

# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

## Introduction

With each RTP update cycle, BCAG prepares a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as required under Senate Bill 375 (SB 375). The SCS demonstrates the integration of land use, housing, and transportation for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from passenger vehicles.

BCAG's 2012 plan was the first to include a SCS under SB 375. The 2012 SCS focused on bringing together the newly developed local general plans, regional habitat conservation planning, and regional blueprint efforts to lay out a future development pattern for the region which balanced housing and employment growth within specified growth areas, protected sensitive habitat and open space, and invested in a multi-modal transportation system.

BCAG's 2016 SCS was a minor update of the 2012 SCS. The focus of the 2016 RTP/SCS was to expand on the efforts of the 2012 plan by integrating the new Long-Range Transit and Non-Motorized Plan and incorporate the latest regional growth forecasts. This approach included an update of the preferred "balanced" land use scenario.

A similar approach has been taken by BCAG with the development of 2020 SCS, as with the 2016 plan. The 2020 RTP/SCS includes an update of the preferred "balanced" land use scenario, which considers the latest regional growth forecasts, recent regional trends in development and housing, and known impacts of the Camp Fire. This approach recognizes the lower than anticipated housing and population growth and minimal changes made to local land use plans over the past four years, with continued focus on the primary land use strategies developed in 2012.

This chapter discusses the update of the SCS and illustrates the changes made from the 2016 plan. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section covers the planning efforts which provide the foundation for this update of the SCS. The second section describes the growth and land use forecasts which make up the SCS as well as some of the analysis and tools which were used to generate them. The third section discusses the regional transportation investments associated with the SCS and the final section describes the public outreach and local partnerships which help shape the development of the SCS.



## **Background Information**

In September 2008, SB 375, also known as the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008, was enacted by the state of California. SB 375 prompts regions to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from passenger vehicles through the coordinated planning of long-range transportation plans. The legislation requires all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) in California to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy, which meets regional passenger vehicle GHG emissions targets, as an additional element of their regional transportation plans.

As described in SB 375, the SCS is an integrated transportation and land use plan which is intended to meet the regional GHG target for the years 2020 and 2035 while also accommodating the region's forecasted growth. If the SCS is unable to meet the regional GHG target within the required state and federal constraints for RTP development, then an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) must be prepared. The APS would identify how GHG targets would be achieved through alternative development patterns, infrastructure, or additional transportation measures or policies.

In 2010, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) set GHG targets for the BCAG region from on-road light-duty trucks and passenger vehicles as a 1% increase from 2005 emissions levels by 2020 and a 1% increase from 2005 emissions levels by 2035. In 2018, ARB updated the BCAG targets as a 6% decrease from 2005 emissions levels by 2020 and 7% decrease from 2005 emissions levels by 2035. These targets apply to the BCAG region for passenger vehicle emissions, and not to individual cities or sub-regions. The metric used for reporting will be GHG emissions per capita.

The 2020 RTP/SCS demonstrates the ability to meet these targets, shown in Table 4-1. The determination that BCAG will meet the CARB GHG reduction target is based upon the results of computer modeling. Appendix 6-6 describes the models and methodology used in preparing the estimates.

**Table 4-1**

**RTP/SCS per Capita CO<sub>2</sub> Emission Reductions for Passenger Vehicles from 2005**

<b>Target Year</b>	<b>ARB Target (2018)</b>	<b>BCAG RTP/SCS</b>
2020	6% reduction	14% reduction
2035	7% reduction	8% reduction

The SCS has been prepared as a component of the RTP. Specific requirements of SB 375, and the locations in which these requirements have been addressed within the 2020 RTP/SCS are identified in Appendix 6-1.

## **Foundational Sustainable Planning Efforts**

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

### *BCAG Regional Blueprint Planning*

In 2006, due to increasing growth pressures in the Butte County region over the previous decade, BCAG initiated the Blueprint Planning Program to establish a multi-faceted planning process to help provide for a more informed land use and transportation decision-making process, and provide an improved environmental permitting process for future transportation and land use projects. These planning efforts were coordinated through the BCAG Planning Directors Group (PDG), which is comprised of planning directors and staff from all the BCAG member jurisdictions, as well as the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

The BCAG Blueprint Program resulted in the establishment of Regional Guiding Principles, an Ecological Baseline Assessment Report, Landcover Mapping, Biological Constraints Analysis, and Butte County Meadowfoam Evaluation. The program also integrated updates of the region's local general plans both with each other and with the Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Lastly, this effort initiated the development of the Butte Regional Conservation Plan.

As of 2020, five of the region's six local jurisdictions (Biggs, Chico, Gridley, Oroville, and Butte County) have completed general plan updates within the past 10 years which include planning horizons that extend to 2030 or beyond. The only remaining jurisdiction, Town of Paradise, has initiated a complete updated of their general plan following the Camp Fire. The areas general plans provide the foundation for the region's SCS.

### *Butte Regional Conservation Plan*

Habitat conservation efforts began in the region in 2007 when BCAG commenced 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 and protection of aquatic and terrestrial resources and providing

habitat for threatened and endangered species through conservation partnerships with local agencies.

