

**BUTTE COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA TRANSMITTAL**

CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY

MEETING DATE:

AGENDA ITEM:

AGENDA TITLE: Butte County General Plan/Zoning Ordinance Update Process: Framework of Guiding Principles Review

DEPARTMENT: Development Services

DATE: June 1, 2006

MEETING DATE REQUESTED: June 13, 2006

CONTACT: Tim Snellings 

PHONE: 530-538-6821

REGULAR X CONSENT _____

DEPARTMENT SUMMARY AND REQUESTED BOARD ACTION:

Development Services staff requests that the Board of Supervisors take the following Actions:

- I. Approve the Working Draft Framework of Guiding Principles and instruct staff to provide them to the Citizens Advisory Committee. Instruct the Citizens Advisory Committee to hold public workshops and provide comment back to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on the following:
 1. Working Draft Framework of Guiding Principles
 2. Draft Butte County Vision Statement

--See Attached Agenda Report--

**AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTALS REQUIRE THE ORIGINAL AND TWELVE (12) COPIES
ATTACH EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM AND OTHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION AS NECESSARY**

Budgetary Impact: Yes _____ No X
 If yes, complete Budgetary Impact Worksheet on back
 Budget Transfer Requested: Yes _____ No X
 If yes, complete Budget Transfer Request Worksheet on back. (Deadline is one business day prior to normal agenda deadline)

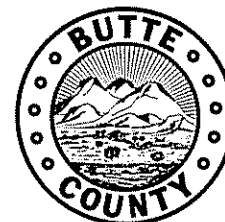
CAO OFFICE USE ONLY

Administrative Office Review _____

Administrative Office Staff Contact _____

4/5's Vote Required: Yes: _____ No: _____


Butte County Department of Development Services
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AGENDA REPORT – BUTTE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BUTTE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE
June 13, 2006

TO: Honorable Chair and Board of Supervisors

FROM: Tim Snellings, Director of Development Services 
Dan Breedon, AICP, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: Working Draft Framework of Guiding Principles

Attachments:

- A. Working Draft Framework of Guiding Principles with General Themes and Specific/Additional Issues
- B. Table 1 –Preliminary Butte County General Plan Process

BACKGROUND

On April 27, 2006, the Planning Commission reviewed the concept of a Working Draft Framework of Guiding Principles and recommended approval to the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors reviewed the Framework of Guiding Principles on May 23, 2006, and decided to continue this item for further consideration.

ANALYSIS

Use of Guiding Principles

Butte County's Working Draft Framework of Guiding Principles (Principles) will be used to provide preliminary guidance to staff and the selected General Plan consultant about important Butte County issues to be addressed through the General Plan update process. As the name implies, the Working

Draft Framework of Guiding Principles provides the initial framework to begin the General Plan Update process. The Principles are intended to be a living document that will be subject to review and update during the first phase of the General Plan Update (see Attachment "B"). The Principles will be provided to the Citizens Advisory Committee, consultants and staff to provide direction and guidance during this process. The document currently includes 12 principles encompassing broad reaching issues while also providing for some specific direction. The Board of Supervisors may add, modify or delete selected Principles. The Board may also opt to keep the Principles very general at this stage of the General Plan Update process until the Citizens Advisory Committee and Planning Commission provides their final recommendations.

Establishing the Draft Guiding Principles

In drafting the current set of 12 Principles, Development Services staff drew upon categories that related to regional and county planning, as well as issues specific to Butte County. The existing Draft Principles are intended as a starting point for dialogue and public discussion, and will be subject to further refinement as the process continues. Although the Principles are intended to relate to generalized themes, the current set of Principles includes some specific direction based upon issues related to Butte County. Attachment "A" provides a more comprehensive look at the themes and specific issues contained within each Principle. Additional detail and recommendations for several of the Principles has been included for the Board's consideration.

