
Appendix A
Issues and Options Report Summary

APPENDIX A

ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the *Issues and Options Report* was to solicit policy direction from the Board of Supervisors on key issues to be addressed in the General Plan Update and to provide the framework for developing the goals, policies, implementation programs, and land use and circulation plans that constitute the *General Plan Policy Document*.

In preparing this *Issues and Options Report*, County Staff and Consultants identified the most critical policy issues to be addressed in the General Plan Update based on the findings of the *Draft General Plan Background Report* and other work undertaken in conjunction with the General Plan Update, including a series of townhall meetings conducted in November 1991. County Staff and Consultants then identified two or more options for addressing these critical issues. Finally, they analyzed the options in terms of their potential implications. The issues discussed in the report were of two types. First, to address specific growth and environmental issues, Chapter 1 of the report discussed and presented options for several sets of policy/programmatic issues under the following headings:

- *Land Use and Housing*
- *Transportation and Circulation*
- *Natural Resources*
- *Infrastructure*
- *Fiscal and Financial Issues*

These policy and program issues were generally independent of the three conceptual land use alternatives described in Chapter 2 and assessed in Chapter 3, although some of the options discussed in Chapter 1 were more or less compatible with each of the three alternatives. The three land use alternatives presented in Chapter 2 were as follows:

- *Alternative 1: New Growth Directed to Cities*
- *Alternative 2: Expansion of Established Communities*
- *Alternative 3: New Unincorporated Growth Area*

These three land use alternatives, which addressed broadly-defined choices for the overall pattern of future growth in Placer County, were discussed in two chapters, each of which focused on different aspects of the alternatives. Chapter 2 described each alternative in terms of its distinguishing characteristics, its full buildout capacity, and its estimated development potential in the year 2010. Chapter 3 assessed the relative implications of the three alternatives.

Appendix A of the *Issues and Options Report* summarized several major land use proposals that were submitted to the County during 1992 and assessed their relationship to the three land use alternatives described and analyzed in Chapters 2 and 3 of the report.

Finally, it should be noted that the *Issues and Options Report* did not cover all of the issues to be addressed in the new General Plan. It focused instead on only those issues judged by the County's Consultant Team and County Staff to be the most critical for interim policy direction.

Following are discussions of the issues addressed in the *Issues and Options Report*.

CRITICAL ISSUES AND ALTERNATIVE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES

Chapter 1 of the *Issues and Options Report* focused on a series of issues that County Staff and the General Plan Consultants determined to be important enough to require public discussion and formal consideration by the Board of Supervisors before the *Draft General Plan Policy Document* was prepared. Based on the information contained in Chapter 1, Staff and Consultants solicited direction from the Board of Supervisors regarding how to deal with each issue in the preparation of the *Policy Document*. The issues raised in this chapter covered a range of concerns that in some cases represented distinct choices regarding specific approaches to addressing key issues in the *Draft Policy Document* and in other cases represented broader philosophical choices that were intended to help form the foundation of the *General Plan*.

The issues discussed in Chapter 1 of the *Issues and Options Report* were grouped into five major areas of topical concern: (1) Land Use and Housing; (2) Transportation and Circulation; (3) Natural Resources; (4) Infrastructure; and (5) Fiscal and Financial Issues. For each topic under these headings, the discussion was broken into three sections. The first section described the issue and highlighted its importance to the County's future generally, and the General Plan specifically. The second part of each discussion posed key questions raised by the issue. Finally, the third section of each discussion framed the options for dealing with each issue within the context of the new *General Plan*. Each of these sections and the topical discussions that they included are described below, along with a summary of the policy direction provided by the Board of Supervisors on the issue.

LAND USE AND HOUSING

This section of Chapter 1 of the *Issues and Options Report* discussed three major issues related to land use and housing. They were (1) Jobs-Housing Balance; (2) Unincorporated Employment Base; and (3) Housing Element. These issues are described below.

Jobs-Housing Balance

Analysis of the relationship between jobs and housing is one method frequently used to evaluate the impact of a community's land use decisions on regional problems related to transportation congestion and housing costs. In its simplest form, the jobs-housing balance analysis focuses on the ratio of the number of jobs available in a particular area to the amount of housing available. In an ideal situation, there would be one job for every employed resident in an area. This general rule-of-thumb represents a theoretical "balance" between jobs in a community and workers in the community who would fill those jobs. Such a balance would allow residents the opportunity to work in their community, thereby reducing long-distance commuting. The closer a community can come to achieving balance, the higher the likelihood that it will be able to meet its responsibility to address regional transportation and housing cost problems.

The *Issues and Options Report* posed some basic questions regarding Placer County preferences for dealing with the jobs-housing balance issue within the new General Plan. These questions implied a very simple choice: Did the County want to use the General Plan as a tool to promote and guide the development of jobs-housing balance in Placer County. The report described two options, as follows:

Option 1: Allow Market Forces to Dictate the Jobs-Housing Relationship

Option 2: Adopt General Plan Jobs-Housing Balance Policies and Programs

Under the first of these two options, the County would step back and allow market forces to dictate how the relationship between jobs and housing evolves. Under the second option, the County would adopt General Plan policies and programs to guide this evolution (e.g., geographic frame of reference, jobs-to-housing ratio standards, methods of implementation mechanisms to monitor employment and residential growth).

Board Direction: Options 1 and 2: Allow market forces to provide jobs-housing balance and adopt general plan jobs-housing balance policies and programs, with the proviso that the General Plan set the framework for monitoring the jobs-housing balance, rather than regulating it.

Unincorporated Employment Base

Much of the recent employment growth in the unincorporated areas of Placer County has occurred in the service and retail sectors, which have grown in response to consumer demand created by residential development. The jobs created at these retail and service establishments have, however, been generally low-skill and low-paying. Conversely, the type of employers creating jobs for primary wage earners have located either in Sacramento County (in Folsom and the city of Sacramento) or in Placer County's cities (particularly Rocklin and Roseville). As a result, most of the primary wage earners in unincorporated Placer County households are forced to commute to jobs in Sacramento and in Placer County's cities. This out-commuting has contributed to traffic congestion and air pollution and has also resulted in residents of unincorporated Placer County doing much of their shopping outside of the unincorporated parts of Placer County, thereby causing the County to miss out on the benefits of local retail activity (primarily sales tax revenues). The failure to attract the type of businesses supporting primary wage earner employment to unincorporated Placer County has also resulted in the loss to the County of the fiscal benefits associated with such development.