The BRCP's conservation strategy outlines a regional approach for the conservation of natural resources while allowing for development under county and city general plans and the RTP/SCS. Urban Permit Areas (UPAs) developed under the BRCP, define the locations where impacts of future urban development are expected to be incurred based on the region's local general plans and the RTP/SCS

### *2012 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy*

BCAG's 2012 MTP was the first to include a Sustainable Communities Strategy and link smart growth planning principles to the transportation system. As previously mentioned in this chapter, the focus of the 2012 SCS was to bring together the recently developed local general plans, the regional blueprint, and habitat conservation planning efforts into a land use strategy which balanced the region's future housing and employment growth in a manner which met the regional greenhouse gas targets while protecting sensitive habitat and open space. This effort relied on increased coordination between local jurisdiction planning staff, BCAG staff, and stakeholders. The plan identified a "potential" Transit Priority Project (TPP) area but lacked a long-range transit plan that could identify specific improvements and routing in the region.

### *Transit & Non-Motorized Plan*

One significant take away from developing the 2012 SCS was the need for a long-range plan identifying future improvement for alternative modes of transportation (i.e., bike, walk, and transit). In 2012, BCAG initiated the development of a long-range transit and non-motorized plan for the Butte County region with the securing of funds through the California Strategic Growth Councils – Sustainable Communities Planning Grant program. Completed in 2015, the plan focuses on improving the transportation network for people who walk, bike, or take transit in Butte County by recommending short-term and long-term changes which are within the projected financial constraints of the region. The plan includes a preferred transit route network and identifies high priority projects to facilitate bicycling and improved pedestrian access to major transit facilities.

### *Butte Plug-in Electric Vehicle (PEV) Readiness Plan*

In 2018 BCAG completed the *Butte Plug-in Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan*, which was developed in cooperation with BCAG member jurisdictions, the Butte Air Quality Management District, and key stakeholders from throughout the region. The purpose of the plan is to ensure BCAG and its member jurisdictions are

prepared to address the increasing use of PEVs within the region. The plan contains information on existing PEV use in the region, recommendations for member jurisdictions to improve building codes, permitting and inspection processes, and zoning, parking and signage for PEVs.

The plan also contains a regional siting plan that identifies priority locations for public PEV charging station installation throughout the region. The document and key chapters and sections can be found on the BCAG website under the planning tab. BCAG expects to continue to utilize the regional siting plan and other key findings and recommendations in the plan to further integrate, improve and increase PEV use in the region.

### **Growth and Land Use Forecasts**

BCAG prepares a regional growth forecast and land use pattern to accommodate the estimated increases in population, employment, and housing. The RTP/SCS identifies areas within the region sufficient to house all of the forecasted population of the region, including all economic segments of the population over the course of the RTP/SCS planning period.

### **Camp Fire**

In November 2018, the Camp Fire destroyed an approximately 15,000 housing units and 500 non-residential structures in the Town of Paradise and surrounding unincorporated communities of Magalia and Concow. Roughly 95% of the Town of Paradise and Concow were lost, including approximately 50% of Magalia. The Camp Fire is the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California history.

The Camp Fire has had an immediate and significant impact on the population, housing, and employment of the region. BCAG has attempted to account for the short and long-term effects of the Camp Fire based on information available at the time of preparing the forecasts and associated modeling for the 2020 RTP/SCS. However, the Town of Paradise and surrounding impacted communities are still in the earlier stages of recovery planning and solid long-term assumptions are not currently present.

To gain a better understanding of the impacts to transportation and land use in the region, BCAG has undertaken the preparation of a Regional Population and Transportation Study. The Study will look at pre and post Camp Fire data, prepare several scenarios for mid and long-term growth in the region and update the regional transit plan. The Study is expected to be completed in late 2021 and will be utilized in the development of BCAG's 2024 RTP/SCS. In addition, the results of the Study will be available to local and regional agencies who need data to update plans and programs.

For the purpose of developing the SCS, BCAG has accounted for the loss of housing units and jobs associated with the Camp Fire, in addition to the displacement of the population to surrounding communities and outside the area, to the best of our ability. The SCS assumes a rebuild rate of ~85% of the burn area over the course of the 2020 RTP. It is important to note the rebuilding of housing units and non-residential structures (which correlate to jobs/employment), are not included as “new”, rather they are recognized as re-built.

## Regional Growth Forecasts

The population, housing, and employment forecasts for the RTP/SCS are based on the “medium scenario” contained in the Butte County Long-Term Regional Growth Forecasts 2018-2040, developed by BCAG in 2019. It represents the most realistic growth scenario for the region, based on available information. The forecasts were prepared as an update to those included in the 2016 SCS and reflect the changes in estimates and projections developed by the State of California for the Butte County region and includes adjustments for the Camp Fire. The update was developed in consultation with the local governments and the Butte County Local Agency Formation Commission. A summary of the forecasts is included in Table 4-2 and a complete copy of the updated regional forecasts has been included in Appendix 6-2.