Once the Board of Supervisors makes the final changes to the Principles they will be provided to the Citizens Advisory Committee where further discussion will take place in public workshops. The Principles will be used by the Citizens Advisory Committee to create a Vision Statement for the County. A Vision Statement is a statement used to provide guidance and direction during the General Plan Update process. The Vision Statement and any changes to the Principles recommended by the Citizens Advisory Committee will be provided to the Planning Commission and the Board for final consideration and action.

Tentative Approval Process and Timeline for DRAFT Principles

The following approval process for the Draft Guiding Principles is set forth for consideration by the Board:

1. **April 27, 2006** -Planning Commission Recommends Approves the concept of the **DRAFT** Principles to Board of Supervisors
2. **May 23, 2006** -Board of Supervisors Reviews **DRAFT** Principles and continues review until June 9, 2006.
3. **May 25, 2006** -General Plan Update Request for Proposal (RFP) sent to selected consultants with **DRAFT** Principles

4. **June 13, 2006** –Board of Supervisors Reviews **DRAFT** Principles and makes final changes prior to providing to consultants and the Citizens Advisory Committee
5. **October 11, 2006 thru December 6, 2006** –**DRAFT** Principles provided to Citizens Advisory Committee for further review, recommendations, and development of the Butte County Vision Statement
6. **February 8, 2007** –Citizens Advisory Committee’s recommendations and Butte County Vision Statement provided to Planning Commission
7. **March 20, 2007** –Board of Supervisors reviews and approves Butte County Vision Statement and **FINAL** set of Principles (**FINAL** Principles provided to General Plan Consultant if approved)

April 27, 2006 Planning Commission Hearing

At their April 27, 2006 Public Meeting, the Planning Commission discussed the Principles and how detailed or general such Principles needed to be. There was discussion on whether the Principles should be shortened to include each heading without further text. Discussion ensued concerning how long each principle needed to be to convey the proper amount of direction concerning important concepts without getting into specifics. There was concern expressed about interpretations and definitions included in the Principles. Additional discussion considered the role of the Citizens Advisory Committee in making these interpretations.

Public testimony was received indicating that the Framework of Guiding Principles was “good for the future structure of the General Plan” and would provide appropriate “marching orders” to the consultant. Another member of the public asked for patience and to consider the varying levels of education involved.

In their closing remarks, Commissioners indicated that the current Principles provided “good overall articulation” and was a “very good working draft”. Staff also clarified that the 12 principles were not presented in any order of importance; all of the Principles presented are of equal importance.

ACTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Development Services staff requests that the Board of Supervisors take the following Actions:

- I. Approve the Working Draft Framework of Guiding Principles and instruct staff to provide them to the Citizens Advisory Committee. Instruct the Citizens Advisory Committee to hold public workshops and provide comment back to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on the following:
 1. Working Draft Framework of Guiding Principles
 2. Draft Butte County Vision Statement

Working Draft Butte County General Plan 2030
Framework of Guiding Principles
With General Themes, Specific and Additional Issues

1. Principle: Agriculture

Agriculture is an important aspect of Butte County's economy and lifestyle that must be maintained, protected, and promoted. Agriculture must be protected from urban encroachment and incompatible land uses. Rural development strategies should be used to transition between urban and commercial agricultural uses. One means of protecting Agriculture will be to promote higher density/mixed use development in the Spheres of Influence for each of the cities.

General Themes: The protection and conservation of agriculture

Specific Issues: Strategies that will focus development pressure away from agriculture while providing transitions between urban, rural, and agricultural land uses.

Additional Issues: The Board of Supervisors may wish to include additional direction within this principle concerning the existing Agricultural Element and the Durham, Dayton, Nelson Plan.

2. Principle: Growth/Urban Development/Housing

The County will determine where growth can be accommodated to fulfill the variety of housing needs of the next 20 years. Urban growth strategies should be directed to, and be supportive of, the LAFCO recognized city Spheres of Influence. Infrastructure necessary to properly accommodate urban growth must be provided with funding mechanisms that ensure continued maintenance. Urban growth areas must complement the diverse goals of protecting agricultural resources, natural resources, and the environment, and be developed in a manner that supports city policies.

General Themes: Planning for the urban growth anticipated during the next 20 years.

