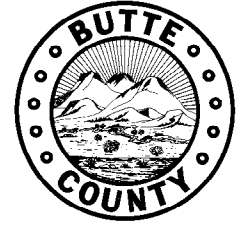


# *Butte County Department of Development Services*

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**AGENDA REPORT**  
**Butte County General Plan 2030**  
**Planning Commission Study Session #1 and #2**  
**Meeting Series #5 –Goals and Policy Development**  
**(Meeting Series #5-3A/B)**

November 7, 2008

Butte County Planning Commission  
25 County Center Drive  
Oroville, CA 95965

**Subject: Butte County General Plan 2030**  
**Planning Commission Study Session #1 and #2, Meeting Series #5**  
**Goals and Policy Development**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- I. Butte County Department of Development Services staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:
  - a. Review and consider the recommendations made by the Citizens Advisory Committee (Attachments E, F), and all of the information and comment made by the public and community groups (Attachments G, H, I, and N) on Goals and Policy development and the Transportation Alternatives (Attachment J) for Butte County General Plan 2030; and,
  - b. Hear and accept additional public comment during the Study Session; and,
  - c. During the facilitated discussion sessions, make recommendations to the Butte County Board of Supervisors on all of the Goals and Policy

Topic areas contained within the Policy Alternatives Document and the Transportation Alternatives; and,

- d. Review the Model Air Quality Element policies (Attachment M) and include these policies in recommendations for Goals and Policy Development to the Board of Supervisors; and,
- e. Review the Water Commission's recommendations for Water Resource Policies (to be sent under separate cover) and include these policies in the recommendations for Goals and Policy Development to the Board of Supervisors; and,
- f. Vote to transmit all recommendations made during both Planning Commission Study Sessions to the Butte County Board of Supervisors for consideration at their January 21 and 22, 2009 Study Sessions.

## **SUMMARY**

This Report applies to the two Study Sessions (November 7 and November 14, 2008) the Planning Commission will undertake for making recommendations on Goals and Policy Development for the Butte County General Plan 2030 process. This formal Meeting Series includes the following meetings and workshops:

Public Workshop  
September 8, 2008

Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings  
October 2, 2008  
October 9, 2008  
October 16, 2008  
October 23, 2008

Planning Commission Study Sessions  
November 7, 2008  
November 14, 2008

Board of Supervisors Study Sessions  
January, 21, 2009  
January 22, 2009

The intent of this report is to provide the Planning Commission with all the comments and information provided at the Public Workshop, the recommendations made by the Citizens Advisory Committee at their 4 public meetings, and general comments provided by the public to the Planning Commission for further review.

The goal of these two Study Sessions is to allow Planning Commissioners to review all of this material, hold a public Study Session, accept input from the public, participate in facilitated discussions, and form recommendations for consideration by the Board of Supervisors at their Study Sessions to be held on January 21 and 22, 2009, where the Board will make the final decisions on Goals and Policy development for Butte County General Plan 2030. The Butte County General Plan 2030 Guiding Principals are provided under Attachment A. Since the beginning of the Butte County General Plan 2030 process, the 13 Guiding Principals have provided a foundation for decision making and are provided for the Planning Commission's reference.

This Report and all attachments constitutes the record of input received concerning Meeting Series #5 (Goals and Policy Development) via the public, the CAC meetings, and the Planning Commission through October 29, 2008 when

this Report was completed. Additional comment regarding Goals and Policy Development received after this date will be provided to the Planning Commission under separate cover, along with recommendations from the Butte County Water Commission concerning water resource policies, and a private group representing cultural and archeological interests in Butte County.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

The following attachments are incorporated into this Agenda Report:

- a. Butte County General Plan 2030 Guiding Principals
- b. General Plan Outline & Element Organization
- c. Preferred Land Use Alternative Exhibits
- d. Goals, Policies and Programs Defined for BCGP 2030
- e. Policy Alternatives Document (as amended by the CAC)
- f. Official CAC Meeting Votes and Summary (October 2, 9, 16, and 23 CAC Meetings)
- g. Summary of Public Comments made at CAC (October 2, 9, 16, and 23 CAC Meetings)
- h. September 8, 2008 Public Workshop, Official Meeting Notes & Summary
- i. General Public Comments, Including Letters Provided to the CAC
- j. Transportation Alternatives Document & Exhibits
- k. Traffic Level of Service Memo from DC&E
- l. Agriculture Enhancement Report
- m. Model Air Quality Element
- n. Watersheds & General Plans (League of Women Voters) Meeting Notes & Summary

