



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

*Many of the chapters contain highlighted boxes in this format, either for the purpose of summarizing, defining technical terms or referencing related information in other parts of the document.*

### 1.1 THE TOWN OF PARADISE

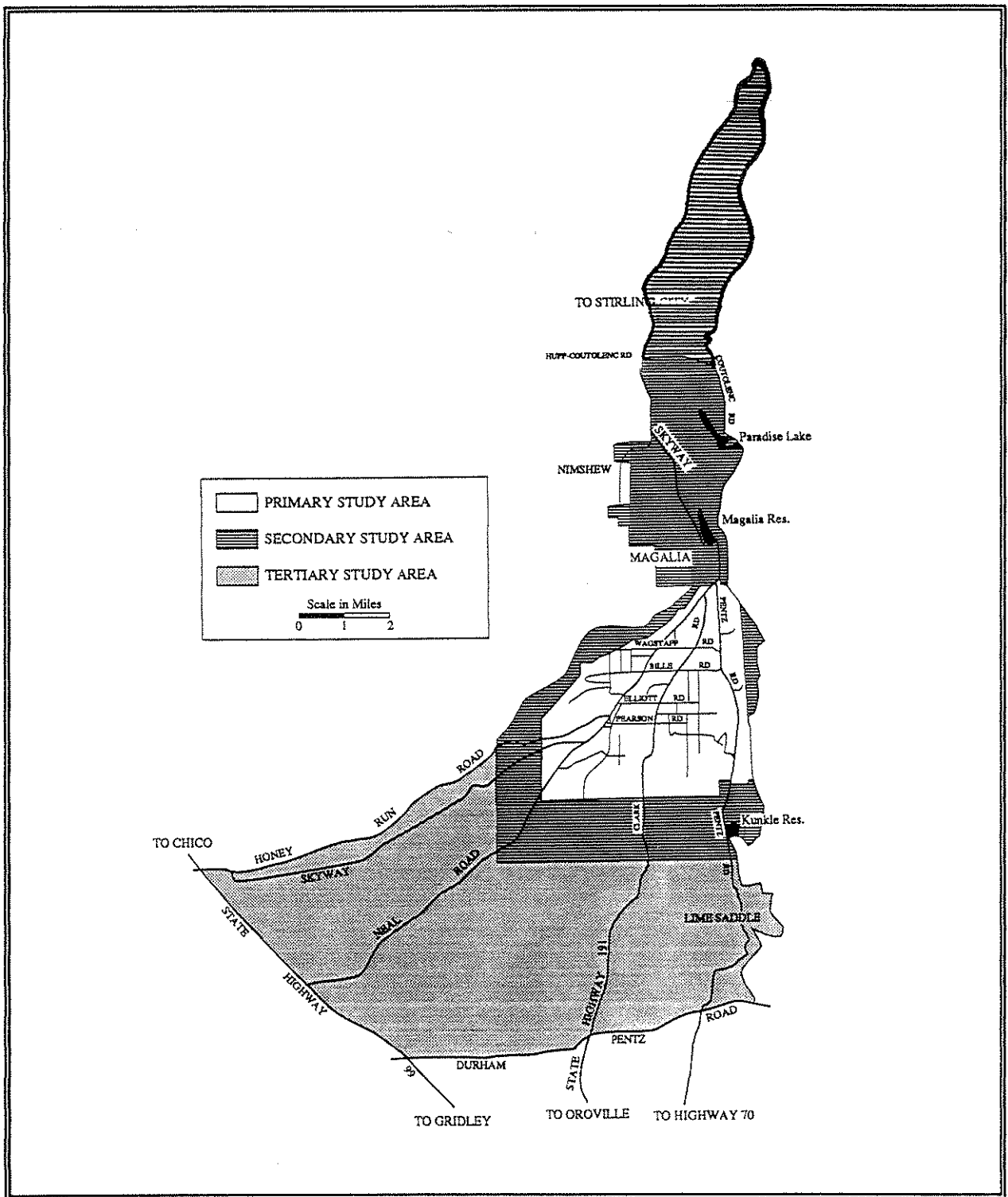
The Town of Paradise, California is located in eastern Butte County in the western foothills of the Cascade-Sierra Nevada Mountains. Located north of Paradise are the smaller unincorporated communities of Magalia, Paradise Pines, Nimshew and DeSabra; to the south of the town is the Lime Saddle area. These areas are known as the Upper and Lower (Eden) Ridge, respectively. To the southeast is the City of Oroville (the county seat), and to the west is the City of Chico. State Route 191 partially bisects the community and ends at its intersection with Pearson Road, located in south central Paradise, and the West Branch of the Feather River flows along the easterly edge of the community.