The *Issues and Options Report* presented two options for addressing the future of Placer County's unincorporated area employment base. They were as follows:

Option 1: Limit Employment Development Opportunities to Existing Plans

Option 2: Expand Employment Development Opportunities in the General Plan Update

The first option called for the County to rely on areas that were currently designated for the type of development that would provide jobs (i.e., commercial, industrial, office). The most important part of the county under this approach would be the Sunset area. The second option issue would direct County Staff and Consultants to identify new unincorporated areas appropriate for the development of employment-oriented development.

Board Direction: Option 2: Expand employment development opportunities through the General Plan. (Staff and Consultants interpreted this to mean that the County will continue to allow the Sunset Area to develop as unincorporated territory and that the other new employment centers will be those included in new growth areas (i.e., Placer Villages, Stanford Ranch West, Villages of Dry Creek.)

Housing Element

The final discussion under the Land Use and Housing section of Chapter 1 of the *Issues and Options Report* addressed the Housing Element, which was adopted in June 1992. This discussion simply described the process through which the County went in adopting the Element, including the separate issues and options exercise that it included.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

The second major section of Chapter 1 of the *Issues and Options Report* addressed broad policy issues related to transportation and circulation, as described below.

Regional Transportation Facilities

As the urban areas of Northern California continue to grow, so will the volume of traffic on I-80 through Placer County. While, in most of county, Placer County development will contribute only a small percentage of this volume, the effects of this traffic on residents and businesses throughout the county will be significant. Recognizing the inevitable increases in traffic in the I-80 corridor, several studies have been initiated to identify possible solutions to anticipated problems. For Placer County, the most important of these have been the *Route 102 Feasibility Study* and the *Southeast Area Transportation Study (SATS)*. The options presented in this section of the *Issues and Options Report* focused on these two studies and the County's involvement in them; they were as follows:

- Option 1: Support the I-80 Multi-Modal Transportation Study/Oppose Further Route 102 Study
- Option 2: Study Long-Term Opportunities for an East-West Roadway in Western Placer County
- Option 3: Oppose Study of a Southeastern Beltway through Placer County
- Option 4: Study Long-Term Opportunities for a North-South Roadway in Southern Placer County

The first two options dealt with Route 102, presenting a basic choice between reaffirmation of the County's past decisions or reconsidering the question of a major east-west roadway in the western part of the county. This choice has important implications for the manner in which future development is planned-for in the western county.

The third and fourth options under the discussion of Regional Transportation Facilities addressed the development of regional bypass that would run north-south through the southern part of Placer County. Under the third option, the County would reaffirm the County's previous position regarding the SATS (i.e., because of the possible negative effects on Placer County, oppose the extension of a beltway from Highway 50 north to I-80). According to the fourth option, the County would generally support the study of a future north-south roadway in the southern part of Placer County, thereby recognizing that there could be a need for such a facility in the future to serve either local or regional traffic demand.

Board Direction: Options 1 and 4: Support the I-80 multi-modal transportation study, oppose further Route 102 study, and support multi-modal study of a north-south *corridor* in the southeast area of the county. (Staff and Consultants interpreted this as not precluding the development of a new or expanded transportation corridor between Highway 65 and I-5 or SR 99 to serve new growth areas in Western Placer County.)

Transportation/Land Use Relationship

In considering the future relationship between land use planning and transportation planning, the County needs to recognize one key fact: the pattern and density of development will determine the feasibility of

different modes of transportation. The low-density, dispersed type of development that has occurred in Placer County's unincorporated areas in the past is not conducive to the efficient provision of transit services, either rail or bus. For transit systems to operate effectively and efficiently, development along transit corridors must be relatively dense and concentrated. The options presented under this issue related to how the County intends to plan for the future relationship between land use and transportation facilities; they were as follows:

- Option 1: Promote Low-Density, Dispersed Development Relying on Automobiles
- Option 2: Promote High-Density, Concentrated Development Relying on Transit

Under the first of these options, the County would continue the historical pattern of development in Placer County; that is, lower-density development catering to the strong market for suburban and rural residential development. Since transit services would be difficult to provide with such a development pattern, this option implies that the County would have to plan for roadway capacity adequate to serve what could be very-high volumes of automobile traffic, depending on how much and where land is designated for development.

The second option under the Transportation/Land Use Relationship issue would depart from the historical development pattern in Placer County by designating land for higher density uses in concentrations high enough to support the development of transit services. An important aspect of this option would be the designation of "high quality transit corridors" for the development of either bus or rail services. This approach could focus on increasing density in already-developed areas along existing corridors (i.e., infill), or it could identify new areas for development that could easily be connected to existing corridors.

Board Direction: The Board directed Staff and Consultants to proceed according to a hybrid "Option 3," according to which the General Plan will establish appropriate land use/transportation relationships on a region-by-region basis.

NATURAL RESOURCES

This section of the *Issues and Options Report* addressed the preservation of Placer County's natural resources, focusing first on agricultural and then on open space and habitat resources.

Agricultural Resource Preservation

Although agriculture remains an important sector of Placer County's economy, it has begun to decline in relative importance in recent years as the manufacturing, recreation, service, and construction industries have grown. The decline in agricultural production is the result of urban growth (within the cities) and rural residential development (primarily in the western part of the county), as well as changes in the economy, government regulations, and the cost of producing and transporting agricultural products. In 1989, the County made a strong commitment to supporting agriculture in Placer County by adopting the *Agricultural Element* and, at the same time, enacting a right-to-farm ordinance. The *Agricultural Element* incorporates policies designed to improve the viability of agricultural operations and promote the conservation of agricultural land.

This section of the *Issues and Options Report* presented three options related to the issue of agricultural preservation, as follows:

- Option 1: Reaffirm Existing Agricultural Protection Policies and Programs

Option 2: Adopt More Aggressive Agricultural Protection Policies and Programs

Option 3: Redesignate Appropriate Agricultural Areas for Urban/Suburban Uses

The first of these options would basically reaffirm the policies and programs of the *Agricultural Element* by incorporating them into the new General Plan. This option would also include an evaluation of how effective individual policies and programs have been. The principal assumption with this option is that the County's current regulations and policies adequately reflect its preferred level of involvement.

Under the second option, the County would strengthen its commitment to agricultural preservation by becoming active sponsors of more aggressive preservation programs. Selection of this option would imply that the County's current level of policy and program commitments is not sufficient to adequately protect agricultural land.

The third option would respond to property owner requests to make more land available for urban and suburban development in the unincorporated areas of Placer County. If this option were chosen, the County would identify an appropriate area or areas of currently-designated, less productive agricultural land for development. For those remaining areas with agricultural designations, the provisions of either of the first two options would be appropriate.

Board Direction: Options 1 and 3: Reaffirm existing agricultural protection policies and programs and redesignate appropriate agricultural areas for urban/suburban use. According to this direction, the *Draft Policy Document* includes most of the substantive policy and program content contained in the *Agricultural Element* and the Land Use Diagram retains the agricultural designations for all of the county, except for the areas covered by the new growth areas.