## **STUDY SESSION FORMAT**

The Planning Commission will participate in morning and afternoon sessions facilitated by Design, Community & Environment Senior Associate Joanna Jansen that will help to arrive at recommendations for each of the policy topics discussed below. In addition to providing direction and recommendations on all of the policy topics, the Planning Commission will provide recommendations on the Transportation Alternatives (Attachment J) also discussed below in more detail.

The policy topics listed below are taken from the Policy Alternatives document, which has formed the basis for goals and policy discussion throughout Meeting Series #5.

### **November 7, 2008 Planning Commission Study Session:**

#### Morning Session (9:00 am – Noon)

- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Agriculture

#### Afternoon Session (1:00 pm – 5:00 pm)

- ◆ Urban Growth Boundaries
- ◆ County Character, New Development & Housing
- ◆ Regional & Local Coordination
- ◆ Community Health & Safety
- ◆ Noise

### **November 14, 2008 Planning Commission Study Session:**

#### Morning Session (9:00 am – Noon)

- ◆ Water Resources
- ◆ Transportation, Circulation & Scenic Highways

#### Afternoon Session (1:00 pm – 5:00 pm)

- ◆ Utilities, Services & Airports
- ◆ Cultural Resources & Tribal Coordination
- ◆ Parks & Recreation, Trails
- ◆ Natural Resources & Habitat
- ◆ Green Building, Greenhouse Gases & Energy

## **POLICY ALTERNATIVES DOCUMENT (ATTACHMENT E)**

This final document presents the most comprehensive and recent Goals and Policy direction as set-forth by the September 8, 2008 Public Workshop and as recommended by the Citizens Advisory Committee during their 4 October meetings on Goals and Policy Development. The Planning Commission should refer to this document to review the specific goals and policy recommendations made by the CAC (changes are provided in ~~strikeout~~ and underline text).

The Policy Alternatives Document forms the basis of the facilitated discussion that will take place during the two Planning Commission Study Sessions and will be the focus of the Planning Commission's discussion and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on Goals and Policy Development.

The Policy Alternatives Document has been used to establish a framework for the development of Goals and Policies during this phase of Butte County General Plan 2030 (Meeting Series #5), and was used extensively at the Public Workshop held on September 8, 2008. The public has been encouraged to review the Policy Alternatives Document for any areas of interest that will be discussed during this phase of the Butte County General Plan 2030 update.

Development of this document began during the Existing Conditions and Issue Identification phase of Butte County General Plan 2030 (Meeting Series #1), and in the first two meetings in the Alternatives Development phase (Meeting Series #2/3). A series of policy questions were identified on a wide variety of topics such as land use and rural development, transportation, agricultural enhancement, and economic development. Ideas were put forth about how these questions should be resolved through the Butte County General Plan 2030 process.

These ideas were refined and condensed into a list of policy questions and solutions, a draft "Policy Alternatives Document", focusing on areas that have both a high level of community concern and a broad range of suggestions and ideas. The Citizens Advisory Committee reviewed this preliminary list on September 6, 2007, the Planning Commission on October 11, 2007. The Board of Supervisors approved the document on November 27, 2007.

The Policy Document also captures information received from the public at the October 15, 2007 Summit held on Butte County's economic future, information provided to the Citizens Advisory Committee at their June 5, 2008 meeting held on General Plan organization, and information provided by the public at the July 22, 2008 Joint Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission meeting concerning Butte County Deer Ranges and the Deer Herd Study.

## **BACKGROUND**

### Overview of Previous Meeting Series #4: Evaluation & Selection of the Preferred Land Use Alternative

Butte County General Plan 2030 Meeting Series #4 concluded with the Board of Supervisors acting to approve the Preferred Land Use Alternative for Butte County General Plan 2030 during two Study Sessions held on July 29 and 30, 2008. Over the prior 4 month period, 11 meetings were held that were devoted to the development of the Preferred Land Use Alternative including the 2 Board of Supervisor Study Sessions, 3 Planning Commission Study Sessions held on May 9, 30 and June 13, 2008, 5 Citizens Advisory Committee meetings held on April 10, 17 and 24, and May 1 and 8, 2008, and a Public Workshop held on March 27, 2008.