Specific Issues: LAFCO recognized spheres of influence for the incorporated cities are the most appropriate place to plan for urban growth, to ensure efficient delivery of services. County development within each City's sphere that is not coordinated with City General Plans will have a negative impact on the urbanization and planning of City Spheres, as well as the use of County land and resources.

3. Principle: Rural Development

The General Plan should identify areas suitable for rural development including a variety of lot sizes that meet the varying needs of rural lifestyles. Where possible, consideration should be given to the "conservation" subdivision approach that utilizes clustered development to minimize consumptive uses of land while protecting areas important for purposes of agriculture, grazing, and conservation. Rural development should be reasonably close to public services and schools when possible, but not interfering with future city growth. The feasibility of a regional sewage treatment and disposal facility in the unincorporated portion of the county must be considered. Rural growth areas must complement the diverse goals of maintaining the rural character of much of Butte County while protecting agricultural resources, natural resources, and the environment.

General Themes: Rural lifestyles and a variety of housing choices and property sizes can and should be accommodated in appropriate locations within Butte County. The development constraints present in these areas must be identified and considered.

Specific Issues: Rural communities of the county (outside designated Spheres of Influence) need to be planned for future growth and conservation. Butte County does not have a regional sewage treatment plant or other services necessary for most types of urban or suburban development.

The provision of services, such as regional sewer treatment, or other options concerning community sewage treatment, needs to be explored and identified. Clustering development may be one way to provide suburban settings and services in rural areas of the County, while preserving or avoiding land use constraints.

Additional Issues: The Board may also wish to include guidance regarding existing area plans such as the Durham, Dayton, Nelson Plan, North Chico Specific Plan, Chapman/Mulberry Neighborhood Plan, and the Stringtown Mountain Specific Plan.

The Board may also wish to provide guidance within this Principle regarding local tribal gaming and existing and proposed casinos.

4. Principle: Natural Resources and Environment

While growth must accommodate the housing needs of the next 20 years, Butte County will act to identify areas that must be conserved and protected, including important watersheds, deer ranges, forests, grasslands, mineral resources, wetlands/riparian areas, scenic resources, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

General Themes: Natural Resources and Environmental considerations present both opportunities and constraints for development in the County.

Specific Issues: The General Plan update must utilize existing and new information and analysis concerning natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas so that growth can be directed to appropriate locations.

Additional Issues: The Board of Supervisors may wish to include specific direction concerning the conservation of the local deer range, watersheds, water recharge areas, and mineral resources within this Principle.

The Board of Supervisors may also wish to include direction concerning Habitat Conservation Planning (HCP) and Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP).

5. Principle: Airport Land Use

Determine equitable ways that the General Plan can protect the four County airports in coordination with the 2000 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

General Themes: Airport Land Use Planning

Specific Issues: Some areas of Butte County contain zoning and General Plan designations that are inconsistent with airport areas of influence as designated by the 2000 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The General Plan must resolve these areas of inconsistencies so that consistent zoning designations can be applied to airport areas.

6. Principle: Recreational Opportunities and Protection of Cultural Resources

As Butte County's population grows over the next 20 years, additional recreational facilities will be necessary to serve both local and regional needs. Cultural resources that are significant to Butte County's history and past must be identified and protected under Butte County policy.

General Themes: Demand for new parks and recreation opportunities needs to be addressed for the next planning period. Existing cultural resources need to be identified by the General Plan.

Specific Issues: As the region grows, the General Plan should assess the need for regional parks, as well as for smaller parks serving smaller urban or suburban locations. Mechanisms need to be assessed and/or developed to allow for acquisition and maintenance of future park facilities.

Additional Issues: The Board of Supervisors may wish to include the need for a regional park or similar types of facilities within this Principle.

7. Principle: Transportation

Butte County's plan for regional and local transportation needs must be coordinated with the California Department of Transportation, the Butte County Association of Governments, the cities, and the County's Capital Improvement Program. The Circulation Element must guide County Improvement Standards and take into account both rural and urban settings. County Improvement Standards within the identified Sphere of Influence for the County's cities should, to the extent practicable, be consistent with the improvement standards of each city.

