

The banner features a dark blue background with the text 'Butte County' in a large, white, serif font at the top. Below it, the text 'General Plan 2030' is written in a smaller, white, serif font. To the left of the text is the Butte County seal, which is circular and contains a landscape scene with mountains and a river. The banner also includes several small, square images: a waterfall on the left, a cow in a field, a landscape with hills, a sunset over a field, a row of trees, a lake, and a wooden barn on the right.

Butte County

General Plan 2030

Butte County General Plan 2030

Meeting Series #5: Goals and Policies

Transportation Alternatives Handout

The Transportation Alternatives for General Plan 2030 represent different approaches to how transportation improvements might occur in Butte County under the General Plan. These alternatives are based on input received during Meeting Series #1, the Public Workshop and CAC meetings held in May 2007, and the series of Area-Wide Workshops and Community Meetings held between April and June 2007. They were also refined based on input from the Planning Commission, Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and public, as well as final direction from the Board of Supervisors. These Alternatives were approved by the Board of Supervisors on November 27, 2007.

The Transportation Alternatives maps are attached to this handout. The Roadway Improvements map shows potential locations for major roadway improvements, such as roadway widening, new road construction, pedestrian improvements or improved intersections. The roadway improvement alternatives were developed to address a series of issues that were raised through the General Plan process to date. These issues are described in the Roadway Improvements section below, and the numbered alternatives to address these issues correspond to the numbers on the Roadway Improvements map. Minor road improvements, such as road maintenance and repaving, are not included in these alternatives; however, the Policy Alternatives address these needs in the Transportation category.

The Bicycle Improvements map displays potential improvements to bicycle facilities, including off-street bicycle paths (defined by the Caltrans Highway Design Manual as “Class I” facilities), on-street bicycle lanes (Class II facilities), and on-street shared bicycle routes (Class III facilities).

Although the roadway improvements and bicycle improvements are mapped separately, these improvements should be considered in tandem. There are opportunities to decrease costs, increase efficiency, and maximize the benefits of an improvement by sharing uses. For example, emergency vehicle and evacuation routes can serve as effective and enjoyable Class I bike paths. Similarly, Class I bike paths that are built slightly wider than the standard width can also serve as emergency evacuation routes. During non-emergency situations, the route would be blocked to vehicular traffic, but during an emergency, vehicles would be directed to these routes. Therefore, while reviewing the roadway and bicycle improvements, it is worthwhile to consider opportunities for shared uses.

Roadway Improvements

The following transportation issues have been raised through the Butte County General Plan 2030 process to date. Options to address these issues are also provided, and these numbered alternatives correspond to the numbers on the attached Roadway Improvements map. During the October 16 meeting, the CAC was asked to recommend specific improvements for inclusion in the General Plan, as well as how to prioritize among them.

An important consideration with these roadway improvement alternatives is how they would be funded. With the exceptions of Alternatives 2 and 24, none of the alternatives are included in the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan, which allocates Butte County transportation funding through 2035. Therefore, the typical sources of transportation funds are not available for the majority of these projects. However, the County could consider alternative funding options, such as increasing transportation impact fees on new development in order to improve public safety or reduce traffic congestion through these roadway improvements. Such a program would require additional study by the County to determine the adequate fee structure. In addition to impact fees, the County could seek sources of grant funding; however, this would not be a standard source of transportation funding, in part due to the significant cost of transportation improvements. In addition, future RTPs could include some of the improvements included in General Plan 2030. The RTP is updated every 4 years, so the next update would be in 2012. By then, there may be additional funding sources that could be allocated to these projects.

Issue A: At the Stirling City Community Meeting, participants identified that the Skyway between Inskip and Butte Meadows is in need of improvements, including paving, to facilitate emergency access, evacuation, tourism and recreation.

- ◆ Alternative 1: Improve the Skyway between Inskip and Butte Meadows for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 2: Improve the Skyway between Inskip and Butte Meadows for full access. As noted above, this improvement is included in the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan.

CAC Recommendation: Support implementation of Alternative 2, which is already underway.

Planning Commission Recommendation: Support implementation of Alternative 2, and include a policy statement that among the possible improvement projects, the Forest Highway 171 (Skyway improvement from Inskip to Butte Meadows) project should be a top priority.

Issue B: At the Cohasset Community Meeting, participants noted that Cohasset Road is in need of improvements, including roadway widening, to facilitate emergency access and evacuation.

- ◆ Alternative 3: Improve Cohasset Road for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 4: Improve Cohasset Road for full access.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Work with federal funding sources to create a funding plan to implement improvements for emergency access, evacuation, fire protection, public safety, water quality protection, circulation and work with community wildlife protection plans to identify and prioritize projects.

Issue C: At the Unincorporated Paradise Area-Wide Workshop, participants noted that alternate routes to facilitate emergency access and evacuation should be developed. General Plan 2030 could include improvements of up to four roadways or sets of roadways, by identifying one alternative from each of the following four pairs:

Doe Mill Road

- ◆ Alternative 5: Improve the Doe Mill Road connection between the Upper Ridge, Forest Ranch and Chico for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 6: Improve the Doe Mill Road connection between the Upper Ridge, Forest Ranch and Chico for full access.

Nimshew Road

- ◆ Alternative 7: Improve the Nimshew Road, Centerville Road and Honey Run Road connection between Paradise Pines and Chico for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 8: Improve the Nimshew Road, Centerville Road and Honey Run Road connection between Paradise Pines and Chico for full access.

Coutolenc Road

- ◆ Alternative 9: Improve the Coutolenc Road connection between eastern Magalia and the Upper Skyway for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 10: Improve the Coutolenc Road connection between eastern Magalia and the Upper Skyway for full access.