Although not specifically the subject of this Meeting Series, the Final Preferred Land Use Alternative Exhibits are provided under Attachment C for the Planning Commission's reference. The Alternatives Evaluation Report and Setting and Trends Report (both of which have been provided to the Planning Commission under separate reports) were the primary technical resources used in evaluating the Preferred Land Use Alternative.

### Summary of Goals & Policy Development (Meeting Series #5)

This section provides a chronological summary-level overview of Meeting Series #5 to date, including a brief overview of all meetings and background materials. More detailed information and each meeting's Official Meeting Votes are provided in the attachments identified for each section.

### September 8, 2008 Public Workshop on Goals and Policy (Attachment H)

Approximately 50 members of the public attended the Public Workshop devoted to Goals and Policy Development (Meeting Series #5) for Butte County General Plan 2030. The event took place at the Southside Community Center in Oroville from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. The evening included an open house session during which members of the public could circulate to 13 open house stations staffed by various officials from Butte County government including CAL-FIRE/Butte County Fire, Public Health, Agricultural Commissioner, Public Works, Administration, Water and Resource Conservation and Development Services. Presentations were provided on the Preferred Land Use Alternative and the recently approved outline describing the organization of Butte County General Plan 2030. Over 25 small group discussions took place regarding goals and policy development in 13 policy topic areas.

The policy alternatives document formed the basis of discussion and group members were asked to each provide one goal pertaining to these areas that they would like to see addressed by the General Plan. A 30 minute discussion ensued during which facilitator's recorded additional detail and ideas concerning Goals and Policy development. All of the information garnered from these discussions was then assembled for review and comment by the Citizens Advisory Committee.

### Citizens Advisory Committee Process

The CAC took their final action on the Preferred Land Use Alternative on October 23, 2008 and voted unanimously to transmit their final recommendations to the Planning Commission for consideration. The Final Policy Alternatives Document shows the CAC's specific recommendations under Attachment E. The CAC's voting summary (Attachment F) provides an overview on how the CAC voted on each of the Policy Topics. Public comment provided at each CAC meeting is provided under Attachment G and I.

The Citizens Advisory Committee received a paper from staff (Attachment D) defining the terms: "goals", "policies" and "programs" along with some fictitious examples describing these terms. The Planning Commission should review these definitions as they will become the convention used under Butte County General Plan 2030.

During their 4 meetings, the CAC systematically reviewed all of the Policy Topics from the Policy Alternatives Document. The four October CAC meetings were organized around policy topics as follows:

#### October 2, 2008

- ◆ Urban Growth Boundaries
- ◆ County Character, New Development & Housing
- ◆ Regional & Local Coordination
- ◆ Cultural Resources & Tribal Coordination
- ◆ Community Health & Safety
- ◆ Noise

#### October 9, 2008

- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Agriculture

#### October 16, 2008

- ◆ Water Resources
- ◆ Transportation, Circulation & Scenic Highways

October 23, 2008

- ◆ Utilities, Services & Airports
- ◆ Parks & Recreation, Trails
- ◆ Natural Resources & Habitat
- ◆ Green Building, Greenhouse Gases & Energy

At the October 9, 2008 meeting the CAC heard a presentation on strategies to address the future of agriculture by Jamison Watts of the Northern California Regional Land Trust, a non-profit organization that assists landowners in voluntary protection of agricultural lands. Butte County Agriculture Commissioner Richard Price provided information and answered questions concerning agricultural resources. Matt Kowta, Principal with Bay Area Economics, subconsultant to the County on economic issues under the Butte County General Plan 2030 project, was present and answered questions concerning economic issues.

