update the City's Development Review process and provide for a new Design Review process would protect scenic vistas to the greatest extent feasible. Residences will also be subject to height restrictions as specified in the City's zoning ordinance. Individual development projects will be required to mitigate impacts to scenic vistas, where appropriate, as a condition of project approval. However, the only way to fully avoid or reduce this impact to a less-than-significant impact would be to prohibit any development that would adversely affect views of scenic resources. This would be inconsistent with the objectives of the proposed General Plan Update and the proposed land use map.

#### **5.1 Colusa Riverbend**

**Impact 5.1.1** The project would convert land from agricultural use to urban uses. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

**Mitigation Measure 5.1.1** The project applicant shall mitigate for loss of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Farmland of Local Importance by either (1) granting a farmland conservation easement to or for the benefit of the City and/or an entity approved by the City, at a 1:1 ratio for each acre developed, or (2) if the City adopts a farmland conservation program, by payment of an in lieu fee as established by the farmland conservation program, which shall be reviewed and adjusted periodically to ensure that the fee is adequate to offset the cost of purchasing farmland conservation easements at a 1:1 ratio.

**Timing/Implementation:** *Prior to issuance of grading permits.*

*Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Colusa Planning Department.*

Finding: Even with the implementation of the above mitigation measure, which is incorporated into the General Plan as a measure that will be applied to subsequent development, this impact remains significant. Presently there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the General Plan project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: The planning staff of the County of Colusa, cities within the County, and Colusa County LAFCO are actively working on drafting an agricultural land mitigation program that would preserve farmland within the County, but outside the urban areas (coterminous with the SOIs) through the private purchase of conservation easements. This program, if adopted by the cities and the County, will facilitate the implementation of practices to conserve Prime Farmland.

Impact 5.1.10 Implementation of the project would result in the loss of views of scenic area and change the visual character within the project vicinity. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Development that could occur under this General Plan could obstruct scenic vistas from existing development, primarily at the urban edge. Proposed development east of SR 20/45 could obstruct views of the Sutter Buttes and of the Coast Ranges. The policies contained in the General Plan's Community Character and Design Element, coupled with the element's implementing actions that update the City's Development Review process and provide for a new Design Review process would protect scenic vistas to the greatest extent feasible. Residences will also be subject to height restrictions as specified in the City's zoning ordinance. Individual development projects will be required to mitigate impacts to scenic vistas, where appropriate, as a condition of project approval. However, the only way to fully avoid or reduce this impact to a less-than-significant impact would be to prohibit any development that would adversely affect views of scenic resources. This would be inconsistent with the objectives of the proposed General Plan Update and the proposed land use map.

## **5.2 Colusa Crossing**

Impact 5.2.1 The project would convert land from agricultural use to urban uses. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Mitigation Measure 5.2.1 The project applicant shall mitigate for loss of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Farmland of Local Importance by either (1) granting a farmland conservation easement to or for the benefit of the City and/or an entity approved by the City, at a 1:1 ratio for each acre developed, or (2) if

the City adopts a farmland conservation program, by payment of an in lieu fee as established by the farmland conservation program, which shall be reviewed and adjusted periodically to ensure that the fee is adequate to offset the cost of purchasing farmland conservation easements at a 1:1 ratio.

*Timing/Implementation: Prior to issuance of grading permits.*

*Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Colusa Planning Department.*

Finding: Even with the implementation of the above mitigation measure, which is incorporated into the General Plan as a measure that will be applied to subsequent development, this impact remains significant. Presently there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the General Plan project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: The planning staff of the County of Colusa, cities within the County, and Colusa County LAFCO are actively working on drafting an agricultural land mitigation program that would preserve farmland within the County, but outside the urban areas (coterminous with the SOIs) through the private purchase of conservation easements. This program, if adopted by the cities and the County, will facilitate the implementation of practices to conserve Prime Farmland.

