



Butte County General Plan 2030

Tribal Consultation Input: Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria

November 4, 2008

Principal Planner Claudia Stuart and Mechoopda Cultural Coordinator and Tribal Council Member Arlene Ward met on November 4, 2008. The purpose of the meeting was to take consultation input from the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria regarding goals and policies development for Butte County General Plan 2030.

The Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria requests that Cultural Resources be addressed by a separate General Plan element, which could also include policies for tribal coordination and historic resources. The Tribe asserts that its input on policies for tribal coordination and management of tribal cultural resources should be given as much or more weight as Citizens Advisory Committee recommendations regarding tribal coordination. The Tribe is concerned that the Citizens Advisory Committee provided its recommendations without reviewing the written consultation information provided to the County by the Tribe. The Tribe provides the following specific consultation input on goals and policies development. Additions to the September 22, 2008 Policy Alternatives document are underlined; deletions are shown in ~~strikeout~~.

Tribal Coordination (Question 37)

Modify Policy #37A: "Establish a process for consultation regarding proposed development projects with local Indian tribes at the earliest possible time.
For example, monthly or quarterly summaries of private development applications and anticipated County projects could be provided by the County. The County could also provide this information at monthly or quarterly meetings.

Modify Policy #37C: "Develop a formal consultation procedure that provides adequate review time for tribes to review and respond, and that includes a definition of terms, notification procedures, review periods, and procedures regarding sharing of confidential information."

Delete Policy #37D, because this policy is redundant with Policy #37E: “~~Include General Plan requirements and develop procedures to document and evaluate Traditional Cultural Properties within the County.~~”

Modify Policy #37E: “Develop and adopt a Cultural Resources Management Plan for the County, including policies and procedures for the curation and disposition of objects, and protection, preservation and long-term monitoring of Traditional Cultural Properties. Include a Native American Cultural Resources Inventory in a Countywide reassessment of cultural resources. Use ethnographies as one source of information for non-archaeological Native American sites.”

This policy is consistent with policies recommended by the Butte County Cultural Resources Coalition.

Modify Policy #37F: “Work with local tribes to adopt standards for County and private development retention of professional archaeologists and cultural resource specialists to monitor construction on sensitive sites. Standards for professional archaeologists should meet or exceed U.S. Department of the Interior standards.”

Add to Policy #37G: “Engage with local Indian tribes to create a confidential cultural resources inventory of the County. Develop a reliable and trustworthy system and relationship between local Tribes and the County to protect confidential tribal information, based on a Memorandum of Understanding or other agreement.”

Add a policy: “Recognize Native American culture as a traditional living contemporary community.”

Modify Policy #37H: “Reevaluate sites of past archaeological investigations that may be impacted by proposed development, using state-of-the-art methods.”

Add a policy: “Establish protection measures to acknowledge and protect traditional tribal cultural knowledge and intellectual property rights.”

Modify Policy #37I: “Recognize the importance to local Native American tribes of natural resources including oak woodlands, deer herds, water bodies and riparian corridors, as well as aquatic, riparian, and upland plant and animal species. Recognize the importance to local Native American tribes of gathering and use sites, as well as other traditional tribal cultural places. Consider use of these resources and sites by contemporary Native Americans in planning for land use, development, and management. Conduct consultation and other coordination with local Native American tribes to preserve these habitats, resources, sites, and species.”

This policy may be cross-referenced under Natural Resources and Habitat (Question 34).

Add a policy to be cross-referenced under Natural Resources and Habitat: “Recognize the importance of aquatic and riparian habitat management to local Native American tribes.”

Regional and Local Coordination (Questions 8-9)

Modify Question 8 under Regional and Local Coordination: “How should the County more effectively coordinate its planning efforts with those of the five incorporated municipalities, other Counties, other planning and regulatory agencies, and local Native American tribes?”

Add a policy under Question 9 – How should the County work with local unincorporated communities in planning for their future? that states: “Create dialogue with local Native American tribes for collaboration on tribal land use plans.”

This could be accomplished by conducting meetings or quarterly updates in which the County would share information about proposed development or anticipated County projects.

Agriculture (Questions 10-16)

Modify Question 14: “How should the County encourage and enhance niche and specialty agriculture, such as organic products, heritage livestock, heirloom crops, and native plant nurseries?”

Add a policy: “Consider impacts to the traditional Native American landscape when developing additional land, including when developing land for agriculture.”

Natural Resources and Habitat (Question 34)

Add a policy “When planning open space, give primary consideration to its restoration and maintenance as a native, pre-contact landscape.”

Modify Policy #34K: Penalize developers who remove special status species or species valued by local Native American tribes.”

Add a policy: “Where landscaping is required, give primary consideration to native tree and plant species, including those valued for traditional Native American cultural uses. Consult with local tribes to develop and update this species list.”