General Themes: Transportation is an important element of the General Plan that needs to be coordinated with all of the transportation planning agencies within the County as well as State and Federal agencies.

Specific Issues: Butte County's General Plan update is unique in that it addresses a large regional area, with important transportation considerations. The General Plan must be complimentary to larger transportation related issues of the County, but must also be proactive in providing transportation systems for all types of future County development.

8. Principle: Economic Development

The General Plan must seek to provide incentives and policies to maintain existing job centers and businesses and attract new high quality employment centers that will create opportunities at various levels with the goal of keeping Butte County generated revenues circulating within Butte County, and enhancing the County's Jobs-housing Balance. Some of these opportunities shall be in the unincorporated parts of the County to provide reasonable future funding for county services. There shall be a tax sharing strategy between the cities/county to discourage the fiscalization of land use decisions in the Spheres of Influence.

General Themes: The General Plan plays a critical role in establishing a positive environment for economic development within Butte County.

Specific Issues: Economic Development in Butte County is constrained by a lack of services and amenities such as sewer and water service, limited housing, and infrastructure.

Additional Issues: The Board of Supervisors may wish to consider including more specific strategies within this Principle to provide incentives for economic development, such as the promotion of a County Research and Business Park or similar concept.

9. Principle: Public Health and Safety

The General Plan must include policies that address the public safety issues important to Butte County, including seismic and fire hazards, appropriate circulation for emergency vehicles and evacuation routes in mountainous areas, areas prone to flood, clean air and water, and all other aspects of public safety. The General Plan must be written in such a manner as to encourage the development of healthy communities, while protecting Agriculture and Natural Resources.

General Themes: The promotion of the public's health, safety and welfare through General Plan policy.

Specific Issues: As a large regional area, Butte County is subject to floods, fires and other natural forces that can influence public safety.

Additional Issues: Due to the mix of mountainous terrain with rural and suburban development, and the need to respond to, or evacuate, these areas in the event of a natural disaster, the Board of Supervisors may wish to consider specific guidance within this Principle, especially concerning

mountainous areas such as Magalia, Upper Pines, and other mountain and foothill communities with limited access. The Board may also wish to consider further detail and guidance concerning the flood prone areas of the valley.

10 Principle: Public Services

The General Plan must address where and how essential public services and/or facilities will be provided to the varied and dispersed geography of the County; such as schools, sewer and water service, road construction and maintenance, fire and police protection, and garbage collection, and general governmental services. Inherent in providing such services is establishing funding mechanisms to maintain appropriate levels of service. The General Plan must recognize that the Neal Road Landfill is a valuable public asset. According to current estimates this landfill will reach capacity in 2033. General Plan Policy must address how the landfill will be protected from future incompatible land uses and how additional land may be reserved to allow for future expansion.

General Themes: The regionally dispersed nature of development in Butte County presents unique challenges concerning the provision of public services, which are essential to the County and its citizens.

Specific Issues: The General Plan should include guiding policy on the establishment of funding mechanisms and strategies for appropriate services for areas intended for future growth.

The Neal Road landfill represents a substantial public investment and the General Plan must include policy to protect its location and allow for future expansion.

11. Principle: Cooperative Planning

Several of the incorporated city jurisdictions within Butte County are poised to begin General Plan updates at this time or in the near future. The General Plan must coordinate both regional and city planning, especially concerning development within designated Spheres of Influence for the incorporated cities. Butte County is open to General Plan proposals that include using a single consultant to jointly develop two or more different General Plan updates for the County and cooperating cities with the goal of applying consistent policies where needed.

General Themes: Butte County's General Plan should work with incorporated cities on regional planning issues that are important to all jurisdictions.