At the October 16, 2008 meeting, the CAC heard a presentation on Regional Transportation Issues provided by Jon Clark, Executive Director of the Butte County Association of Governments. Public Works Director Mike Crump and Public Works Engineer Paul Lundbom provided information and answered questions concerning the Transportation Alternatives, including the Butte County Bikeway Master Plan Update. Kendra Breiland, Traffic Planner with Fehr & Peers Associates, subconsultant to the County on traffic issues under the Butte County General Plan 2030 project, provided a presentation and answered questions concerning county-wide levels of service for traffic flow. Butte County Department of Water & Resource Conservation Director Paul Gosselin also provided information and answered questions regarding existing programs devoted to water resources and policy.

At the October 23, 2008 meeting the CAC heard presentations from Butte County Resource Conservation District Manager Pia Sevelius and USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service District Conservationist Nathan Key on conservation issues as they apply to Butte County. CAL-FIRE/Butte County Fire Department Chief Henri Brachais answered questions concerning fire protection services.

General Plan Outline & Element Organization (Attachment B)

The General Plan Outline & Element Organization of Butte County General Plan 2030 was approved by the Board of Supervisors on August 19, 2008. This was developed via CAC review and from public input received by the CAC in a special meeting held on June 5, 2008.

The Planning Commission reviewed the CAC's recommendations on July 24, 2008 and recommended that they be approved by the Board of Supervisors. The

approved outline includes recommendations for the inclusion of optional elements for Economic Development, Agriculture, Water Resources, County Character, and Public Facilities & Services.

The various General Plan Elements shown under this outline will ultimately contain all of the goals and policies when they are approved by the Board of Supervisors. Meeting Series #6 will be devoted to a review of the Draft Butte County General Plan 2030, scheduled to begin in spring, 2009.

### Policies Proposed through Consultation with Native American Tribes

Under state requirements pursuant to SB 18, Butte County is required to consult with six local Native American tribes on Butte County General Plan 2030. The local tribes identified by the state for consultation are:

- Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria
- Greenville Rancheria of Maidu Indians
- Maidu Nation
- Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians
- Berry Creek Rancheria of Maidu Indians
- Enterprise Rancheria of Maidu Indians.

These tribes were initially notified of the opportunity to consult on Butte County General Plan 2030 in January 2007. On July 9, 2008 the Department of Development Services invited each of the six tribes to an initial Tribal Update meeting. At the meeting, staff provided an overview of Butte County government, Butte County General Plan 2030, and Meeting Series #4: Evaluation and Selection of a Preferred Land Use Alternative. The Department of Development Services invited each of the six tribes to a second Tribal Update Meeting on October 22, 2008. At the meeting, staff reviewed the Preferred Land Use Alternative, and provided an update on Meeting Series #5: Goals and Policies Development. Before and at each session Tribes were invited to provide consultation input either during or outside of the meeting.

Policies proposed by the Mechoopda Tribe in early-mid 2008 have been incorporated into the Policy Alternatives document under Question 37, "How should the County respect Native American culture and concerns?" Nine policy alternatives (a – i) were formulated in response to the Tribe's consultation input. On October 2nd the Citizens Advisory Committee recommended revisions to these policy alternatives as shown.

At the second Tribal Update meeting on October 22nd, the Mechoopda Tribe proposed an additional policy under Question 34, "How should the General Plan address preservation of important habitat areas, including riparian (river and

stream) corridors, vernal pools, oak woodlands and deer migration habitats.” The Tribe proposed a draft policy:

- ♦ Recognize the importance of aquatic and riparian habitat management to local tribes.

The Mechoopda Tribe has requested an opportunity to propose additional policies, and to suggest policy refinements, through further consultation before the conclusion of Meeting Series #5. Staff is working to arrange a meeting with Tribal representatives and facilitate this consultation input before the November 14<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission session. The results will be provided to the Commission for the study session.

In addition to specific proposed policies, the Mechoopda Tribe has requested that historic and cultural resources be addressed through a separate optional Cultural Resources Element, which could also include policies for tribal coordination. Tribal representatives note the large number of historic and cultural sites in the County, the number of sovereign and/or federally recognized local Native American tribes, and the unique history of the County’s landscape as reasons for this request.