Open Space and Habitat Preservation

Placer County includes a substantial amount of private and public open space land. Much of this open space land also serves as habitat area for sensitive vegetation communities. These vegetation communities in turn support a multitude of sensitive or endangered species. Most of the laws, regulations, and policies concerning open space and habitat resources (primarily state and federal) have evolved as ad-hoc responses to species-specific impacts on an individual project basis. These ad-hoc responses, unfortunately, provide little direction for comprehensive open space or habitat protection. The three options discussed in the *Issues and Options Report* deal with the County's involvement in future efforts to protect these resources, particularly from a comprehensive perspective; they are as follows:

Option 1: Defer Oversight of Habitat Preservation to Federal and State Agencies

Option 2: Establish Strong County Preservation Policies

Option 3: Initiate Active County Involvement in Habitat Preservation

Currently, the regulations most directly affecting habitat preservation are promulgated and enforced by various federal and state agencies. In this scheme, local governments play a relatively minor role. Under Option 1 the County would maintain its current approach, which consists principally of project-by-project review and analysis of habitat disturbance or loss.

Under the second option, the County would establish a strong set of local policies to protect and preserve those resources it considers valuable. The County's commitment would be a policy-based expression of the County's philosophy, without an active program-based implementation effort. For instance, the County could adopt a "no-net-loss" policy for specific habitat or open space resources, leaving it up to project

proponents to implement policies on a case-by-case basis. This option would also commit the County to setting up a study or ongoing program to identify the location and relative importance of open space lands that are critical for sensitive habitat and recreation needs.

Under the third option, the County would initiate a comprehensive habitat conservation program. Because much habitat protection regulation is the responsibility of federal and state agencies, this approach would require that the County identify and initiate cooperative planning efforts with the public and private agencies and organizations who have an institutional interest in habitat preservation in Placer County. The County could initiate these joint planning efforts using memoranda of understanding that establish the institutional objectives and commitments of each participant. The County could also sponsor the formation of a regional open space district or a joint powers authority to permanently focus tax money and planning resources on countywide efforts.

Board Direction: Option 3: Initiate active County involvement in habitat preservation, which will address State, Federal, and appropriate local requirements.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The fourth major section of Chapter 1 of the *Issues and Options Report* addressed three issues related to the infrastructure necessary to support current and future development: Water Supply, Wastewater Management, and Drainage and Flood Control.

Water Supply and Delivery

The issue of water supply in Placer County is fundamentally a question of whether development should rely on groundwater or surface water. Surface water sources currently supply most of the water being used in Placer County, and there appears to be ample surface water, in terms of supply and the rights to develop the supply, to support all existing and currently planned development. While local surface water is plentiful, its use in many areas is problematical because of the major infrastructure necessary for its distribution and use and because of the cost to treat it.

Groundwater use is much less prevalent and often more problematical than surface water use, but some areas of Placer County effectively have no other economically viable source of supply. Groundwater is also the primary source of supply for agricultural irrigation in the western part of the county. Groundwater sources are often more attractive than surface water for several reasons, including lower costs for permitting, transmission, treatment, and distribution, although the cost of power to pump groundwater is increasing. The adequacy of groundwater supply and quality to serve new development is, however, a significant concern because information regarding aquifer boundaries, safe yield potentials, and quality is limited, although there is evidence that local groundwater sources have been overdrafted and/or contaminated. The cumulative effects of groundwater use and contamination in Placer County are, however, not well understood.

While, overall, Placer County has abundant surface and groundwater resources, recent evidence of problems associated with groundwater development suggest that the County actively address the issue of how best to provide water to future urban and suburban development and agriculture. Accordingly, the five options under the issue of Water Supply in the *Issues and Options Report* presented a range of responses regarding the future provision of water; these options were as follows:

Option 1: Continue to Rely on both Surface Water and Groundwater

- Option 2: Rely on Large Surface Water Suppliers but Allow Interim Groundwater Use
- Option 3: Require New Urban and Suburban Development to Rely on Surface Water
- Option 4: Provide Opportunities for Groundwater Users in Problem Areas to Convert to Surface Supply
- Option 5: Promote Development of Surface Water Supplies for Agricultural Irrigation

Currently, the County will approve development in most parts of the county as long as project proponents are able to demonstrate adequate water availability, be it surface or groundwater. The first option would continue this practice, making an implicit judgement that existing problems are not severe enough to compel changes in basic County policy.

The second option would require that where there is evidence of groundwater quality or supply problems, existing large and reliable water systems would be expanded to supply surface water for all new development within their service areas or "spheres." This option presumes that there is currently sufficient evidence to conclude that overdrafting and contamination problems are serious. This option further presumes that large suppliers that are able to conduct comprehensive planning programs and take advantage of economies of scale are the best suppliers of surface water.

Under the third option, the County would require all new urban and suburban development to use surface water exclusively, in the interest of protecting groundwater supplies from overdraft and contamination. The presumption underlying this option is that existing evidence justifies a shift away from reliance on groundwater. This option implies the establishment of some sort of threshold criteria for what constitutes "urban" or "suburban" development.

Under the fourth option, the County would work to provide opportunities for all development in areas experiencing groundwater contamination and overdrafting, including agriculture, to convert to surface supplies. Because the costs associated with this approach could be very high, the County could establish a program to decrease the financial burden on current groundwater users that shift to surface supplies. Because it focuses on existing rather than new development, this option could be combined with any of the other four options.

The fifth, and final, option under Water Supply, would involve County adoption of policies and institution of programs to provide surface irrigation water, particularly in the western part of the county where there is evidence of groundwater overdrafting. Since the principal difficulty with providing irrigation water to this area is the lack of adequate surface water transmission facilities, the County's involvement would focus on the development of such facilities, either in conjunction with local water suppliers or alone.

Board Direction: Options 3, 4, and 5: Require new urban and suburban development to rely on surface water, but clarify meaning of *urban and suburban*; provide opportunities for groundwater users in problem areas to convert to surface supplies; and promote development of surface supplies for agricultural users in western county.

Wastewater Management

Two basic approaches to collecting and treating wastewater are currently being used in Placer County. The first is the community system, which consists of a network of collection lines that connect individual wastewater generators to a centralized treatment facility; this type of system predominates in Placer County. The second approach is on-site collection and treatment using septic systems. On-site systems are used predominantly in Placer County's rural, outlying areas that cannot be efficiently served by community wastewater systems.

While community systems in the county have operated generally without significant problems, there is mounting evidence that the use of on-site systems in some areas of Placer County has had detrimental impacts on groundwater quality, specifically nitrate contamination of local aquifers. This is particularly true in some areas in the western part of the county that have elevated groundwater and poor soil percolation. This is also true in many foothill and mountain areas of the central and eastern county that have elevated groundwater, poor or thin soils, and steep slopes.