**Table 4-2**

**RTP/SCS Regional Growth Forecasts**

Year	Employees	Population	Housing Units
2018	82,900	227,896	99,353
2020	83,452	228,694	86,929
2030	84,733	248,313	105,916
2040	92,188	265,964	115,235

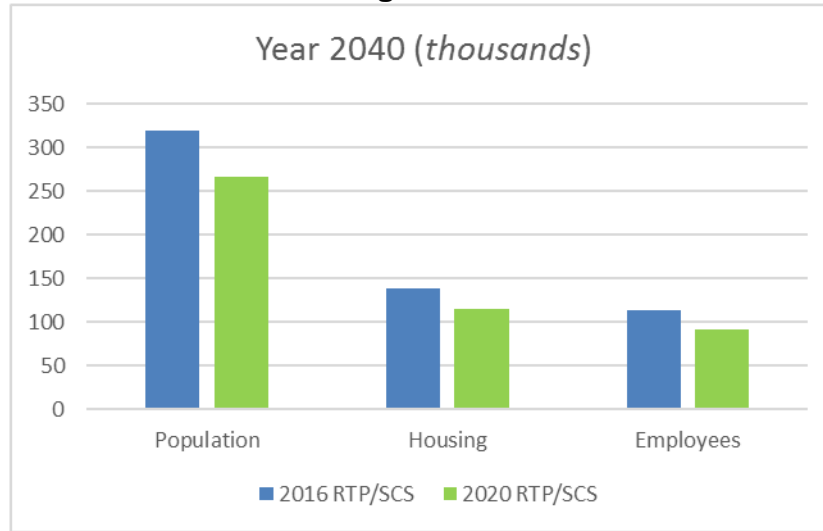
*Source: BCAG, 2019.*

The 2040 growth forecast indicates that the population in the BCAG region is expected to grow by ~38,000 people, an increase of 17%, between 2018 and 2040. As shown in Figure 4-1, this growth is significantly less than that included in the 2016 SCS which estimated ~97,000 additional people, an increase of 44%, over a 26-year period from 2014-2040. The updated forecasts show the need to accommodate approximately 16,000 new housing units, an increase of 16%, and 9,280 new employees, an increase of 11%, between 2018 and 2040, as shown in Figure 4-1. This growth is also less than the 41,000 new housing units and 34,000 new employees included in the 2012 plan. As population and housing increases have been steadily increasing in the past several years, employment has seen much greater increases in recent years<sup>1</sup>. Employment is expected to return to its

<sup>1</sup> BCAG Sustainable Communities Strategy Progress Report, September 2019.

long-term historical average by year 2030, based on a jobs-to-housing ratio of 0.80<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 4-1**



## Land Use Forecasts

The land use forecasts, and the process for allocating growth within the region, are affected by federal and state requirements related to the regional transportation plans and the Clean Air Act. In general, federal and state laws require BCAG to develop a forecasted land use pattern, based upon the best available information, in order to, among other things, design specific transportation improvements to serve that land use, and to perform travel modeling to determine the performance of the transportation system and determine whether the plan, including its land use and transportation components, meets federal air quality requirements. Beginning with BCAG's 2012 plan, this process was affected by SB 375, and specifically its requirements to include an SCS, to calculate the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from passenger vehicles, and enable the California Environmental Quality Act streamlining benefits for projects that are consistent with the SCS.

In preparing the land use forecasts for the 2012 SCS, BCAG developed three distinct land use scenarios for the purpose of illustrating the travel effects of different development patterns on the regional transportation system and the associated greenhouse gas emissions resulting from these patterns. In addition, the scenarios allowed BCAG to test the performance of the enhanced regional travel demand model to ensure it was responding appropriately to changes in land use. Appendix 6-3 includes a complete description of each scenario and the associated analysis.

<sup>2</sup> BCAG Provisional Long-Term Regional Growth Forecasts 2018 – 2040, September 2019.