Three study areas were established for the town and surrounding areas for the purpose of the *General Plan*:

- **Primary Study Area** - reflects the existing town limits.

- **Secondary Study Area** - encompasses the existing Sphere of Influence adopted for the town by the Butte County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), and the Paradise/Magalia Reservoir watershed area to the north.
- **Tertiary Study Area** - extends to the south and west to Highway 99 and Durham-Pentz Road.

These areas are shown on Figure 1-1. For purposes of this *Policy Document*, the terms "Study Area," "Planning Area" or "Plan Area" refer collectively to the primary, secondary and tertiary study areas.



**PLANNING AREAS (GENERALIZED)**

**FIGURE 1-1**



## 1.2 PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

Every California city and county is required by state law to adopt a general plan for its future physical development. The *General Plan* is frequently referred to as a "constitution" for growth, development, and conservation, because it is the legal foundation upon which all land use decisions are to be based. It is a comprehensive expression of community values, and the formulation of long-term development goals and public policy statements related to the distribution of future land uses.

The *Paradise General Plan* is intended to chart and direct future land use decision making over the next fifteen years. It contains chapters (elements) on land use, circulation, housing, noise, safety, open space/conservation/energy, and education and social services. Together, the chapters identify the various issues, goals, objectives, policies and specific implementation measures related to land use development and conservation. Collectively, the chapters form the basis and structure for the decision making process.

The *General Plan* process offers the town the opportunity to plan proactively, rather than simply reacting to development proposals. It also allows the town and other public service providers (i.e. Paradise Irrigation District, Paradise Recreation and Park District and the Paradise Unified School District) to plan for providing services, facilities and infrastructure consistent with the plan.

The *Paradise General Plan* has a number of important characteristics that reflect the uniqueness of the community. First, it is a growth management plan, intended to balance population growth with the availability of public services, infrastructure, open space enhancement, as well as with the preservation of

the special rural charm of the town. Second, the *Paradise General Plan* is intended to reflect the values, needs and desires of the citizenry. It is hoped that citizens monitor and ensure its implementation, and participate in revisions and changes as the community evolves. Finally, it is intended to be a creative and special vision for the future of Paradise. It blends the ideas and imaginative thinking of the citizenry, calls for the innovative use of land use planning tools and methods, and stresses the importance of citizen participation in the planning and decision making process. Citizens are encouraged to monitor the plan to ensure implementation, and they are encouraged to participate in its revisions and changes as the community evolves.

## 1.3 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Many cities and counties are searching for more effective ways to manage growth. Decision makers, with citizen support are creating tools and methods for timing, shaping and limiting population expansion. Community leaders are discovering that unmanaged growth can provoke a variety of problems ranging from an inability to provide adequate public services to the degradation of the environment and aesthetic qualities of a community.

The goal of growth management programs is to balance the various types of land use development with the preservation of the natural environment and the unique qualities of a community. Most programs seek to reduce public costs for providing infrastructure and services, manage traffic levels, preserve sensitive lands, and in other ways improve the overall quality of life for community residents.

An approach to growth management should not be conceived merely as a bundle of techniques individually assigned to treat the symptoms of the complex problems of growth. The approach should be designed as a



comprehensive statement, and a systematic strategy which relates goals, objectives and policies to actual implementation.

The approach and strategy of growth management must also be tailored to the individual community. Environmental, economic and social constraints to growth and development should provide the foundation for building a comprehensive growth management program.

#### 1.4 THE LEGAL BASIS FOR GROWTH MANAGEMENT

General plans that emphasize growth management have not been adopted and implemented without legal challenge. In order to protect the rights of property owners, the state and federal courts have defined several principals that should be considered when designing a growth management plan. First, the regulations of the plan must promote the public welfare. The approach to growth management must not exceed the local governmental "police power," as defined by the courts. Is the approach to managing growth within the community a legitimate and rational way to promote the public welfare? Second, the approach should include a way to equitably address local and regional housing demands. Does the growth management plan provide housing opportunities for all citizens in the community or does it inherently exclude certain groups? Third, the approach must provide for the free mobility of all citizens in the community. The plan cannot isolate a citizen's "right to travel" freely. Fourth, the approach to growth management cannot restrict the use of land so severely that it removes all reasonable economic use of the property. The restrictions on land use must be designed to achieve an appropriate and legitimate governmental objective, while a reasonable economic use of property is retained.

#### 1.5 PARADISE'S APPROACH TO GROWTH MANAGEMENT

When the town incorporated in November of 1979, it inherited a community where growth and development had not always been comprehensively planned or managed. Residential neighborhoods and commercial areas had evolved with little regard for the compatibility of land uses, infrastructure service capacity needs or physical constraints. The amount of growth was market driven, yet no effective planning tools, political leadership or planning policies were either in place or practiced to comprehensively manage the growth that was occurring.