The regulation of both community and on-site wastewater is focused almost exclusively on compliance with waste disposal regulations related to protecting water resources from pollution or contamination and the associated public health concerns. These regulations, which are administered and enforced by multiple layers of federal, state, and local agencies, generally do not address comprehensive planning issues. The four options presented in the *Issues and Options Report* related to the County's future participation in the regulation of both community and on-site wastewater systems; they were as follows:

- Option 1: Continue Ad Hoc Approval of On-site Systems
- Option 2: Limit On-site System Use to Larger Parcels
- Option 3: Establish a Reclamation Policy for Community Wastewater Systems
- Option 4: Promote Regionalization of Community Wastewater Systems

Under the first option, the County would continue the current practice of allowing the development of on-site wastewater treatment systems on a case-by-case basis. This approach could further stipulate that future proposals for on-site systems carefully assess potential cumulative groundwater impacts.

The second option would limit the use of on-site systems to larger parcels and would prohibit their use in areas where soil and groundwater conditions are not suitable. Where soils and groundwater conditions and project scale or density prohibit the use of on-site systems, the County would consider permitting the use alternative community systems (e.g., septic tank effluent pumping systems, variable grade sewers, vacuum sewers). If these alternative systems prove infeasible, the County would require the development of community wastewater systems.

The third option would encourage reclamation and reuse by establishing a policy requiring new development relying on community wastewater systems to incorporate reclamation and reuse technology. In addition to requiring new development to reclaim and reuse wastewater, such a policy could encourage existing community wastewater treatment systems to modify their facilities as economic conditions and demand for reclaimed water increases.

The fourth option under Wastewater Management would foster the development of regional wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal facilities where economically and technically viable. Regional facilities could be managed either by cities or county service areas, depending on the circumstances.

Regionalization, especially where urban and suburban development is occurring rapidly, could result in the most cost effective solution for wastewater management.

Board Direction: Options 1 and 4: Continue ad-hoc approval of on-site systems, while promoting regionalization of community systems.

FISCAL AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

The final set of issues addressed in Chapter 1 of the *Issues and Options Report* dealt with fiscal and financial concerns, including Public Facility and Service Financing and Unincorporated Service Levels and Funding.

Public Facility and Service Financing

The County has become increasingly concerned about funding of public facilities, particularly those facilities that are needed to serve new growth. In the past, the County has not required new development, either within cities or in the unincorporated areas, to address their impacts on County facilities such as jails, courts, libraries, regional transportation systems, and general County administrative office space. As a result, many of these facilities have become congested as staffing has increased, while facility capacity has not.

In 1990, the County began reviewing proposed development projects to assess their potential impacts on all types of County infrastructure. The County proposed this review process to the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) as a policy that would apply to all future annexations and unincorporated area development. The County has also begun a comprehensive analysis of capital facilities needed to accommodate growth through the year 2010. The analysis will document the full cost of new facilities and will propose methods of funding the cost with revenues from new development. The findings of the County's capital facilities analysis and investigation of possible funding methods will have important implications for the policies and programs of the new General Plan. Because the General Plan will more definitively identify the amount, type, and location of development that the County anticipates over the next 20 years, the County will have an opportunity to better identify the associated facility needs. In addition, the new plan will provide an opportunity for the County to coordinate policy efforts regarding alternatives for funding the needed facilities.

While the new General Plan's approach to addressing countywide facility funding issues will be largely informed by other studies that are currently under way, the *Issues and Options Report* identified the following three broad options that merit consideration:

- Option 1: Use Existing Sources to Expand Countywide Facilities
- Option 2: Raise Existing or Institute New Taxes to Expand Countywide Facilities
- Option 3: Charge New Development for its Share of Countywide Facilities

The first of these options would call for the County to use existing funding sources to expand countywide facilities. This would mean that the County would use discretionary revenues to increase the capacity of existing countywide facilities. This option would realize only small gains in capital investment and could result in lower operating standards.

Under the second option, the County would raise existing taxes or institute new taxes to generate additional revenue to fund capital facilities improvements. This could include utility taxes, special

assessment districts, or a sales tax increase. Future cuts in State financial assistance to counties could, however, make such tax increases necessary just to support ongoing operation and maintenance expenditures, thereby limiting their availability to fund facilities development. Although past attempts at increasing the sales tax in Placer County have failed to obtain the necessary two-thirds vote, future votes could be necessary.

According to the third option, the County would charge *all* new development in the county for the cost of additional countywide facilities needed to serve the new development, as is done in other California counties. This would require that Placer County's cities adopt the County's program and apply it to all new development within their jurisdictions; such agreements might be difficult to negotiate, but may be tied to other regional issues of concern to the cities (i.e., growth in incorporated versus unincorporated areas). In addition, a fair allocation of future facility costs could result in large financial burdens that would inhibit job-creating development.

Board Direction: Options 1 and 3: Use existing sources to expand existing facilities and services and charge new development for its share of countywide facilities.

Unincorporated Service Levels and Funding

During the past few decades, growth in the unincorporated areas of Placer County has increased the size of existing suburban communities and created new developments in previously rural areas. The County has provided the residents and workers of these unincorporated areas with services similar to those typically provided by cities. These municipal-type services--primarily sheriff's patrol, local parks, libraries, and general government services--have been funded mostly by discretionary general fund revenues. Counties, including Placer County, are not generally as well-suited as cities to provide these types of services, partly because of the wide dispersion of population and employment and partly because of the County's responsibility for funding state-mandated facilities and services. The County's dual role as the administrator of these state-mandated services and as provider of municipal-like services to the unincorporated areas get particularly complicated during the annual budget process. Because the cost of many countywide services is determined by the State Legislature through program requirements, and the Legislature has increased mandated levels of service without increasing financial assistance, the percentage of the County's budget dedicated to these services has increased. Conversely, the percentage of discretionary revenue available to fund municipal-like services to the unincorporated areas has decreased.

If the County intends to continue attracting new development to its unincorporated areas, its obligations to provide municipal-like services will continue to increase. The three options described under the issue of Unincorporated Service Levels and Funding in the *Issues and Options Report* addressed the County's commitment to these obligations; these options are as follows:

- Option 1: Require All New Urban Development to Annex to Cities
- Option 2: Restrict New Unincorporated Development to Existing Unincorporated Communities
- Option 3: Establish Differential Level of Service Standards
- Option 4: Require New Development to Pay the Full Cost of Providing Municipal-Like Services

Under the first option, the County would limit further increases in the County's responsibility to expand current or provide new municipal-like services by requiring that all new urban development annex to cities. This would require that each city, instead of the County, assume responsibility for providing municipal-like services to new development. The County could then concentrate on providing those countywide services for which it is statutorily responsible.