Specific Issues: The goal in jointly developing these Plan updates would be to coordinate to the greatest extent possible the various processes through which the individual General Plan drafts are prepared. General benefits include significant economies of scale, sharing information rather than developing it independently of each other, and addressing issues of mutual concern directly with each other, even where jurisdictions may not end up in agreement. Each jurisdiction would ultimately be responsible for adopting its own General Plan separately, regardless of what happens in the other jurisdictions. The consultant working for all jurisdictions involved would be under separate contract to each.

Other Benefits of Cooperative Planning:

1. A Sphere of Influence is an important planning tool that has synergistic influence on city and regional planning.
2. Joint planning between the City and the County will help to eliminate inconsistencies in Sphere of Influence areas.
3. A one consultant approach concerning multiple general plans could result in a substantial savings in time and cost, since joint planning areas such as spheres would not be "planned" twice (once by the city and once by the county).
4. Potential benefits of joint planning through a single consultant within the Spheres of incorporated cities include:

- Consistent permit processes and development standards within Spheres
 - Promoting efficiency of service delivery
 - Preservation of resource lands
 - Maintenance of consistent circulation patterns and standards
 - Promoting agricultural preservation
 - Time and cost savings
 - Single set of zoning in sphere areas
 - Promoting infill and compact urban form
 - Discouraging sprawl
5. Utilizing a single consultant provides a reason to share information, data, resources and ideas. This approach can have positive influences in the following areas:
- Transportation Planning and BCAG coordination
 - LAFCO coordination of Sphere of Influence updates and service reviews
 - Land Use Designations
 - Affordable Housing – Regional Housing Needs Planning
 - Minimize duplication of effort with corresponding savings
 - Consistency of Plan contents and Principles
 - Timing
6. Cities could benefit from the regional perspective offered by coordinating with the County General Plan as follows:
- Consistency, streamlining of planning in spheres
 - Coordination and protection of county watersheds
 - Protection of water quality
 - Protection of agricultural resources
 - Other Resource Planning issues beneficial to cities, such as open space, conservation planning, dispersed recreational activities dependent upon preservation of deer range/habitat.
 - Coordination of Airport Planning
 - Protection of sensitive areas around cities (e.g. view sheds, unwanted land uses, noisy land uses) by joint policy.
 - Development of regional recreation opportunities (Lake Oroville, etc.)
7. Other areas of joint interest, such as the Gridley/Biggs Area, North Chico Specific Plan, and South Oroville would benefit.

8. Improved coordination in areas currently served with municipal services but currently unincorporated such as Thermalito and the greater Oroville Area.
9. Potential for enhanced opportunities for direct and constant contact with the selected consulting firm (consultant could open a temporary office in Butte County).

12. Principle: Sustainability

The General Plan must support the use of natural resources in a way that provides a secure future for Butte County's residents. This shall include the exploration of alternative strategies for energy sources and conservation in agriculture, building, transportation and other appropriate areas. Development must maintain or enhance economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. General Plan policy must include a strategy to provide incentives and regulations to accomplish this Principle.

General Themes: Making choices regarding natural resources, conservation and development that have a positive influence on the current and future generation's ability to remain self sufficient, while protecting the environment and promoting a high quality of life.

Specific Issues: Conservation and identification of natural resources, strategies to conserve, identify alternative energy resources and promote efficient processing and utilization through General Plan policy.

Additional Issues: The Board of Supervisors may wish to include a statement regarding economic sustainability of future growth and development within this Principle.

TABLE 1
PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE --BUTTE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE
Zoning Ordinance & EIR Process
“Charting the Course of Butte County’s Future”

April 13, 2006
 “Charting the Course”
 Workshop

- Closing out the Technical Update
- General Plan Update - Why? When? How?
- Role of a Consultant in a General Plan Update process
- How is a new General Plan implemented?
- Role of a Citizens Advisory Committee
- What is the 'PROCESS' we will be utilizing to create our new General Plan/Zoning Ordinance and EIRs?
- What is a city 'sphere' and why is it important?
- New Tools: The role of Infill Development, Form Based Codes, Ahwahnee Principles, etc
- City/County Collaborative Planning opportunities

April 27, 2006
 Planning Commission Meeting

- Reviewed RFP, Citizens Advisory Committee process and the DRAFT Framework of Guiding Principles