Impact 5.2.6 Implementation of the project would result in the loss of views of scenic area and change the visual character within the project vicinity. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Development that could occur under this General Plan could obstruct scenic vistas from existing development, primarily at the urban edge. Development along the western and northern edges of the City could impair views of the Coast Ranges. The policies contained in the General Plan's Community Character and Design Element, coupled with the element's implementing actions that update the City's Development Review process and provide for a new Design Review process would protect scenic vistas to the greatest extent feasible. Residences will also be subject to height restrictions as specified in the City's zoning ordinance. Individual development projects will be required to mitigate impacts to scenic vistas, where appropriate, as a condition of project approval. However, the only way to fully avoid or reduce this impact to a less-than-significant impact would be to prohibit any development that would adversely affect views of scenic resources. This would be inconsistent with the objectives of the proposed General Plan Update and the proposed land use map.

### **5.3 Brookins Ranch**

Impact 5.3.1 The project would convert land from agricultural use to urban uses. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Mitigation Measure 5.3.1 The project applicant shall mitigate for loss of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Farmland of Local Importance by either (1) granting a farmland conservation easement to or for the benefit of the City and/or an entity approved by the City, at a 1:1 ratio for each acre developed, or (2) if the City adopts a farmland conservation program, by payment of an in lieu fee as established by the farmland conservation program, which shall be reviewed and adjusted periodically to ensure that the fee is adequate to offset the cost of purchasing farmland conservation easements at a 1:1 ratio.

*Timing/Implementation:* Prior to issuance of grading permits.

*Enforcement/Monitoring:* City of Colusa Planning Department.

Finding: Even with the implementation of the above mitigation measure, which is incorporated into the General Plan as a measure that will be applied to subsequent development, this impact remains significant. Presently there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the General Plan project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: The planning staff of the County of Colusa, cities within the County, and Colusa County LAFCO are actively working on drafting an agricultural land mitigation program that would preserve farmland within the County, but outside the urban areas (coterminous with the SOIs) through the private purchase of conservation easements. This program, if adopted by the cities and the County, will facilitate the implementation of practices to conserve Prime Farmland.

Impact 5.3.14 Implementation of the project would result in the loss of views of scenic area and change the visual character within the project vicinity. *Significant and unavoidable environmental impact.*

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Development that could occur under this General Plan could obstruct scenic vistas from existing development, primarily at the urban edge. On the eastern edge, proposed development could obstruct views of the Sutter Buttes, while development along the western and northern edges of the City could potentially impair views of the Coast Ranges. The policies contained in the General Plan's Community Character and Design Element, coupled with the element's implementing actions that update the City's Development Review process and provide for a new Design Review process would protect scenic vistas to the greatest extent feasible. Residences will also be subject to height restrictions as specified in the City's zoning ordinance. Individual development projects will be required to mitigate impacts to scenic vistas, where appropriate, as a condition of project approval. However, the only way to fully avoid or reduce this impact to a less-than-significant impact would be to prohibit any development that would adversely affect views of scenic resources. This would be inconsistent with the objectives of the proposed General Plan Update and the proposed land use map.

## 6.0 Cumulative Impacts

Impact 6.2 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in addition to existing, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in Colusa County, would contribute to the cumulative loss of Prime Farmland and other valuable farmland in Colusa County, the Sacramento Valley and the State. *Significant and unavoidable/ Cumulatively Considerable environmental impact.*

Mitigation Measure Implement Mitigation Measure 4.1.5.

Finding: General Plan buildout, by definition, constitutes the cumulative scenario for loss of Prime Farmland. Even with the implementation of the above mitigation measure, which is incorporated into the General Plan as a measure that will be applied to subsequent development, this impact remains significant. Presently there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the General Plan project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: General Plan buildout, by definition, constitutes the cumulative scenario for loss of Prime Farmland. See Rationale for MM 4.1.5. The planning staff of the County of Colusa, cities within the County, and Colusa County LAFCO are actively working on drafting an agricultural land mitigation program that would preserve farmland within the County, but outside the urban areas (coterminous with the SOIs) through the private purchase of conservation easements. This program, if adopted by the cities and the County, will facilitate the implementation of practices to conserve Prime Farmland.

Impact 6.3 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in addition to existing, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in the area, could result in a cumulative increase in population and housing growth in the County and associated environmental impacts. *Significant and unavoidable/ Cumulatively Considerable environmental impact.*

Finding: General Plan buildout, by definition, constitutes the cumulative scenario for population and housing. There are no mitigation measures that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant. There are no feasible alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and still provide for planned urban uses. Specific economic, legal, social, technological and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: General Plan buildout, by definition, constitutes the cumulative scenario for population and housing. Substantial new residential development is being proposed by property owners and developers adjacent to the City of Colusa's city limits. The City is better equipped than the County to extend municipal services to these developments. Furthermore, the City desires that new residents of these future developed areas be considered an integral part of the urbanized community, and can better accomplish this through annexation of these areas into the City.