The second option would call for restricting new unincorporated development of existing unincorporated communities. This would allow the County to take advantage of existing service and facility capacity to serve new growth, while additional capacity could be added at the margin more efficiently than providing new services to previously-undeveloped areas.

The third option would establish differential level of service standards that recognize appropriate differences in the type of development generating the demand for services. For instance, the County could adopt different service level standards for urban and rural development. Some counties explicitly recognize that it is infeasible to provide the same level of services to remote rural areas as to urban and suburban areas without incurring much higher costs.

Under the fourth option, the County would require new development to pay the full cost of providing municipal-like services. This option would stipulate that all new municipal-like services be provided at the sole cost of the private sponsors of development, regardless of the level of service called for by County standards.

Board Direction: Options 3 and 4: Establish differential service standards, and require new development to pay full cost of providing municipal-like services.

DESCRIPTION OF LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

The second part of the *Issues and Options Report* described and assessed the implications of three alternative approaches for accommodating demand for forecasted development through the year 2010. The Consultants, working closely with County Staff, outlined three scenarios, each of which implied a distinct set of underlying land use assumptions as well as a set of policy and program commitments. These three scenarios were as follows:

ALTERNATIVE 1: NEW URBAN GROWTH DIRECTED TO CITIES

This alternative emphasized shifting the jurisdictional control over new growth and development from the County to the cities. County general plan policies would be modified to encourage all new urban-scale growth within the incorporated cities of Placer County (including currently unincorporated areas within city spheres of influence to be annexed to cities), rather than in the unincorporated areas of the county.

This alternative would necessarily involve the establishment of cooperative agreements with each of the cities in the county to ensure that the development regulatory process will lead to mutually acceptable results.

The forms of unincorporated area development allowed under this alternative would include infill development within existing community plan areas, dispersed residential, agricultural, open space, and resource-based recreational uses.

New unincorporated area growth would be limited to currently-designated communities, with reductions in the extent and density of growth contemplated by the existing *General Plan* for select areas. New proposals for urban growth needing general plan amendments and rezoning would not be considered. County General Plan and zoning designations within city spheres of influence would be changed to limit development before annexation, so that city plans for the spheres would not be compromised by potentially incompatible development in the interim.

ALTERNATIVE 2: EXPANSION OF ESTABLISHED COMMUNITIES

Under Alternative 2, the County would promote new growth in established unincorporated communities within and immediately adjacent to existing developed areas and away from environmentally-sensitive areas. The County would achieve this objective by promoting development in areas that can now accommodate, or could be expanded to accommodate, additional growth without exacerbating existing or causing new natural resource, infrastructure, or public facilities and services problems. Under this alternative, the County would, nonetheless, modify existing plans to reduce development potential in unincorporated areas where land use designations reflect unrealistic development potential in light of resources or infrastructure and service limitations. This alternative would provide for no new communities or major new growth areas; it instead would call for the intensification of existing unincorporated areas, including areas within city spheres of influence. The most important distinction between Alternatives 1 and 2 is that under Alternative 1, the approval of new urban development would be left up to cities, while under Alternative 2, the County would continue to approve such development.

New development in the unincorporated communities targeted for growth would emphasize urban densities with compact urban form, implement "neo-traditional" pedestrian- and transit-oriented urban planning concepts where feasible, and de-emphasize typical suburban development. New development would also be sited and designed to help establish distinct community character. Commercial development would emphasize "village commercial" character that would have the appearance of a small community pedestrian-scale downtown rather than the automobile-oriented shopping malls typical of modern suburban development. Where appropriate, new urban-type development would be located near transportation/transit corridors, and where public facilities and services can be efficiently provided.

Although a full range of residential uses would be allowed in different locations, the plan would emphasize the "ends" of the range (e.g., dispersed rural homesites on very large parcels, and urban residential at higher-density urban residential densities). In addition, land would be designated for various other uses, including convenience and village commercial, mixed use developments; agriculture, resource-based recreation, large-scale industrial development, small industrial centers within various unincorporated urban areas, and additional protected open space.

ALTERNATIVE 3: NEW GROWTH AREA

Under Alternative 3, the County would identify an area or areas suitable for the establishment of new urban development. This alternative would redirect growth from the established unincorporated communities, thereby relieving development pressure on potentially sensitive areas. Development in new growth areas would emphasize "neo-traditional" planning principles (i.e., compact pedestrian- and transit-oriented development). Under this alternative, the County would modify existing plans to reduce development potential in unincorporated areas where land use designations reflect unrealistic development potential in light of resources or infrastructure and service limitations. In conjunction with the identification of new growth areas, the County would explore a transfer of development rights (TDR) program as a means of reallocating development potential from existing communities and surrounding agricultural land to the new community site. While under Alternative 1 the County would direct new urban development to the cities and under Alternative 2 it would continue to approve new urban development in some of the same areas as the cities, under Alternative 3 the County would provide an opportunity for the same type of urban development in an entirely new location.

For purposes of analysis, the *Issues and Options Report* assumed that new urban development would be designed to function as a discrete "new town" with a buildout population of approximately 20,000 and an

area of about four square miles. Community design would emphasize urban densities with compact urban form, implement "neo-traditional" urban planning concepts where feasible, and de-emphasize recent suburban development patterns. Commercial development would emphasize "village commercial" character.

County Staff and Consultants identified several site selection criteria for the location of any new urban development areas (see page 2-7 of the *Issues and Options Report*). For purposes of analysis, County Staff and Consultants determined that the general area that best satisfied these criteria was near Baseline Road, west of Roseville.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE THREE LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

Chapter 3 of the *Issues and Options Report* assessed and compared the implications of the three land use alternatives described above (and in Chapter 2 of the report), focusing on both the quantitative and the qualitative differences among the three land use alternatives. The alternatives were assessed according to five topical headings, each including two or three analysis factors, as shown below:

IMPACT CATEGORIES	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3
Land Use, Housing, and Urban Design			
Effects on Urban Form	Because responsibility for approving new urban development would shift primarily to the cities under Alternative 1, the County would have little influence over the form of development, at least at the project level. From a larger perspective, the County would affect the pattern of urban development by not approving projects within or immediately adjacent to city spheres of influence. Presumably, this would result in more definite distinctions between urban (i.e., incorporated) and rural (i.e., unincorporated) areas.	This alternative anticipates that new urban growth would be compact in form, would be located within and directly adjacent to existing communities, and would de-emphasize traditional suburban development styles in favor of more state-of-the-art planning (e.g., "neo-traditional" urban planning concepts). In addition, some dispersed, lower density rural homesites would be allowed. Because of this additional development, Alternative 2 could result in the greatest change to the county's urban form and the appearance of unincorporated communities and rural landscapes.	Alternative 3 would significantly alter existing county urban form by providing for an entirely new urban area; it would, however, result in less change to the existing character of unincorporated communities and rural areas (except in the vicinity of the new town) than Alternative 2.