This *Paradise General Plan* is intended to provide the comprehensive approach, planning tools, programs and policies to successfully manage growth as it occurs. The plan requires consideration of both environmental and infrastructure constraints when assigning future zoning classifications, thus affecting potential densities to properties. The plan also establishes "performance standards" with an emphasis on "constraints analysis" for growth and development, rather than allowing growth to occur unchecked, or simply banning it outright. The primary tools and standards in the plan that are intended to manage growth are:

- A detailed constraints analysis system.
- Moderate to large minimum parcel sizes.
- Specific fire and police response time thresholds.
- Specific traffic service levels.
- An overriding policy of requiring development to be designed to accommodate constraints, rather than altering the environment to accommodate the development project.



The use of these tools, standards and policies will provide an approach allowing the community and its decision makers to regulate the source of varied land use problems (traffic, public services, water, densities, aesthetics, etc.), rather than growth in and of itself. The intent is to have the town grow at an orderly, safe and cautious pace, and consistent with the population growth rate experienced over the past five-ten years.

## 1.6 PREPARATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

This document represents the third *General Plan* for the Town of Paradise. Following incorporation in November of 1979, the town adopted the *Butte County General Plan* as its first *General Plan*. In 1982, the town adopted its first "locally originated" *General Plan*. That particular *General Plan* was intended to cover a ten-year time frame (1982-1992). Upon its adoption, this particular plan will supersede the previous *Paradise General Plan* as the official guide for planning and development in the Town of Paradise, and possibly its environs.

### QUAD Consultants

The town's *General Plan* revision and update program was initiated in December 1990 with the selection of QUAD Consultants and specialty subconsultants Dowling Associates (transportation engineers) and Brown-Buntin Associates (noise specialists) to assist the town with the process. One of the first steps in the process was the conducting of a citizens' opinion telephone survey. It polled a representative sample of the community to identify local issues, needs, concerns and desires. Numerous volunteers conducted the survey under the direction of town staff. Survey results are included in Volume III, *Environmental Setting*, as an appendix.

### Policy Development

As a basis for policy development, the consultants prepared a detailed *Environmental Setting* document which describes existing conditions in the Town of Paradise, the secondary and tertiary study areas and the region. The *Environmental Setting* document includes chapters on town history, geology/seismicity, soils and topography, climate and air quality, hydrology, vegetation and wildlife, noise, light and glare, land use, population, housing, transportation/circulation, risk of upset and safety, public services and utilities, scenic and cultural resources, and relationship to other plans of the town and other agencies.

### General Plan Revision Steering Committee

The *General Plan* update and revision process has been directed, and all documents have been reviewed, by a General Plan Revision Steering Committee appointed by the Town Council. This Committee consists of the members of the Town Council, the Planning Commission and Community Development Department staff. The composition of the General Plan Revision Steering Committee has changed during the process of revising the plan, due to the changes in members of both the Planning Commission and Town Council.

### General Plan Citizen Subcommittees

Public participation in the *General Plan* process has been primarily provided by four subcommittees of the steering committee, consisting of more than seventy Paradise residents representing a wide variety of affiliations and interests. These subcommittees met numerous times over a period of several months to identify issues, formulate goals, policies and alternatives and review materials prepared by the consultants. All meetings were open to the public and input was allowed from noncommittee members.



With the assistance of these subcommittees, *General Plan* goals, objectives and policies were formulated in response to major community issues identified through the survey, by the steering committee, town staff, other public agencies and by the subcommittees themselves. Each subcommittee formulated its own vision for the community in the form of a map, representing in graphic form the subcommittees' goal and policy statements. These four sets of goals, objectives, policies (organized by *General Plan* element) and maps, along with a narrative description of each subcommittee's approach, were compiled into two working papers entitled *Issues, Goals and Objectives* and *Alternatives Development and Evaluation*. These documents were presented to the steering committee for review and selection of a preferred alternative. In order to assist steering committee members in reaching consensus, the major topics were then reorganized into approximately thirty-five issues for discussion purposes. Those issues are highlighted in Chapter 3.0 of this document.

### Preparation of the Draft Documents

Based upon the direction and recommendations of the steering committee, and consultation with town staff, the consultants prepared the draft *Policy Document* of the *General Plan*, consisting of goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures, as well as land use, circulation, and constraints diagrams. At the same time, the consultants prepared a draft *Environmental Impact Report* (EIR) to satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act. The EIR appears as Volume II of the *General Plan* document.

