

POLICY ELEMENT

The purpose of the Policy Element is to identify legislative, planning, financial and institutional issues and requirements, as well as any areas of regional consensus. The Policy Element presents guidance to decision-makers of the implications, impacts, opportunities, and foreclosed options that will result from implementation of the RTP. The Policy Element is a resource for providing input and promoting consistency of action among state, regional and local agencies. California statutes state that each RTP shall (Government Code Section 65080 (b)) include a Policy Element that:

1. Describes the transportation issues in the region;
2. Identifies and quantifies regional needs expressed within both short and long-range planning horizons (Government Code Section 65080(b)(1)); and,
3. Maintains internal consistency with the Financial Element and fund estimates.

1. Policy on Highways, Streets, and Roads

Goal: A safe and efficient regional road system that accommodates the demand for movement of people and goods.

Objective	Policy / Action
1.1 Maintain a Level of Service "D" on all regionally significant roads	1.1.1. Fund and implement projects identified on the Tier 1 priority list in the Action Element of the RTP.
	1.1.2. Aggressively pursue discretionary Caltrans funding such as IIP, SHOPP, HBP, HES etc.
1.2 Identify and prioritize improvements to the regional road system.	1.2.1. Prepare and apply evaluation criteria to prioritize regional road projects identified to improve the overall transportation system of the region.
	1.2.2. Evaluation criteria will evaluate how the projects achieve the following objectives: 1) an integrated and balanced road system; 2) improvement in traffic flow and safety; 3) minimize environmental effects; and 4) minimize adverse impacts on agricultural land.
	1.2.3. Use Regional Improvement Program funds to finance the prioritized regional improvements.
	1.2.4 Use BCAG Travel Demand Model performance measures as appropriate to quantify project benefits.

2. Policy on Transit

Goal: Provide an efficient, effective, coordinated regional transit system that increases mobility for urban and rural populations, including transportationally disadvantaged persons.

Objective	Policy / Action
2.1. Meet all transit needs that are “reasonable to meet.”	2.1.1. Provide complementary dial-a-ride transit services for the elderly, handicapped, and those residents not served by a fixed route service within the service area.
	2.1.2. Provide adequate fixed route transit system to serve the general public, including those who rely most on transit.
	2.1.3. Maintain the locally developed Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan.
2.2. Increase transit ridership that exceeds annual population growth rate for Butte County.	2.2.1. Add additional routes and expand services as necessary to meet ridership demand.
	2.2.2. Support Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) projects which improve transit operations.
	2.2.3. Work with larger employers (i.e. University) for transit incentive programs.
	2.2.4. Evaluate fixed route system, identify other innovative alternatives such as a market based approach system to increase ridership.
	2.2.5. Explore “best practices” in other regions to learn from and consider for increased ridership and customer satisfaction for transit.
2.3. Promote citizen participation and education in transit planning and operations.	2.3.1 Include Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and Coordinated Transportation Working Group in the regional transit planning process.
	2.3.2. Use the BCAG newsletter and website for transit education and information.
2.4. Maintain a reliable transit system.	2.4.1. Monitor contractor for timely transit operations reporting.
	2.4.2. Conduct Preventative Maintenance Inspections for transit fleet.

3. Policy on Rail

Goal: A rail system that provides safe and reliable service for people and goods.

Objective	Policy / Action
3.1. Maintain and expand passenger service through Butte County.	3.1.1 Monitor the activities of Amtrak to assure passenger rail services in Butte County.
	3.1.2. Support the High Speed Rail Commission planning efforts for rail service connecting Chico to Sacramento.
	3.1.3. Pursue state and federal grant funding for rail safety projects.

4. Policy on Goods Movement

Goal: Provide a transportation system that enables safe movement of goods in and through Butte County.

Objective	Policy / Action
4.1. Provide an adequate regional road system for goods movement.	4.1.1 Work with state and federal legislators to lobby for funding to develop continuous four lane highway to Chico on the SR 70/99 Corridor.
	4.1.2. Leverage regional share funds for Caltrans interregional share and State Highway Operations and Protection Program.

5. Policy on Aviation

Goal: A fully functional and integrated air service and airport system complementary to the countywide transportation system.

Objective	Policy / Action
5.1. Maintain daily commercial airline service to the Bay Area.	5.1.1 Support commercial airline service in Butte County.
5.2. Work with local agencies to ensure compatible land uses around existing airports to reduce noise conflicts.	5.2.1. Support the Butte County Airport Land Use Commission and local airports in their efforts to ensure compatible land uses around airports.
	5.2.2. Support the local airports in their attempts to acquire the land surrounding the airports.
5.3. Ensure Airport Master Plans are updated and revised as necessary and required.	5.3.1. Support projects that integrate air transport facilities with other modes of transportation.