IMPACT CATEGORIES	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3
Jobs-Housing Balance	<p>Alternative 1, for instance, would provide for most future urban development, both residential and employment-generating, to be directed to the cities. Implicitly, this would result in a closer geographic relationship between housing and employment opportunities because development would be less dispersed. In qualitative terms, it is also likely that development occurring within cities would include a broader range of housing types and densities, and thus, a broader range of affordability. This would likely be true of non-residential development also, since the existing base of employment within the cities is relatively broad.</p>	<p>Alternative 2 would promote the expansion of existing unincorporated communities, with an emphasis on "neo-traditional" development concepts (i.e., higher residential density, pedestrian- and transit-oriented design, village-type commercial). Under Alternative 2, the County would promote business park and industrial development in the Sunset Industrial area. Compared with Alternatives 1 and 3, this alternative would result in a more dispersed development pattern. Consequently, Alternative 2 would present more obstacles to the County's attempt to balance jobs and housing in the unincorporated area. It could also result in more commuting within the South Placer area than would either Alternative 1 or 3.</p>	<p>Alternative 3 is designed to promote a jobs-housing balance, at least within the new town that it envisions. Under this alternative, the new town would develop with higher-density residential uses and would be planned to accommodate a full range of employment-generating uses, including development supporting jobs for primary wage earners. Under this alternative, the County would be able to exert some influence over the jobs-housing balance in the new town by monitoring development phasing and attempting to ensure that residential and non-residential development proceed at a relatively even pace. Policies and programs to promote such a balance would be critical to the new town's success in maintaining a jobs-housing balance.</p>

IMPACT CATEGORIES	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3
Natural Resources			
<p>Agricultural Land Conversion</p>	<p>One of the fundamental objectives of Alternative 1 is the protection of open space and agricultural land. The alternative envisions protecting these land resources by reducing the likelihood that pressure for urban development will affect these areas. Accordingly, of the three alternatives, Alternative 1 would provide for the highest level of protection of the county's agricultural resources.</p>	<p>Under this alternative, the County would continue to approve urban-type development in its unincorporated communities. Alternative 2 would also permit continued large-lot rural residential development. Because this type of development would be dispersed throughout the county's rural areas, it is likely that it would occur on or near prime agricultural land. This could result in erosion of the distinction between "agricultural" areas and "rural residential" areas. Because it would allow the most dispersed pattern of urban development, Alternative 2 would be most likely to adversely affect agricultural land and production. Its effects would, however, be less significant than would those of the current plan for the area, because of the promotion of more compact, denser urban development.</p>	<p>Alternative 3 would provide for the most unincorporated development of the three alternatives. By definition, however, Alternative 3 would result in a more intensive, concentrated pattern of development by virtue of its promotion of a new town in the western part of the county. The area that appears to be most suitable for the development of a new town is classified as "unique farmland/ farmland of local importance." Development in this area would result in the conversion of important agricultural land to urban uses and could foster additional growth pressures on adjacent agricultural areas. Alternative 3 would, nonetheless, provide for definite boundaries between agricultural and urban uses, and the new town could absorb urban growth that might otherwise encroach on other agricultural areas. As a result, Alternative 3 would have impacts similar to Alternative 2 in terms of the severity of its impact on agricultural land and production.</p>

IMPACT CATEGORIES	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3
Natural Habitat Loss	One of the primary objectives of Alternative 1 is the protection of habitat areas. The alternative envisions protecting these resources by reducing the likelihood that pressure for urban development will affect these areas. Accordingly, of the three alternatives, Alternative 1 would provide for the highest level of protection of the county's natural habitat resources.	Under this alternative, the County would continue to approve urban-type development in its unincorporated communities. Alternative 2 would also permit continued large-lot rural residential development. Because this type of development would be dispersed throughout the county's rural areas, it is likely that it would occur near valuable natural habitat areas. Because it would allow the most dispersed pattern of future urban development, Alternative 2 would be most likely to adversely affect habitat areas.	Alternative 3 would provide for the most unincorporated development of the three alternatives. By definition, however, Alternative 3 would result in a more intensive, concentrated pattern of development by virtue of its promotion of a new town in the western part of the county. The area that appears to be the most suitable for the development of a new town (i.e., near Baseline Road, west of Roseville) includes valuable grasslands and wetland habitats, as well as some oak woodlands. While development in this area would presumably draw some development away from other areas, it could affect some of these important habitat areas. As a result, Alternative 3 would fall between the other two alternatives in terms of its potential impacts on sensitive natural habitat areas.
Air Quality	In most areas of the county, Alternative 1 would result in incrementally lower emissions in 2010 than either Alternative 2 or 3. This is the case simply because development under Alternative 1 would result in the concentration of urban development within cities, thereby promoting more efficient travel patterns than would be likely under Alternatives 2 and 3, both of which would result in increased development in unincorporated areas.	Because development would be more dispersed under Alternative 2, automobile trips would tend to be longer, resulting in more vehicle miles travelled and higher air pollutant emissions. The emissions from Alternative 2 would, nonetheless, differ very little from the other two alternatives.	In spite of the development of a new town that would promote growth conducive to good air quality, Alternative 3 would have worst effect on air quality, primarily because of the length of automobile trips to and from the new town. The emissions from Alternative 3 would, nonetheless, differ very little from the other two alternatives.
Transportation and Circulation			
Trip Generation and Mode Choice	While trip generation would differ very little among the three alternatives (less than 2 percent), Alternative 1 would result in the highest number of person and vehicle trips overall.	Although Alternative 2 would fall in between the other two in terms of total trip generation overall and in the South Placer area, it would result in the highest trip generation in the Auburn-Foothills regional analysis area.	Alternative 3 would result in slightly fewer vehicle trips per person trips than either Alternative 1 and 2. This is principally due to the new town which would have higher transit and carpool usage than surrounding development.