May 23, 2006
 Board of Supervisors Meeting

- Reviewed and Approved RFP, Citizens Advisory Committee process, creation of a two member Board of Supervisors Subcommittee
- Discussed DRAFT Framework of Guiding Principles and decided to have further discussion on June 13, 2006

May 25, 2006
 RFP Sent to Consultants

- May 25, 2006, RFP Mailed to all Consultants on department’s list and posted on buttegeneralplan.net website
- June 30, 2006 Consultants Submit Website Questions (last day)
- July 07, 2006 All answers posted on County website
- July 21, 2006 Proposals Due by 4:00 pm
- August 3, 2006 Finalists Selected for Interview
- August 15, 2006 Finalists Interviewed by Selection Committee
- Early September (estimated date: September 12, 2006) Board of Supervisors consider top-ranked Proposal and awards Contract
- September 25, 2006 Work Initiated

June 13, 2006
 Board of Supervisors Meeting

- Board of Supervisors makes final changes to Draft Framework of Guiding Principles for further review and comment by the Citizen Advisory Committee at a later date

September 25, 2006
 Work Initiated by Consultant on General Plan

- Selected consultant begins all work on General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Update and EIR

Startup -- Public Participation and Outreach – CEQA review

2006 – Phase I
 Start-up, Data Collection, Public Participation and Outreach, Evaluation of Existing GP Products. Work Plan Schedule, Final Draft Framework of Guiding Principles

The objective of this phase is to complete a detailed work plan and schedule, obtain and compile background information, ensure a complete database for existing conditions, create a template for maps and graphics, and evaluate the existing General Plan in terms of State Guidelines, its value and usefulness to various County departments and the currency of the fundamental principles of the Plan.

Startup – Public Participation and Outreach – CEQA review (Cont.)

2006-2007 – Phase 2

Collect and Analyze Data,
Product: Background Reports

Using information collected in Phase 1, staff and Consultants will analyze long-term local and regional trends and will summarize opportunities, constraints, and factors that will affect future development and conservation decisions. This information will provide an evaluation of the issues and options and will identify areas where more detailed information must be collected for the General Plan and EIR.

2007 – Phase 3

Refine Goals
Products: Draft Goals, Policies
and Action Programs

In this phase, input from the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Community Workshops, and the stakeholder outreach by staff will be used to draft the essential goals, policies, and action programs. Areas to be preserved and enhanced will be identified, along with options for development of “change areas.” These options may include land use re-designations, or the amount of growth allowed under different policies. In order to undertake a preliminary impact analysis, the options will be quantified.

2007-2008 – Phase 4

Alternatives Analysis
Products: Plan Alternatives,
Preferred Plan, Draft 2030
General Plan, Draft Zoning
Ordinance

The consultant will draw on the Background Reports, and the Goals, Policies, and Programs to prepare a Preferred (preliminary draft) General Plan and alternatives. The Preferred Plan will be presented for comment at Community Workshops and reviewed by the Citizens Advisory Committee. The Preferred Plan will be revised and refined to create the Draft General Plan 2030, and will be considered by the Planning Commission in one or more study sessions, and will be reviewed at Community Workshops. A draft Zoning Ordinance will be completed. The Board of Supervisors will be asked to confirm the Draft Plan and alternatives. A Scoping Session will be held with the Planning Commission prior to preparing the Draft EIR.

2008 – Phase 5

Draft EIR Completion
Products: Administrative Draft
EIR, Draft EIR

The Draft EIR will be finalized, analyzing the impacts of the Preferred Plan and one or more alternatives for development or preservation of specific sites. The EIR will be circulated and public hearings noticed.

September 2009 – Phase 6

G P / Z O /EIR Adoption,
Certification
Products: Adopted General
Plan and Zoning Ordinance
Certified Final EIR

Public hearings will be held at the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to consider the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR. These meetings will provide crucial opportunities for public input prior to Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors refinement and adoption of the General Plan, and certification of the Final EIR.