## **TRANSPORTATION DISCUSSION**

The discussion of transportation issues will require the Planning Commission to make recommendations in three distinct areas:

1. Transportation, Circulation & Scenic Highways Policies
2. The Transportation Alternatives
3. Policy Question –Level of Service for County Roads

### Transportation Alternatives Handout and Exhibits (Attachment J)

The Transportation Alternatives Handout provides information on the development of the transportation alternatives and how they apply to the various communities of Butte County. This exhibit has been amended to show the CAC’s recommendations made at their October 16, 2008 meeting. The exhibits provide the various county-wide transportation alternatives. The Planning Commission will be asked to make recommendations on the appropriate Transportation Alternative.

The Department of Public Works recently provided updated exhibits concerning the Bikeway Master Plan Update, which is in progress. The Citizens Advisory Committee recommended including the Bikeway Master Plan Update in the selected Transportation Alternative.

### Level of Service Policy Question (Attachment K)

A Level of Service (LOS) calculation determines how a road segment or intersection is performing by assigning a grade (A through F) much the same as a report card, with the “A” standing for excellent (free flowing traffic) and the “F” standing for Failure (gridlock). General Plans must provide policy guidance on the LOS that a county or city wishes to maintain for their roads when considering development projects and infrastructure improvements.

The attached memo includes a discussion of this issue and some visual representations of varying LOS grades and traffic flow. The Planning Commission will be asked to make a recommendation concerning this policy issue for use in the Butte County General Plan 2030 Circulation Element.

### **BACKGROUND MATERIALS**

Various background materials have been provided to the Citizens Advisory Committee during this process. These resources have been attached to this Agenda Report for the Planning Commission’s reference and review. The following sections provide brief explanations for each of these resources:

#### Agriculture Enhancement Report (Attachment L)

This Report was completed by DC&E and provides a valuable assessment of techniques used in Butte County to enhance agriculture, and provides information on other techniques successfully used in the State of California that the Planning Commission may wish to consider as agricultural policy topics are discussed.

#### Model Air Quality Element (Attachment M)

This document was approved by the Air Quality Management District in January 2008. The document provides an excellent overview of Air Quality Issues pertinent to Butte County, and sets forth suggested policies to be incorporated into Butte County General Plan 2030. Staff recommends that the policies located within the Model Air Quality Element be incorporated into Butte County General Plan 2030.

Watersheds & General Plans Workshop, League of Women Voters  
(Attachment N)

The Butte County League of Women Voters hosted a workshop on Watersheds & General Plans co-sponsored by the Butte County Departments of Development Services and Water and Resource Conservation. This workshop took place on September 25, 2008 at the Masonic Family Center in Chico and approximately 50 members of the public including watershed groups from throughout the County attended. The workshop included the formation of small study groups organized around several of Butte County's watersheds. This document provides policy recommendations from the watershed groups for the Planning Commission's reference and consideration.

**ADDITIONAL COMMENT**

Public Comment

Public Comment associated with Goals and Policy Development that has been received through direct mail, email and submission to the Citizens Advisory Committee is provided under Attachment I.

Butte County Water Commission

The Butte County Water Commission has formed a subcommittee to address water resource policies. The full Water Commission is expected to review the recommendations of this subcommittee on November 4, 2008. The Water Commission's final recommendations will be provided to the Planning Commission prior to the November 14, 2008 Study Session. It is staff's recommendation that the Planning Commission review and accept the Water Commission's final policy recommendations.

Butte County Cultural Resources Coalition

The Butte County Cultural Resource Coalition, a private group of local cultural and historic resource experts met with Butte County General Plan staff on October 28, 2008 to discuss the Cultural Resource & Tribal Coordination Topics from the Policy Alternatives Document. The group made a number of substantive recommendations concerning this policy area. This information was still being assembled at the time of writing this Agenda Report and will be provided to the Planning Commission prior to the November 14, 2008 Study Session. It is staff's recommendation that the Planning Commission consider these recommendations during the discussion of this policy topic.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Planning Commission's recommendations will be transmitted to the Board of Supervisors for their Special Study Session to be held on January 21 and 22, 2008. The Board's final action on Goals and Policy Development will end Meeting Series #5. Meeting Series #6 –the Draft Butte County General Plan 2030 document will then be schedule to begin in spring of 2009. Meeting Series #6 will also include a Public Workshop, CAC meetings, Planning Commission Study Sessions, and Board of Supervisors Study Sessions.

Sincerely,

Dan Breedon, AICP, Principal Planner  
Butte County Department of Development Services