IMPACT CATEGORIES	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3
Travel Patterns	Average travel distance would be relatively equal for the three land use alternatives, but would be slightly lower under Alternative 1 than under Alternatives 2 and 3. This is because Alternative 1 would concentrate development within incorporated areas, thereby reducing average trip lengths.	Alternative 2 would fall in between the other two alternatives in terms of average trip length.	In spite of the fact that Alternative 3 would have the lowest vehicle trip generation of the three alternatives, it would have the highest number of vehicle miles travelled due to longer average trip lengths. While work trips generated in the new town would be shorter on average than the rest of South Placer County due to the assumed employment levels in the new town, non-work trips generated in the new town would be longer because a significant number of trips would have to leave for services or activities not available in the new town.
Traffic Congestion	Alternative 1 would have fewer lane miles of congestion (i.e., level of service F) than either Alternative 2 or Alternative 3. While Alternative 1 would generate a slightly higher number of vehicle trips than Alternatives 2 and 3, it would result in fewer vehicle miles travelled due to shorter trip lengths.	Alternative 2 would spread development outside of incorporated areas, thereby increasing average trip lengths and placing more traffic demand on two lane rural roadways in the unincorporated areas. Alternative 2 would, therefore, require higher levels of transportation improvements than Alternative 1 and about the same level as Alternative 3.	Like Alternative 2, Alternative 3 would disperse development outside of incorporated areas, thereby increasing average trip lengths and placing more traffic demand on two lane rural roadways in the unincorporated areas. Alternative 3 would also require higher levels of transportation improvements than Alternative 1.
Infrastructure			
Water Supply and Delivery	Because Alternative 1 would direct new growth into the county's unincorporated areas, the greatest effect would be on municipal systems. Typically, it is less problematic and less expensive to expand existing treatment and distribution systems than it is to develop new systems (as under Alternative 3) and more environmentally efficient and reliable than developing individual well systems.	The most important consideration in Alternative 2 would be the continued approval of dispersed lower-density development. This type of development often relies on individual well systems for supply, thereby raising questions regarding groundwater quantity and quality.	The new town assumed under Alternative 3 would require the identification of a new raw water source, as well as the development of treatment and distribution facilities. If a surface water source is to be used for supply for the new town, construction of a new transmission facilities would be necessary. If the new town is to rely on groundwater resources, studies would be required to determine if the acceptable yield of the aquifer will safely meet the total projected future demand.

IMPACT CATEGORIES	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3
Wastewater	<p>Alternative 1's greatest impact on the wastewater infrastructure would be in the cities, into which it would direct development. Existing community treatment systems would have to be expanded to accommodate development under all of the alternatives, but especially under Alternative 1.</p>	<p>As with water, the most important consideration in Alternative 2 would be the continued approval of dispersed lower-density development. This type of development often relies on individual septic systems for waste treatment. This would raise concerns regarding the capacity of local groundwater resources to tolerate the continued development of septic systems.</p>	<p>Alternative 3 would require the construction of new wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system for its new town. This could be accomplished in one of two ways. The new town could construct a new collection system to connect to existing collection systems and regional plants, or the developers of a new town could develop an entirely new system, independent of any existing systems.</p>
Drainage	<p>Alternative 1 would ultimately require improvements to the existing drainage and flood control facilities primarily within city expansion areas. Because numerous drainage and flood control studies have been completed for the city areas, the improvements necessary to accommodate incorporated growth are already understood.</p>	<p>The areas expected to absorb additional development under Alternative 2 most likely do not have well-planned, properly-sized storm drainage systems, so extensive infrastructure improvements would likely be required. Since several drainage and flood control studies in the western unincorporated areas of Placer County have been completed recently, planning for drainage and flood control facilities to accommodate future growth under Alternative 2 would not be too complicated. This alternative would require additional facilities to be constructed to accommodate growth in most unincorporated communities.</p>	<p>Because Alternative 3 would provide for development of a new community in an area not currently planned for urban development, it would require additional drainage and flood studies to determine the necessary improvements. The location of the new town would primarily determine the magnitude of potential drainage impacts. Depending on the location, the associated costs of these improvements could be prohibitive since many areas of the county face serious flood and drainage problems. One advantage of this alternative, however, is that resolution of drainage issues could be planned in advance, thereby allowing growth to be directed to areas either without significant problems or to areas where there are relatively simple solutions to drainage problems.</p>

IMPACT CATEGORIES	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3
Fiscal and Financial Issues			
Fiscal Implications	<p>While property tax revenue would cover a higher percentage of costs under Alternative 1, sales tax generation would be low. Under Alternative 1, the County would sacrifice potential sales tax receipts by directing most commercial and industrial development to the cities. Improved revenue-sharing agreements with the cities could, however, make the sacrifice less severe.</p>	<p>Given the assumptions underlying this fiscal analysis, Alternative 2 would be the most fiscally beneficial to the County for two reasons. First, it would be the most aggressive in terms of the County capturing sales tax because it would result in more commercial development. Second, the housing developed under Alternative 2 would, on average, likely be of lower density and higher value than the housing in either of the other alternatives.</p>	<p>Alternative 3, which combines aspects of the other two alternatives, should have a fiscal return that falls in between Alternatives 1 and 2.</p>
Infrastructure Finance	<p>Alternative 1 proposes that cities accommodate the majority of new development, within current boundaries or through annexation, and provide the requisite municipal facilities (i.e., police and fire stations, parks, local administrative offices, local roads, and utilities). There would be efficiencies to providing facilities for growth adjacent to existing urban infrastructure, and distribution networks and new plant construction for water and wastewater service and for other utilities would be limited under this alternative. Similarly, directing growth to the cities would diminish the County's need to expand the capacity of local roads in unincorporated areas. Compared to the other alternatives, Alternative 1 would minimize the County's role as provider of municipal-like facilities.</p>	<p>Alternative 2 would result in greater demand for infrastructure and other public facilities to serve the population in the unincorporated area. This alternative's more dispersed development pattern would not allow for the efficiencies possible with development concentrated around urban existing areas or in a new town. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the larger population and employment base in the unincorporated areas under Alternative 2, compared to the other alternatives, might enable the County to reach service level thresholds for providing facilities such as branch libraries or neighborhood parks, resulting in a higher level of service than would otherwise be the case.</p>	<p>The development pattern under Alternative 3 would combine some of the features of both of the other alternatives. Development concentrated in a new town would provide for efficiencies in local distribution networks and roadways. Furthermore, infrastructure systems in a large-scale, master-planned new town could take advantage of new technologies; this could contribute to reducing the per-capita cost of facilities. Following the same logic, incorporating pedestrian- and transit-oriented features in the new town might reduce the need for the sort of extensive local road networks typical of recent subdivisions accommodating large amounts of development. On the other hand, major arterials and trunk lines for other infrastructure would have to be extended and new capacity created to serve the new town.</p>

IMPACT CATEGORIES	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3
Market Feasibility	Alternative 1 is consistent with the market forces directing development to South Placer County, where the most significant differences among the alternatives are evident in the distribution of development. Much of that difference in distribution is a question of jurisdiction, not location. The primary distinction among the alternatives is the guiding statement about the approach to development policy in unincorporated areas. Under Alternative 1, development would occur under the auspices of the cities, rather than the County, a subtlety that would not likely affect market demand.	Under Alternative 2, more development would occur under the purview of the County. Assuming that the cities and the County would be asked to approve similar types of development, this would make little difference with respect to market demand.	As with Alternatives 1 and 2, the main consideration under Alternative 3 would be which jurisdiction assumed responsibility for sponsoring development. Again, market demand would not likely make a distinction. In addition, Alternative 3 would include a new town that would raise the issue of regional demand for such large-scale types of development. The outlook for a new town in South Placer County depends to some extent on the success of proposals for large-scale development in neighboring counties. If for some reason, new town proposals in Sacramento or Sutter counties were more successful in the approval and development process than the Placer County proposals, then development in South Placer County would not occur at the same rate or in the same form as anticipated, particularly, in Alternative 3.