General Plan policies and programs will mitigate this impact to some extent by providing for a phased, logical growth pattern, ensuring that municipal services are available to serve these new residents without creating adverse impacts on existing residents. These include a land use plan, circulation plan and community character & design element that would promote alternative modes of transportation (bicycle and pedestrian access) to city services, mixed use development (i.e., housing in close proximity to retail and employment centers), and efficient use of vacant land.

Impact 6.4 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in addition to existing, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in the area, could result in a cumulative increase in traffic. *Significant and unavoidable/ Cumulatively Considerable environmental impact.*

Mitigation Measure Implement Mitigation Measures 4.3.1a, 4.3.2a, and 4.3.2b; please see above.

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would fully reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level and, at the same time, achieve the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: The General Plan policies and implementing actions provide for maintaining LOS C or better on all local roadways, and LOS D or better on State highways and intersections—in accordance with Caltrans standards for state highways in urban areas. Traffic impact analyses will be undertaken with all new development projects that could potentially result in adverse impacts on roadways within the City limits. Implementation of General Plan mitigation, coupled with site-specific mitigation that would be required for all approved development projects, would provide service levels consistent with the City's LOS standards. However, potential issues with funding, right-of-way acquisition, the effect of regional traffic through the City, the timing for obtaining required permits, and coordination with Colusa County and Caltrans could result in delays in delivering roadway improvements prior to deficient LOS conditions having developed in the interim period. The proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions attempt to establish similar timing for development and the provision of roadway improvements. However, for the aforementioned reasons, the City cannot ensure that these improvements will be timely in all circumstances.

Impact 6.5 Implementation of the General Plan Update, in combination with existing, approved, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable development, would contribute to a cumulative increase in traffic noise on regional roadways. *Significant and unavoidable/ Cumulatively Considerable environmental impact.*

Finding: This impact remains significant because it is not likely that cumulative traffic noise levels can be fully mitigated, and there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level while, at the same time, be able to meet the project objectives. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the project outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Traffic noise associated with buildout under the proposed General plan would expose existing and future residents to excessive noise levels. The General Plan specifies an update of the City's Noise Ordinance that will establish noise level performance standards for stationary noise exposure and maximum transportation noise exposure; mitigation of noise created by new transportation noise sources, to the extent feasible. However, despite implementation of this mitigation measure and site-specific mitigation with individual development projects, this impact would remain significant given that some of the increased noise will occur adjacent to existing noise-sensitive land uses with little or no ability to provide buffers or noise barriers due to lack of adequate buffer area or the infeasibility to retrofit existing residences with effective noise barriers.

Impact 6.6 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in combination with existing, approved, proposed and reasonably foreseeable development, would exacerbate existing NSVAB problems with ozone and particulate matter. *Significant and unavoidable/ Cumulatively Considerable environmental impact.*

Mitigation Measure Implement Mitigation Measures 4.5.1 and 4.5.2; please see above.

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Consequently, this impact is significant and unavoidable. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Implementation of the proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions would assist in the improvement of air quality conditions. The General Plan's land use plan, circulation plan and Community Character & Design Element would help to reduce project impacts on air quality by promoting alternative modes of transportation (bicycle and pedestrian access) to city services, mixed use development (i.e., housing in close proximity to retail and employment centers), and efficient use of vacant land. Furthermore, site-specific mitigation that would be required for all approved development projects to further reduce the project's impacts on air quality. Nevertheless, there are no feasible methods to completely offset air pollutant emission increases from land uses proposed in the General Plan, and still provide for planned urban land uses.