6. Policy on Non-Motorized Transportation

Goal: A regional transportation system for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Objective	Policy / Action
6.1 Work with local agencies to develop and construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	6.1.1. Support the construction of Class 1, 2, and 3 bike routes as designated in the local bicycle plans.
	6.1.2. Assist local jurisdictions in actively pursuing bicycle and pedestrian related funding.
	6.1.3. Support projects and policies for bicycles on the fixed route transit system (bike racks, etc.).
6.2 Assist local jurisdictions in pursuing grant funding.	6.2.1. Assist as requested in developing local bicycle plans.
	6.2.2. Participate in local bicycle advisory committees.

7. Policy on Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)

Goal: Promote the use of ITS technologies in the planning and programming process.

Objective	Policy / Action
7.1 Maintain the North State ITS System Deployment Plan.	7.1.1. Encourage the use of ITS technologies in the project development process.
7.2 Apply Transportation Systems Management (TSM) strategies to projects where appropriate.	7.2.1 Assist local agencies in evaluating the impacts of TSM strategies.

8. Policy on Energy

Goal: Reduce usage of nonrenewable energy resources for transportation purposes.

Objective	Policy / Action
8.1 Increase public transit and carpooling/vanpooling and bicycling/walking.	8.1.1. Add additional transit routes and services where feasible.
	8.1.2. Support passage of ordinances that provide for vanpooling and carpooling programs.
	8.1.3 Support passage of ordinances that provide for park and ride lots.

9. Policy on Air Quality

Goal: Achieve air quality standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State Air Resources Board.

Objective	Policy / Action
9.1. Coordinate transportation planning with air quality planning at the technical and policy level.	9.1.1. Assist as requested by the Butte County Air Quality Management District to develop the transportation-related portions of the State Implementation Plan for air quality.
	9.1.2. Provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions in developing air quality analysis as needed for projects.
	9.1.3 Support projects which demonstrate an air quality benefit.
9.2. Implement transportation requirements established by Assembly Bill (AB) 32.	9.2.1. Work with state to identify emissions budget for Butte County.
	9.2.2 Develop transportation projects that reduce green house gas emissions.

10. Policy on Land Use Strategies

Goal: Provide economical, long-term solutions to transportation problems by encouraging community designs which encourage walking, transit, and bicycling.

Objective	Policy / Action
10.1. Innovative land use and transportation planning.	10.1.1. Provide technical assistance and make available BCAG Travel Demand Model as a tool to assess road network to identify potential solutions to improve traffic movement.
	10.1.2. Assist as requested in evaluating land use strategies.
10.2. Plan future roads to accommodate land uses at a regional level.	10.2.1. Assist member jurisdictions in taking a regional approach in land use and developing a road network that serves the entire region.
	10.2.2. Encourage all jurisdictions to actively participate in the Regional Transportation Plan Update process.

10.3. Roads that are pedestrian friendly, encourage bicycle trips and the use of the mass transportation system.	10.3.1. Assist member jurisdictions in developing and implementing strategies and design criteria that make new commercial and residential developments friendly to pedestrians and bicyclists.
10.4. Preserve productive farmland and land that provides habitat for rare, endangered or threatened species.	10.4.1 Consider impacts on prime farmland and areas that support protected wildlife.
	10.4.2 Encourage participation in development of the Butte Regional Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP).
10.5. Ensure Goals and Policies are consistent at both the regional and local levels.	10.5.1 Assist the cities, town and county during their General Plan updates to ensure that the plans are consistent with the RTP and HCP/NCCP.

11. Policy on Transportation Financing

Goal: Develop and support financing strategies that provide for continuous implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan projects and strategies.

Objective	Policy / Action
11.1. Develop and adopt policies that will provide adequate funding resources for all transportation modes and strategies.	11.1.1. Provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions in the development of transportation financing mechanisms.
	11.1.2. Consider cost efficiency / cost benefit ratio in project evaluation criteria.
11.2. Work with Cities and County on development of a regional road network fee program.	11.2.1 Work with cities, town and county to identify potential options for funding transportation system maintenance and improvements on the regional road network.
	11.2.2. Develop funding shortfall needs assessment for state highways, local streets and roads for Butte County.

12. Policy on Outreach and Coordination

Goal: Provide a forum for participation and cooperation in transportation planning and facilitate relationships for transportation issues that transcend jurisdictional boundaries.

Objective	Policy / Action
12.1. Assist jurisdictions in local transportation planning.	12.1.1. Evaluate transportation impacts of land use and development proposals as requested.
	12.1.2. Provide technical assistance in the preparation of transportation financing mechanisms as requested.
	12.1.3. Assist in the preparation of local general plans.
12.2. Promote consistency among all levels of local transportation planning.	12.2.1. Involve the local, state, and federal agencies and elected officials in the transportation planning process.
	12.2.2. Promote consistency between the Regional Transportation Plan and local and state level plans.
12.3. Promote citizen participation and education in transportation planning.	12.3.1. Use the BCAG newsletter for transportation planning education.
	12.3.2. Conduct workshops and information sessions for transportation planning and projects.
	12.3.3 Utilize the internet to facilitate the dissemination of transportation projects and information on the planning process.
	12.3.4 Follow BCAG's Public Participation Plan procedures.