BOARD DIRECTION ON LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

The Board’s direction regarding land use alternatives reflected a composite of various considerations. The Board chose not to characterize its direction in terms of one of the three alternatives described in Chapter 2 of the *Issues and Options Report*. Instead, the Board opted to provide its direction in the form of a hybrid alternative, which was labeled "Alternative 5." This alternative originated with Supervisor Ozenick, who first presented it at the Board’s third meeting (May 27th). In its final form, Alternative 5 consisted of five components: (1) a set of *Objectives/Comments/Observations*; (2) a summary description of the Board’s preferences for the general *Location of New Development*; (3) a description of the desired *Form of New Development*; (4) a set of *Standards and Conditions* to be applied to new development; and (5) directions regarding the areas to be considered for accommodation of new development. Following is a summary of each of these five components.

Objectives/Comments/Observations

The primary objectives of Alternative 5 are as follows:

1. Provide direction to guide growth in the County so that the grandchildren of current Placer County residents and their families’ futures are protected. (The current General Plan appears to only accommodate expected growth for the next 40± years.)

2. Specify that new growth must pay its own way and make other positive contributions which will protect the lifestyles of Placer County residents and minimize adverse impacts on the existing quality of life in the county.
3. Protect agricultural lands.
4. Balance growth by separating and individualizing population centers.
5. Plan to accommodate the County's share of new growth occurring throughout California. California is growing by 500,000 people per year, with a current population of 31.3 million, and a projection of 63 million by the year 2040. The Countywide General Plan should, therefore, include a population cap of 500,000.

Location of New Development

Development proponents will determine whether to develop in a city or in the county, but the majority of new development should be directed towards the South Placer area within both the cities and the unincorporated area.

New population centers would be permitted where buffers can be provided to separate such areas from the existing cities and agricultural lands.

Any development proposal submitted in conformance with the general plan will be required to include a buffer zone to insure separation from other developments. The size of the buffer zone would be proportionate to the total project size, and the location of the buffer would depend on where the project is to the sited. The buffer must be contained within the project boundaries. No outside lands would be included unless those lands are acquired as part of the project.

Form of New Development

New development would take place within the cities of Placer County as well as in the unincorporated area. The forms of unincorporated area development allowed under this alternative should include infill development within existing cities and community plan areas and development approved according to the provisions of specific plans. Additional opportunities for rural residential growth and continued agricultural uses should be provided where such areas can serve as land use buffers between existing and new population centers.

Standards and Conditions

The Placer County General Plan should include strict performance standards to regulate development in the county. Development shall not be permitted unless it meets the following standards:

1. New urban or suburban development is permitted only within existing city limits, within designated community plan areas, and/or under the guidelines of a specific plan.
2. To protect current residents from subsidizing new development, the County will develop policies to ensure that new growth does not have a negative fiscal impact.

3. Taxes generated from new development must pay the full operating costs of government services required for the development.
4. Revenue sharing agreements shall be negotiated with cities to ensure that new development in incorporated areas or annexations does not decrease the level of County services and County facilities.
5. The County will require that new development pay the full capital costs of infrastructure improvements required by that development.
6. Agricultural areas shall be protected through large zoning minimums and policies contained in the Agricultural Element of the General Plan.
7. The creation of new population centers shall be subject to the above conditions as well as the following standards and/or development requirements:
 - a. New population centers proposing urban densities shall be designed to, or shall have a goal of, achieving a jobs/housing balance.
 - b. Transit services to serve the project area shall be financed by new population centers and available state and federal financing under appropriate transportation funding.
 - c. Land use buffers and greenbelts shall be established as new population centers develop. Land acquisition, purchase of development rights, conservation easements, or similar mechanisms shall be used and financed by new development, to guarantee that such buffers are maintained in perpetuity.
 - d. Buffer zones may include ranchette type uses with zoning minimums ranging from 1 to 20 acres in addition to designated open space.
 - e. A range of housing types shall be included within new population centers based on income distribution in the county and development staged such that a balance is maintained over time (consistent with the Housing Element).
 - f. New population centers shall be regulated through specific plans and development agreements, and no guarantees of development rights shall be assured until the County approves such plans and agreements.
 - g. New population centers will be expected to provide a balanced complement of land use types including residential (low, very low, and moderate cost), commercial, industrial, office, recreational, institutional, and open space.

NEW GROWTH AREAS

At its April 27, 1993 meeting, the Board of Supervisors provided initial direction regarding opening up new areas for development. Prior to providing this direction, however, the Board directed County Planning Department Staff to continue with its ongoing community plan update program, eliminate three

existing community plans previously identified by Staff (Lincoln, Westville, and Tinker Knob) as a part of the General Plan Update, and to identify new future community plan areas as appropriate.

With respect to the designation of new growth areas, at their April 27th meeting, the Board directed that the area south of Baseline Road and west of Watt Avenue and the area encompassed by the proposed Bickford Ranch project be designated for potential urban growth. The Board deferred final consideration of other areas until County representatives had an opportunity to discuss new growth areas with the cities that would be most affected (Roseville, Rocklin, and Lincoln).

Following meetings with city representatives, the Board met on June 6, 1993, to consider the remainder of the areas that had been proposed as new growth areas. At that meeting the Board provided direction to open up the areas covered by a revised version of the proposed Placer Villages project and the Bickford Ranch, Stanford Ranch West, and Villages of Dry Creek projects.

For purposes of preparing the *Draft General Plan Policy Document*, County Staff and Consultants assumed that the Board's direction regarding the new growth areas would be implemented on the *Land Use Diagram* by designating these areas as specific plan areas (i.e., areas requiring preparation and adoption of a specific plan prior to development). County Staff and the Consultants also assumed that to accompany the designations on the *Land Use Diagram*, the *Draft Policy Document* would specify a set of standards reflecting the project descriptions submitted by project proponents and consistent with the "standards and conditions" outlined in the previous section.