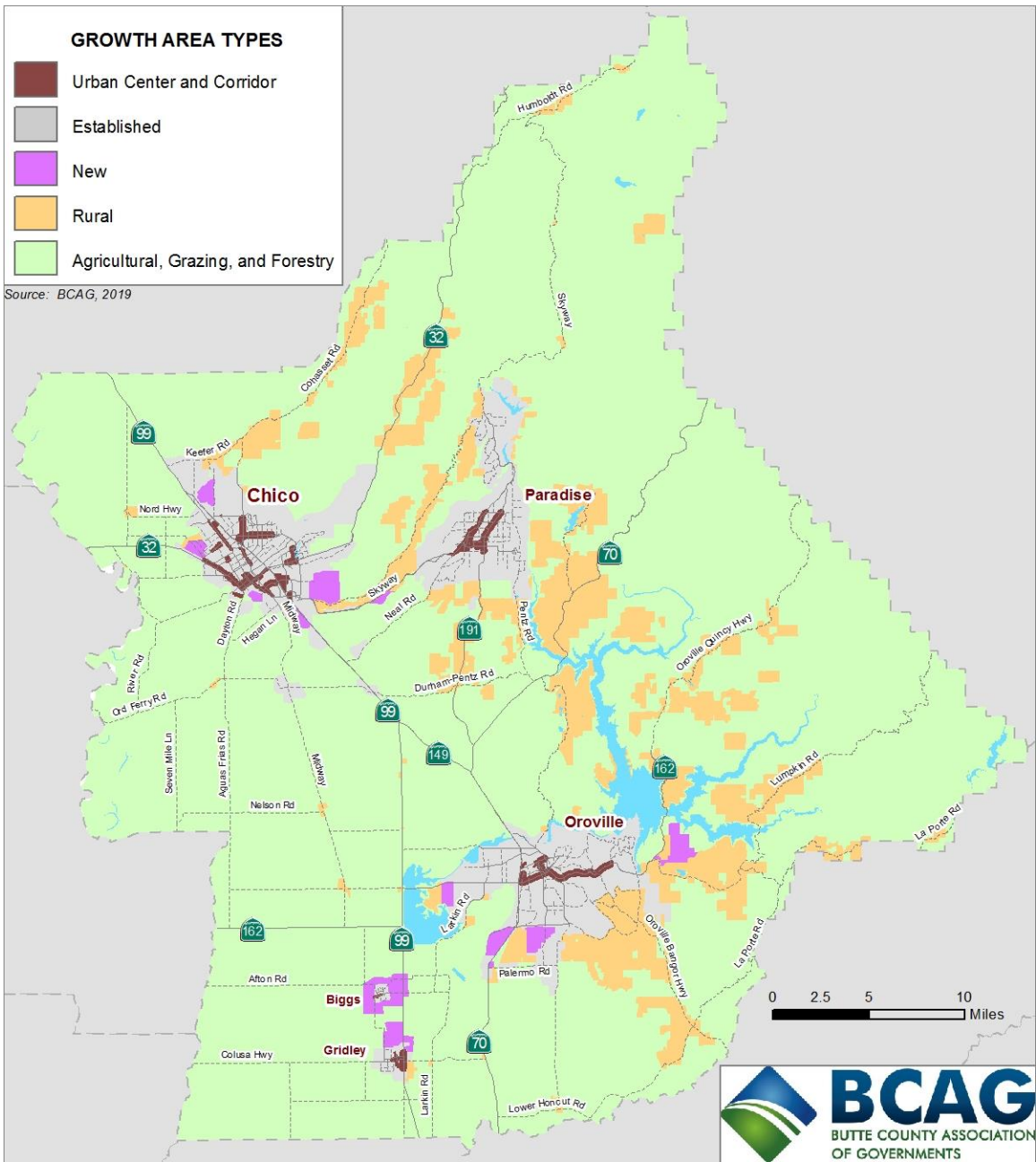
The 2016 SCS included an update of the 2012 SCS land use forecasts preferred “balanced” scenario. The forecast was updated with the latest local general plan and project information. The latest growth forecasts for population, housing, and employment were then applied.

The result of the updated land use forecast for the 2020 SCS is similar to what was included for the 2016 plan, in that the overall land use pattern is unchanged. However, the amount of growth being distributed within that pattern is less than what was included in the 2016 plan, this reflects the latest growth forecasts which were discussed in the previous section. As with the 2016 SCS update, the forecast has been updated with latest local general plan information and project information. Modifications have been made to the jobs-to-housing ratio as well as the housing mix to reflect historical averages and recent trends. Lastly, adjustments have been made to account for the losses and associated recovery related to the Camp Fire.

The following subsections describe the updated land use forecasts as they relate to specific growth area types, housing types, transit priority project areas, the jobs-housing balance, resource areas and farmland, and the regional housing needs process. Comparisons to the 2016 plan are also included to illustrate changes made between the plans.



Figure 4-2



## *Development by Growth Area*

For the 2012 SCS, BCAG developed a framework for describing the RTP/SCS that is made up of Growth Area Types. The Growth Area Types are an adaptation to a similar framework developed by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), BCAGs closest neighboring Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Local land use plans (e.g., adopted and proposed general plans, specific plans, master plans, corridor plans, etc.) were divided into one of five Growth Area Types based on the location of the plans. This framework has been carried over to the 2018 SCS, unchanged. Figure 4-2 provides an illustration of the Growth Area Types.

Included below is brief description of each Growth Area Type followed by a summary of land uses allocated within each, based on an update of the preferred “balanced” land use scenario. The forecasted allocations are consistent with growth assumptions (e.g., location, density, and intensity of use) utilized in existing general plans or other local adopted plans, however, it does not utilize all available capacity in those plans.

Urban Center and Corridor Areas consist of higher density and mixed land uses with access to frequent transit service. These areas typically have existing or planned infrastructure for non-motorized transportation modes which are more supportive of walking and bicycling. Future growth within these areas consists of compact infill developments on underutilized lands, or redevelopment of existing developed lands. Local plans identify these areas as opportunity sites, downtowns, central business districts, or mixed-use corridors.

Established Areas generally consist of the remaining existing urban development footprint surrounding the Urban Center and Corridor Areas. Locations disconnected from Urban and Corridor Centers may be residential-only, employment-only, or a mix of these uses with urban densities. These areas consist of a range of urban development densities with most locations having access to transit through the urban fixed route system or commuter service. Future growth within these areas typically utilize locations of currently planned developments or vacant infill parcels. Local plans generally seek to maintain the existing character of these areas.