Impact 6.9 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in addition to existing, approved, proposed and reasonably foreseeable development in the Planning Area and larger regional context would result in a cumulative loss of biological resources in the region. *Significant and unavoidable/ Cumulatively Considerable environmental impact.*

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Consequently, this impact is significant and unavoidable. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Implementation of the General Plan policies and implementing actions would reduce the contribution of General Plan buildout to cumulative biological

impacts in the region. However, the General Plan's contribution would remain cumulatively considerable, as implementation of the proposed General Plan along with cumulative development throughout the region would contribute to the loss of habitat for special state plant and wildlife species. The only mitigation for this impact would be to restrict the majority of development proposed in the General Plan Planning Area, which is not considered feasible given that it would not meet the project objectives and would fundamentally conflict with the many of the goals and policies of the General Plan.

Impact 6.14 Buildout of the proposed General Plan Update would result in the cumulative increase of greenhouse gases including CO<sub>2</sub> emitted into the atmosphere. *Significant and unavoidable/ Cumulatively Considerable environmental impact.*

Finding: There are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Consequently, this impact is significant and unavoidable. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: Implementation of the proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions would assist in the improvement of air quality conditions. The General Plan's land use plan, circulation plan and Community Character & Design Element would help to reduce project impacts on air quality by promoting alternative modes of transportation (bicycle and pedestrian access) to city services, mixed use development (i.e., housing in close proximity to retail and employment centers), and efficient use of vacant land. Furthermore, site-specific mitigation that would be required for all approved development projects to further reduce the project's impacts on air quality. Nevertheless, there are no feasible methods to completely offset air pollutant emission increases from land uses proposed in the General Plan, and still provide for planned urban land uses.

Impact 6.15 The impacts of global climate change would cumulatively result in the potential decrease in water supply, increase in air pollutants, and increase in health hazards. *Significant and unavoidable/ Cumulatively Considerable environmental impact.*

Finding: While all policies and implementing actions provided in the General Plan to reduce the impacts would help to reduce regional impacts on global climate change as a result of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce this cumulative effects of global climate change on the City, or the effects of the project on global climate change to a less-than-significant level. Consequently, this impact is significant and unavoidable. Specific economic, legal, social, technological and other benefits of the proposed General Plan outweigh this significant impact, as further set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations below.

Rationale: While all policies and implementing actions outlined in the General Plan and Draft MEIR would assist in the reduction of GHG emissions, effect on water supply and flooding, climate change is a result of global GHG emissions. A complete elimination of GHG emissions in the City would not significantly reduce GHG emissions on a global scale nor decrease the effects of global climate change on the City's residents.

## **EVALUATION OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES**

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Draft EIR must consider a reasonable range of alternatives to the General Plan that meet the objectives of the project and that reduce or avoid environmental impacts of the proposed General Plan. The alternatives that were considered and subsequently rejected are listed below:

### **Alternative 1 – No Update/No Development Projects**

The “No Project” alternative is discussed in pages 7.0-4 through 7.0-13 of the Draft MEIR. Under this alternative, the proposed Colusa General Plan and its associated Land Use Map would not be adopted, and the existing City of Colusa General Plan policy document and Land Use Map would remain in effect. The City would utilize its existing zoning and other regulations regarding development within the City limits. No expansion of the City’s Sphere of Influence and Planning Area would take place. Infrastructure would be installed under existing plans, if applicable. None of the specific projects discussed in the Draft MEIR (Colusa Riverbend, Colusa Crossings, Brookins Ranch) would be developed. Instead, all unincorporated areas outside the City limits would develop in accordance with the General Plan designations and zoning of Colusa County and not be annexed by the City. Buildout under Alternative 1 would result in approximately 3,725 residential dwelling units and an associated population of 10,617. Alternative 1 would result in the fewest number of new residential units and residents.

### **Alternative 2 – No Update/ Development Projects Only**

Alternative 2 is discussed in pages 7.0-14 through 7.0-23 of the Draft MEIR. This alternative is similar to Alternative 1 in that the proposed Colusa General plan and its associated Land Use Map and Circulation Map would not be adopted. The existing General Plan and its Land Use Map would guide future development within the City limits. However, under Alternative 2, the three specific projects (Colusa Riverbend, Colusa Crossings, Brookins Ranch) would be annexed into the City and developed as described in the MEIR. The City would utilize its existing zoning and other regulations regarding development within the City limits and on the project sites. Infrastructure would be installed under existing plans, if applicable. However, infrastructure on the project sites would be installed as described in the MEIR. Buildout under Alternative 2 would result in a maximum of approximately 8,219 residential dwelling units and an associated population of 23,424.