Jordan Hill Road

- ◆ Alternative 11: Improve the Jordan Hill Road connection between eastern Magalia and Highway 70 for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 12: Improve the Jordan Hill Road connection between eastern Magalia and Highway 70 for full access.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Work with federal funding sources to create a funding plan to implement improvements for emergency access, evacuation, fire protection, public safety, water quality protection, circulation and work with community wildlife protection plans to identify and prioritize projects.

Issue D: At the Concow/Yankee Hill/Jarbo Gap Community Meeting, participants identified that Concow Road is in need of improvements to enhance fire protection, public safety and circulation.

- ◆ Alternative 13: Improve Concow Road and Oak Way for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 14: Improve Concow Road and Oak Way for full access.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Work with federal funding sources to create a funding plan to implement improvements for emergency access, evacuation, fire protection, public safety, water quality protection, circulation and work with community wildlife protection plans to identify and prioritize projects.

Issue E: At the Cherokee Community Meeting, participants identified that Cherokee Road is in need of improvements to improve public safety and accommodate a wider range of traffic types.

- ◆ Alternative 15: Improve Cherokee Road for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 16: Improve Cherokee Road for full access.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Work with federal funding sources to create a funding plan to implement improvements for emergency access, evacuation, fire protection, public safety, water quality protection, circulation and work with community wildlife protection plans to identify and prioritize projects.

Issue F: At the Berry Creek/Brush Creek Community Meeting, participants identified that Bald Rock Road is in need of upgrades due to increases in traffic since the road was first constructed. According to County staff, this road is heavily populated and traveled, but does not meet design standards for a large portion of its length.

- ◆ Alternative 17: Improve Bald Rock Road for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 18: Improve Bald Rock Road for full access.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Work with federal funding sources to create a funding plan to implement improvements for emergency access, evacuation, fire protection, public safety, water quality protection, circulation and work with community wildlife protection plans to identify and prioritize projects.

Issue G: At the Feather Falls/Forbestown/Clipper Mills Community Meeting, participants identified that Lumpkin Road, Ponderosa Way and Forbestown Road were all in need of improvements for public safety and circulation.

- ◆ Alternative 19: Improve Lumpkin Road, Ponderosa Way and Forbestown Road for emergency access and evacuation only.
- ◆ Alternative 20: Improve Lumpkin Road, Ponderosa Way and Forbestown Road for full access.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Work with federal funding sources to create a funding plan to implement improvements for emergency access, evacuation, fire protection, public safety, water quality protection, circulation and work with community wildlife protection plans to identify and prioritize projects.

Issue H: At the Lake Oroville Area-Wide Workshop, participants were concerned about congestion and safety along Highway 162 in the foothills east of Oroville.

- ◆ Alternative 21: Improve Highway 162 between the Oroville city limits and Miners Ranch Road.
- ◆ Alternative 22: Improve the Highway 162 intersections with the Oroville Quincy Highway and Miners Ranch Road.
- ◆ Alternative 23: Develop an alternate routes, including road improvements to Ophir Road, Lower Wyandotte Road and Miners Ranch Road.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Support all alternatives.

Issue I: At the Biggs and Gridley Area-Wide Workshop, participants were concerned about congestion and safety issues along Highway 99.

- ◆ Alternative 24: Widen Highway 99 through the Gridley area. This improvement would expand upon the current plans by Caltrans and the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) to establish passing lanes on Highway 99 in the Gridley area, as indicated in the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan.
- ◆ Alternative 25: Construct a new road to bypass the slower traffic in Gridley. Caltrans has acquired land for a right-of-way for a Highway 99 bypass, but is not currently pursuing this project.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Defer decision until the City of Gridley addresses this through their General Plan Update.

Issue J: The Town of Paradise has identified a need for a northern connection between Neal Road and the Skyway to relieve traffic within the town limits.

- ◆ Alternative 26: Improve Indian Springs Road, located southwest of Paradise, and extend the road to connect to the Skyway.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Defer decision to Town of Paradise.

Issue K: The City of Chico has identified a need to connect the Skyway to Highway 99.

- ◆ Alternative 27: Connect the Skyway and Highway 99 southeast of Chico via the proposed Southgate interchange.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Defer decision to City of Chico.

Issue L: Congestion and safety issues along Highway 70, Palermo Honcut Highway and associated side roads have been identified.

- ◆ Alternative 28: Improve Dunstone Drive, La Porte Road and Lower Honcut Road for full access. This route is currently not viable as a regional access because it is unpaved; however, according to County staff, it has ample width, right-of-way and alignment to accommodate a paved roadway built to County standards.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: This should be considered as a longer-term project.

Issue M: During Meeting Series #1, participants identified a need for a better east-west connection to Interstate 5 than currently exists.

- ◆ Alternative 29: Improve Highway 162 west of the Thermalito Afterbay and Colusa Highway/East Gridley Road.

Planning Commission and CAC Recommendation: Follow policy recommendation made in response to Question 24: "Work with other agencies to improve access for the movement of goods and services to Interstate 5."

Bicycle Improvements

The attached Bicycle Improvements map shows existing bicycle facilities in Butte County, as well as planned facilities under the Countywide Bikeway Master Plan and facilities suggested by the public and County staff during the Butte County General Plan 2030 process to date. The Countywide Bikeway Master Plan was developed by BCAG in 1998, and it serves as a regional planning tool that includes County and local agency master plans, including regional parks and recreation districts. More recently, the Butte County Department of Public Works submitted a draft of a revised Bikeway Master Plan to the CAC on October 16, 2008.

The CAC and Planning Commission have recommended that the General Plan support the countywide master bicycle planning effort that is currently underway, as presented to the CAC on October 16.