New Areas are typically connected to the outer edge of an Established Area. These areas currently consist of vacant land adjacent to existing development and represent areas of future urban expansion. Future growth within these areas will most often consist of urban densities of residential and employment uses with a few select areas being residential only. Local plans identify these areas as special planning or specific plan areas, master plans, and planned development or planned growth areas. Currently, fixed route transit service is nonexistent in these areas. However, fixed route transit service would likely be provided to areas which are directly adjacent to current urban routing as part

of build-out. Quality pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure are typically required to be incorporated under the local jurisdictions' plans.

Rural Areas consist of areas outside existing and planned urban areas with development at low residential densities. These areas are predominantly residential and may contain a small commercial component. The densities at which these areas are developed do not reasonably allow for pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure and transit service is limited or nonexistent. Automobile travel is typically the transportation option.

Agricultural, Grazing, and Forestry Areas represent the remaining areas of the region not being planned for development at urban densities. These areas support agricultural, grazing, forestry, mining, recreational, and resource conservation type uses. Locations within these areas may be protected from future urban development under federal, state, and local plans or programs such as the Chico area "greenline", Williamson Act contracts, or conservation easements. Employment and residential uses are typically allowed within portions of this area but are most often secondary to agricultural, forestry, or other rural uses.

The updated land use forecasts for housing indicates most new housing, approximately 55%, will be allocated to the Established growth area, followed by the New growth area at approximately 30%, and the Urban Center and Corridor areas at 6%. Table 4-3 summarizes the housing in the RTP/SCS by Growth Area Type.

**Table 4-3**

**Summary of Housing Units Forecasted in RTP/SCS**

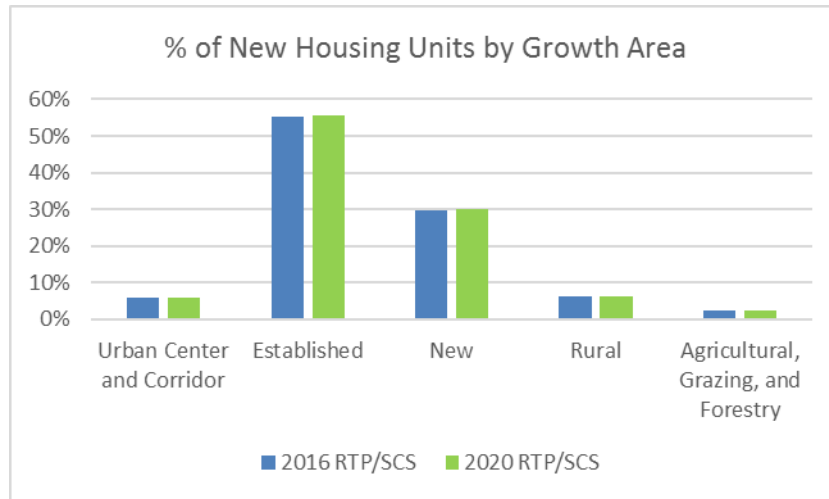
Growth Area Type	2018 Existing Housing Units	Camp Fire Net Housing*	New Housing Units**	Total 2040 Forecasted Housing Units
Urban Center and Corridor Areas	8,642	-192	1,060	9,510
Established Areas	75,966	-1,803	9,985	84,148
New Areas	437	0	5,398	5,835
Rural Areas	7,877	-121	1,155	8,911
Agricultural, Grazing, and Forestry Areas	6,431	-11	411	6,831
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>99,353</b>	<b>-2,127</b>	<b>18,009</b>	<b>115,235</b>

\*Camp Fire Net Housing assumes ~%85 rebuild of the estimated 14,490 units destroyed

\*\*New Housing Units excludes Camp Fire rebuild units

The percentage of new housing units being allocated to each growth area is unchanged in comparison to the 2016 SCS. Figure 4-3 below, illustrates the comparison of the two plans new housing unit allocations by growth area.

**Figure 4-3**



In line with the update land use housing forecasts, the employment forecasts indicate that most new jobs, approximately 60%, will be allocated to the Established growth area. However, the Urban Center and Corridor growth areas will see the second largest growth of employees with a 26% share. This is reflective of the existing infill opportunities available in these areas, which are primarily retail and office uses with secondary housing uses. Table 4-4 summarizes the employment in the RTP/SCS by Growth Area Type.