### **Alternative 3 – Increased Density of Development**

Alternative 3 is discussed in pages 7.0-23 through 7.0-31 of the Draft MEIR. This alternative would have a similar buildout scenario to that under the proposed General Plan in terms of population and number of dwelling units. However, this alternative would designate more acreage for medium-density and high density residential development. The result would accommodate the same anticipated population at buildout of the proposed General Plan but on less land. In this scenario, more intensive residential development would occur at the three development project sites (Colusa Riverbend, Colusa Crossings and Brookins Ranch). Implementation of this alternative would result in the same number of dwelling units and new residents as the proposed project, but at a higher density on less acreage.

### **Alternative 4 – Revised Circulation Alternative**

Alternative 4 is discussed in pages 6.0-32 through 7.0-43 of the Draft MEIR. This alternative would 1) revise Implementing Action CIR-1.1.a to establish LOS D as the minimum acceptable LOS for the city streets and intersections along SR 20/45 and provide for an alternative circulation pattern that designates a more direct route between

SR 20/45 on the southeast side of the Planning Area and SR 20 to the southwest. This alternative includes a modification to the proposed future development of a four-lane arterial street along the existing railroad right-of-way coterminous with the southern boundary of the City's SOI. When future traffic volumes and levels of service warrant, this roadway would be constructed similarly to what was proposed with the Circulation Map under the Draft General Plan, but the roadway alignment would make a more direct connection than was originally proposed. As with the draft Circulation Map, Alternative 4 provides a route that would minimize the need for future through-traffic to pass through the City via Sioc Street, Fremont Street, and Market Street. All other aspects of Alternative 4, including the remainder of the originally proposed Circulation Map and all other elements of the General Plan would remain the same as with the proposed Project. Alternative 4 would have the same land use designations, buildout population, and number of housing units as with the proposed General Plan.

## **MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM**

A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared in conformance with Section 21081.6 of CEQA and Section 15097 of the CEQA Guidelines. The MMRP establishes the framework the City of Colusa and others will use to implement the mitigation measures adopted in connection with MEIR approval, and the monitoring/reporting of such implementation. "Monitoring" is generally an ongoing or periodic process of project oversight. "Reporting" generally consists of a written compliance review that is presented to the decision-making body or authorized staff person.

It is the intent of this program to: 1) provide a framework to document implementation of the required mitigation; 2) identify monitoring/reporting responsibility; 3) establish the frequency and duration of monitoring/reporting; 4) provide a record of the monitoring/reporting; and 5) ensure compliance with those mitigation measures that are within the responsibility of the City to implement. The City of Colusa has adopted those mitigation measures within its responsibility to implement as binding conditions of approval, fully enforceable by the Council.

The MMRP, included as *Attachment 2* lists each of the mitigation measures adopted by the City in connection with General Plan approval, the project component to which the mitigation measure applies, the project phase during which the measure is to be implemented, the person/agency responsible for implementing and monitoring implementation of the measure, the frequency of monitoring and reporting, and the status of compliance with the mitigation measure.

## **STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS**

The City must adopt feasible mitigation measures, consider possible alternatives to the project, and certify the Final MEIR, which identifies several self-mitigating elements of the project. Nonetheless, implementing the proposed General Plan update will result in significant impacts. Before the City decides to approve a project that will cause one or more significant environmental effects, CEQA requires that the City find that specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant effects on the environment.

This is accomplished through a Statement of Overriding Considerations, which is a statement of the City's views on the ultimate balancing of the merits of approving the General Plan (Project) despite its environmental damage. The Statement of Overriding Considerations must be made in the form of a written finding stating the agency's specific reasons supporting its action based on the Final EIR and/or other information in the record. The requirements for a Statement of Overriding Considerations are established in Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) and in the CEQA statute in Section 21081 of the Public Resources Code.

Substantial evidence includes facts, reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts, and expert opinions supported by facts. Substantial evidence is not argument, speculation, unsubstantiated opinion or narrative, evidence which is clearly inaccurate or erroneous, or evidence of social or economic impacts that do not contribute to or are not caused by physical impacts on the environment.

