

Sustainable Communities Strategy



Linking Land Use, Housing, and Transportation Planning

BCAG will be developing a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of the 2012 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) in order to comply with California Senate Bill 375 (SB 375). The 2012 RTP will include the SCS as an additional element, which demonstrates the integration of land use, housing, and transportation to reduce passenger vehicle greenhouse gas emissions.

Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

A primary goal of the SCS will be to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles to state-mandated levels, thereby reducing the risk of climate change. In 2010, the California Air Resources Board approved passenger vehicle greenhouse gas reduction targets for the Butte County region for the years 2020 and 2035. Once prepared, the SCS must meet achieve these targets, otherwise BCAG will be required to prepare an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS), identifying how these targets can be met.

Managing Growth

Another goal of the SCS will be to manage the region's growth in a sustainable way. Projections show that over the next 25 years, the region's population will increase by ~110, 000 people and an estimated 47,000 homes will be needed to accommodate the growth.

Affordable Housing and the SCS

The law also requires the SCS land use pattern to align with the area's Regional Housing Needs Assessment, assuring that each community provides an opportunity for a mix of housing affordable to all economic segments, therefore furthering the integration of land use, housing, and transportation planning.

Existing Sustainable Planning Efforts

Although the SCS is a recent requirement, BCAG has past and present efforts which incorporate sustainable planning principles and help provide a foundation for the development of the 2012 SCS.

In 2006, BCAG initiated the Blueprint Planning Program which included the development and coordination of Regional Guiding Principles, Regional Growth Projections, ...*continued on other side*



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Sustainable Communities Strategy Process

Air Resources Board sets regional targets to reduce passenger vehicle greenhouse gas emissions



BCAG develops Regional Transportation Plan



BCAG prepares Draft SCS with input from stakeholders and public



Draft SCS is quantified and presented to public and BCAG Board of Directors for review and comment



Final RTP and SCS approved by BCAG Board of Directors December 2012



Air Resources Board reviews Sustainable Communities Strategy

If you have questions regarding the Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Butte County region or wish to be placed on the SCS email notification list, please contact :

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Existing Sustainable Planning Efforts—*cont.*

continued from Page 1 ...Ecological Baseline Conditions Report, Landcover Mapping, Biological Constraints Analysis, and Conservation Strategy. This information was then utilized by BCAG when preparing the 2008 RTP and by the cities and county when updating their General Plans.

Habitat conservation efforts began in the region in 2007 when BCAG commenced with the development of the Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP). The BRCP is a joint Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) and, once completed, will allow for appropriate and compatible growth and development in the Butte County region while ensuring the preservation of aquatic and terrestrial resources and providing habitat for threatened and endangered species through conservation partnerships with local agencies.

Public Involvement and Collaboration

In addition to BCAG's normal 2012 RTP outreach efforts, further opportunities will be provided for public input into the SCS in accordance with BCAG's Public Participation Plan. These opportunities include various public hearings conducted at regularly scheduled meetings of the BCAG Board of Directors, public workshops throughout the county, and the ability to receive information and provide comments via the BCAG website and SCS email notification list.

BCAG's Planning Directors Group (PDG), consisting of local jurisdiction planning staff and staff from the Butte Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), will be utilized as the primary group for developing the land use and housing components of the SCS. The PDG members are also partners in a grant obtained from the California Strategic Growth Council for the purpose of collaborating in the development of the 2012 SCS.

New Technical Tools

In order to prepare and quantify the SCS, BCAG has worked to develop new tools and enhance the existing travel model. With funds received from both a Caltrans Planning grant and California Strategic Growth Council – Model Improvement grant, BCAG is preparing a land use allocation model for the purpose of assisting with the development of the land use component of the 2012 SCS, as well as enhancing the existing travel model to increase its sensitivity to smart growth land use principles.

CEQA Benefits

Residential and mixed use projects that are shown to be consistent with the SCS may be eligible for certain types of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining. BCAG will be working to inform the cities and county regarding ways to use the streamlining to support infill and transit-oriented developments, as well as provide housing closer to jobs and services in their community, creating an improved jobs-housing balance.