**Table 4-4**

**Summary of Employment Forecasted in RTP/SCS by Growth Area**

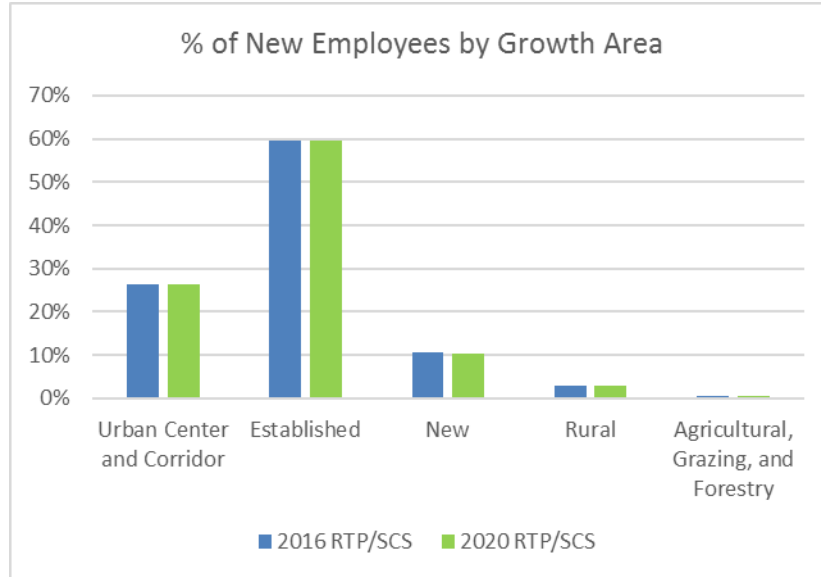
Growth Area Type	2018 Existing Employees	Camp Fire Net Employment*	New Employees**	Total 2040 Forecasted Employees
Urban Center and Corridor Areas	31,823	-433	2,629	34,019
Established Areas	45,763	-258	5,961	51,466
New Areas	1,329	0	1,045	2,374
Rural Areas	2,218	0	290	2,508
Agricultural, Grazing, and Forestry Areas	1,768	0	53	1,821
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>82,900</b>	<b>-691</b>	<b>9,979</b>	<b>92,188</b>

\*Camp Fire Net Employment assumes ~%85 recovery of the estimated 3,500 employment loss.

\*\*New Employees excludes Camp Fire recovery employment

The percentage of new employment being allocated to each growth area is unchanged in comparison to the 2016 SCS. Figure 4-4 below, illustrates the comparison of the two plans new employee allocations by growth area.

**Figure 4-4**



### *Housing*

Providing a variety of housing types, including apartments, townhouses, condominiums, and single-family homes, creates opportunities for the variety of people living in the region. For the purpose of preparing the forecasted development pattern of the SCS, BCAG has categorized housing into one of two categories:

- Single Family units are detached homes built at densities ranging anywhere from 13 units per acre in the urban areas to 1 unit per 160 acres in timber and agricultural areas.
- Multi-Family units are attached or detached homes built at densities ranging from 13 to 50 units per acre. Multi-family homes generally consist of duplexes, triplexes, lofts, apartments, condominiums, townhouses, row houses, etc.

A demographic study prepared by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, “Changing Demographics and Demand for Housing Types, January 2011”, indicates the evolving demographics and preferences held by specific demographic groups, or generational cohorts are driving a change in the housing stock. The study finds that on the demand side, the aging of the baby boom generation and the preferences of Generation Y (those born between 1978 and 1994) will have the greatest effect. These groups are expected to produce greater demand for apartments and small housing units (i.e. multi-family housing) into the future.

As with the two previous plans, the 2020 RTP/SCS estimates that there will be an increased demand for multi-family housing. Regionally, 32% of the new housing in the forecasted development pattern is multi-family and 68% is single family. This demonstrates a moderate shift in the housing mix from the current estimate of 26% multi-family and 74% single family.

By year 2040, it is estimated that 27% of housing will be multi-family and 73% single family. Minimal shifts are expected within each Growth Area, except for the New areas. The New Growth areas are expected to develop with a greater rate of multi-family housing (30%), a rate higher than the regional average.

**Table 4-5  
Summary of Housing Unit Mix by Growth Area**

Growth Area Type	2018 Housing Mix		2040 Housing Mix	
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Single Family	Multi-Family
Urban Center and Corridor Areas	41%	59%	40%	60%
Established Areas	73%	27%	72%	28%
New Areas	100%	0%	70%	30%
Rural Areas	100%	0%	100%	0%
Agricultural, Grazing, & Forestry Areas	97%	3%	98%	2%
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>27%</b>

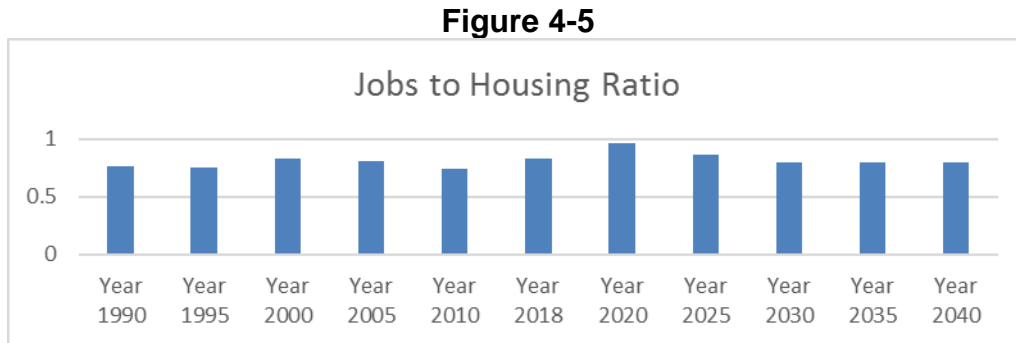
### *Jobs Housing Balance*

At the regional level, a jobs-housing balance can be discussed as a point in which the areas jobs and households are balanced so that neither jobs nor housing must be imported or exported. An imbalance in a region’s jobs-housing ratio can increase travel by causing workers to commute out of their residence area (in areas with few jobs) or workers commuting into a region (in areas with more jobs).