Staff recommends the Council accept the above findings to support the Statement of Overriding Considerations below:

- Implementing the proposed General Plan update will result in project level and/or cumulative significant and unavoidable impacts in the areas of land use, population and housing, transportation and circulation, noise, air quality, visual resources/light and glare. Some of the significant traffic impacts and effective mitigations identified in the Final MEIR are at locations under the authority and jurisdiction of other public agencies. In cases where the City has no jurisdiction or authority to mitigate offsite impacts, it cannot ensure the implementation of recommended mitigations by other agencies.
- The Statement of Overriding Considerations are described below. These Findings and Statements of Overriding Considerations are also found the Final MEIR Certification Resolution #07-29, included as Attachment 4.
- The proposed General Plan will result in significant unavoidable impacts to land use, agricultural resources, population and employment, transportation and circulation, noise, air quality, and visual resources, as set forth in Section B, above. The City Council has balanced these significant unavoidable impacts of the Project against the Project benefits and based on the entire record before it, hereby determines that the identified impacts are acceptable.
- After review of the entire administrative record, including the Final MEIR, the City Council staff report, and the oral and written testimony and evidence presented at public hearings, the City Council finds that specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other anticipated benefits of the Project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts, and therefore justify the approval of this Project. The proposed General Plan has eliminated or substantially lessened all significant effects on the environment where feasible, and the City Council finds that, on balance, the remaining significant unavoidable impacts of the Project are acceptable because the benefits of the Project outweigh them. The City Council finds that each of the overriding considerations set forth below constitutes a separate and independent ground for such a finding. The Project will result in the following substantial benefits, which constitute the specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other considerations that justify the approval of the proposed General Plan:

- The proposed General Plan will provide diverse housing opportunities for all economic levels.
- The proposed General Plan will provide a foundation for comprehensive planning and clear direction to large annexations and extensive new development that is anticipated to occur with adoption of this General Plan. The policies and programs contained in the General Plan will help the City to maintain a compact urban form inside the Planning Area, which allows for existing and future commercial and industrial development (with related jobs and revenue benefits), while minimizing the development pressure on agricultural land uses outside of the Planning Area. The Project establishes “Special Planning Areas” (“SPAs”) that include smart growth principals through a system of neighborhoods within the SPAs that integrate with and bear relationship to the historic city center, and that establish a more walkable and sustainable community. In addition, the Project would provide an improved circulation network, as the City grows, which would include improved connectivity between existing and new areas of the City, as well as improvements to pedestrian and bicycle forms of transportation.
- The proposed General Plan’s policies and programs will facilitate opportunities for economic benefits that the City would derive from implementation of the General Plan. Along with residential growth, the Project is expected to result in the retention of existing and attraction of new business and industry, which will create new jobs for City residents, including a relatively long-term source of construction and other jobs as the project builds out over time. The Project will contribute to the City’s economic vitality and provide commercial sales and property tax revenue.
- The proposed General Plan would accommodate projected regional growth by proposing a concentrated development pattern that balances employment, residential, retail, and recreational uses, linked to transportation system improvements. By accommodating projected regional growth, the proposed General Plan would lessen the pressure for development in the unincorporated area, which could lead to additional and more severe environmental impacts at the regional level, particularly the removal of large tracts of prime agricultural land.
- The proposed General Plan will provide significant acreage of parks in the City for use by residents, employees and visitors. It will establish a comprehensive trails and pathways network, and inter-jurisdictional/interagency cooperation to mitigate impacts on natural resources.
- The proposed General Plan will provide school expansion and new schools to address local need for educational facilities.

## **FINANCIAL AND/OR POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Adoption of the General Plan is expected to result in fiscal benefit to the City through its policies and programs related to an updated fee program and direct contributions by private developers to ensure that infrastructure and municipal services are in place with the necessary funding for operations and maintenance prior to development occurring. With the adoption of a variety of master plans, a 10-year capital improvement program

will be prepared that will address the cost and financing sources for the projects that will be identified.

**Attachments:**

1. General Plan cut-sheets (final revisions to text and graphics)
2. Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
3. General Plan Implementation Program
4. Resolution #07-29 (Master EIR adoption)
5. Resolution #07-30 (General Plan adoption)

**Provided under separate cover:**

Final Environmental Impact Report (including public comments and responses on Draft EIR).