On December 16, 1992 the General Plan Revision Steering Committee unanimously decided to direct town staff to revise the draft *General Plan* documents, based upon the comments received from the general public, special districts, and interested organizations.

## 1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The *Paradise General Plan* consists of three documents: the *General Plan Policy Document* (Volume I), the *Environmental Impact Report* (Volume II) and the *Environmental Setting* (Volume III) documents.

Volume III describes and analyzes the existing conditions in the Town of Paradise, the Secondary and Tertiary Study Areas and the region. It provides supporting documentation for the *Policy Document* and also serves as the required "environmental setting" section of the Environmental Impact Report.

Volume I sets forth the goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures for the *General Plan*, as well as the *Land Use Diagram* and *Circulation Diagram* designations and standards for population density, land use and building intensity. Together, these statements, definitions, diagram and standards constitute the policy of the Town of Paradise for the comprehensive, long-range physical development of the community.

Goals, objectives, policies, standards, implementation measures and plan diagrams are defined in the 1990 State of California *General Plan Guidelines* as follows:

- **Goals.** A goal is a direction setter. It is an ideal future end, condition or state related to the public health, safety or general welfare toward which planning and planning implementation measures are directed. A goal is a general expression of community values and, therefore, is abstract in nature. Consequently, a goal is generally not quantifiable, time dependent or suggestive of specific actions for its achievement.
- **Objective.** An objective is a specific end, condition or state that is an intermediate step toward attaining a goal. It should be achievable and, when possible, measurable and time specific. An



objective may only pertain to one particular aspect of a goal or it may be one of several successive steps toward goal achievement. Consequently, there may be more than one objective for each goal.

- **Policy.** A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making. It indicates a clear commitment of the local legislative body [Town Council]. A policy is based on a general plan's goals and objectives as well as the analysis of data. For a policy to be useful as a guide to action it must be clear and unambiguous.
- **Implementation Measure.** An implementation measure is an action, procedure, program or technique that carries out general plan policy. Each policy must have at least one corresponding implementation measure.
- **Standard.** Standards define the abstract terms of goals, objectives and policies with concrete specifications.
- **Diagram.** A diagram is a graphic expression of a general plan's development policies, particularly its plan proposals. A diagram must be consistent with the general plan text and should have the same long-term planning perspective as the rest of the general plan. Typically, a diagram is not regulatory in nature as is a zoning ordinance map. Rather, it, along with the general plan text, provides a rational basis for planning-related regulations.

Chapter 2.0 of the *General Plan Policy Document* defines and describes the land use and circulation designations which appear on the *Land Use Diagram* and *Circulation Diagram*, and also sets forth the standards for population density and land use intensity for each designation. This chapter also includes the diagrams (which are physically located in the pocket inside the back cover), a description of the street classification system, and estimated *General Plan* build out information (Table 2-2). Chapters 3.0, 4.0 and 5.0 present, respectively, a summary of the major

assumptions and issues considered during the planning process, the central goals of the *General Plan*, and the constraints and opportunities that form the parameters within which the Plan was developed.

The goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures for the *General Plan* are found in Chapter 6.0. This chapter is divided into several sections corresponding to the seven mandatory *General Plan* elements: *Land Use*, *Circulation*, *Open Space/Conservation and Energy* (combined to avoid duplication of similar topics), *Safety*, *Noise and Housing*. An optional element entitled "*Education and Social Services*" has also been prepared. Within each section, or element, statements are arranged in hierarchical order: goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures. The numbering system for these statements is based upon the name of the element (e.g. *Land Use*, *Housing*, etc.) and the type of statement (goal, objective, policy or implementation measure), abbreviated as follows:

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| ● Land Use (LU)                         | ● Goal (G)                   |
| ● Circulation (C)                       | ● Objective (O)              |
| ● Housing (H)                           | ● Policy (P)                 |
| ● Noise (N)                             | ● Implementation Measure (I) |
| ● Safety (S)                            |                              |
| ● Open Space/Conservation/ Energy (OCE) |                              |
| ● Education and Social Services (ES)    |                              |

Within each hierarchy, statements are numbered sequentially. For example, the first goal statement in the *Housing Element* is numbered HG-1; the third policy statement in the *Safety Element* is numbered SP-3.

Volume II of the *Paradise General Plan* is the *Environmental Impact Report* prepared for the *General Plan*. As provided in Section 15166 of the *state CEQA Guidelines*, this EIR is integrated with the *General Plan* document, and was prepared in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality



Act. The EIR assesses the impacts of the *Paradise General Plan* on the environment, and recommends mitigation measures for significant impacts, most of which are already incorporated into the policy statements of the *General Plan*.