Traditionally, the Butte County region has been an area in which housing has been greater than employment, with residents commuting out of the area to find employment. With the last downturn in the economy this “imbalance” in housing and jobs had increased, peaking with a year 2011 jobs (non-farm) per housing unit of 0.72. In 2018, a rebound in the economy shows the areas ratio at 0.83 jobs (non-farm) per housing unit.

The 2020 RTP/SCS includes a forecasted decrease in the existing 2018 ratio of jobs to housing, as included in the Butte County Long-Term Regional Growth Forecasts 2018-2040. The long-term forecasts estimate that the region will return to historic levels of 0.80 jobs per housing unit by the year 2030 and continue this

trend into 2040. Figure 4-5 illustrates the historical, current, and forecasted jobs to housing ratios for the Butte County region.



*Accommodating the Regional Housing Need Allocation*

BCAG is required by state law to complete a Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP) to determine the region’s housing needs in four income categories - very low, low, moderate, and above moderate. This process occurs before each housing element cycle. (Note: SB 375 changed the update cycle from a four to eight-year period).

Prior to 2010, the RHNP was completed separately from the RTP. SB 375 now links the RHNP and RTP processes to better integrate housing, land use, and transportation planning. Integrating both processes helps ensure that the state’s housing goals are met.

In August 2019, BCAG released the 6<sup>th</sup> cycle Draft RHNP Methodology, which covers the 7 ½ year period from December 31, 2021 to June 15, 2030. The Final RHNP was approved by the BCAG Board on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (Appendix 6-4). The RHNP distributes the state determination of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, as provided by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The HCD determination includes a total of 15,506 housing units, with 8,803 of these being rebuilds from the Camp Fire. 3,365 (21.7%) units are considered low or very low income.

The SCS land use pattern accommodates the projected housing growth included in the Butte County Long-Term Regional Growth Forecasts (Appendix 6-2). The projected housing growth over the period of this plan is 18,009 new units and 12,363 Camp Fire rebuild units, well beyond the 6,703 new units and 8,803 rebuilds required in the RHNP. Combined (new and rebuild), 23% of the units are included in the projected SCS land use pattern as multi-family and meet the HCD density requirements for low and very income housing.

### *Transit Priority Project Area*

As established by SB 375, a Transit Priority Project (TPP) area is defined as a location within one-half mile of a major transit stop or an existing or planned high-quality transit corridor included in the RTP/SCS. A high-quality transit corridor is defined by the State as a corridor with fixed route bus service intervals no longer than 15 minutes during peak commute hours. Certain projects within a TPP area are eligible for CEQA streamlining benefits.

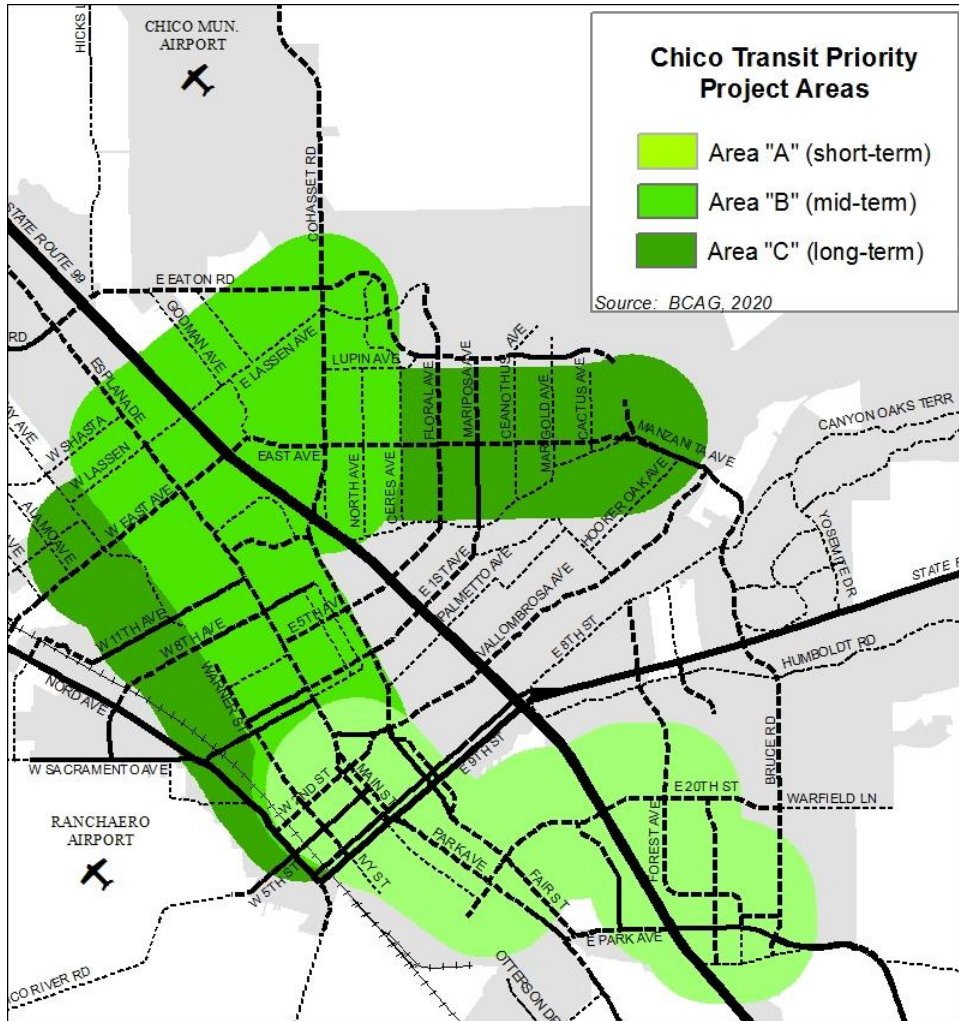
The RTP/SCS has identified three (3) Transit Priority Project Areas within the Chico service area (Figure 4-6) based on the current Butte County Transit and Non-Motorized Plan (see Chapter 8 – Non-Motorized Transportation). The three TPP areas are described below.

- Area “A” - covers the Downtown Chico Transit Center and the area surrounding B-Line Route 15S, as described in the Butte County Transit and Non-Motorized Plan (TNMP). The new route is included in the TNMP short term plan for this corridor.
- Area “B” – expands on area “A” and combines B-Line Routes 15S and 15N to form the Route “1” transit corridor. The new combined route is included in the TNMP mid-term plan for this corridor.
- Area “C” – further expands on areas “A” and “B” with the addition of two new transit corridors along East Avenue and Warner Street, pending increased development (or redevelopment) within the existing built-up areas. The new expanded corridors are included in the TNMP long-term plan.

New development within the Chico TPP areas consist mainly of infill and redevelopment opportunities. Mixed use, higher density, development, creating both employment and housing, is the primary allocation of new growth within the Chico TPP areas. Table 4-6 provides a summary of housing and employment forecasted to occur within the Chico TPP areas.



**Figure 4-6**



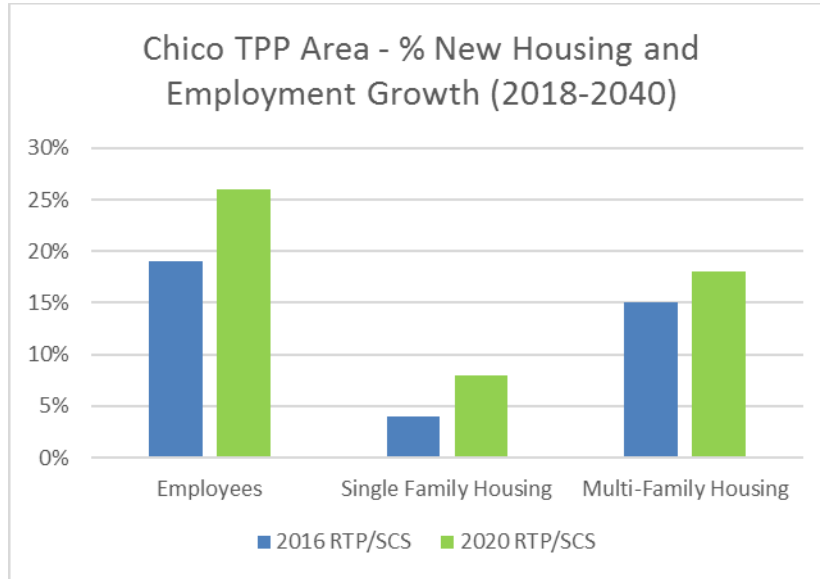
**Table 4-6**

**Summary of RTP/SCS New Employment and Housing within Chico TPP Areas**

Location	2018 - 2040 New Employees	2018 - 2040 New Housing	
		Single Family	Multi-Family
Within Chico TPP Areas	26%	8%	18%
Outside Chico TPP Areas	74%	92%	82%
Region Total	100%	100%	100%

The percentage of new single and multi-family housing units being allocated to the new Chico TPP Areas has increase in comparison to the 2016 SCS. In addition, the percentage of new employees has increased from 19% in the 2016 plan to 26% in the 2020 SCS. These changes are due to the increased share of regional housing allocated to the Chico area. Figure 4-7 below, illustrates the comparison of the Chico TPP Area included in the 2016 plan and the 2020 SCS in terms of new housing and employment.

**Figure 4-7**



### *Resource Areas and Farmlands Considerations*

In developing the RTP/SCS land use forecast and transportation system, BCAG considered the region’s latest information regarding resource areas and farmland, as required by Senate Bill 375. Appendix 6-5 includes a complete description of the datasets considered and the estimated impacts to farmlands, recreation and open space, habitat and natural resources, and flood control lands.

### *Regional Modeling*

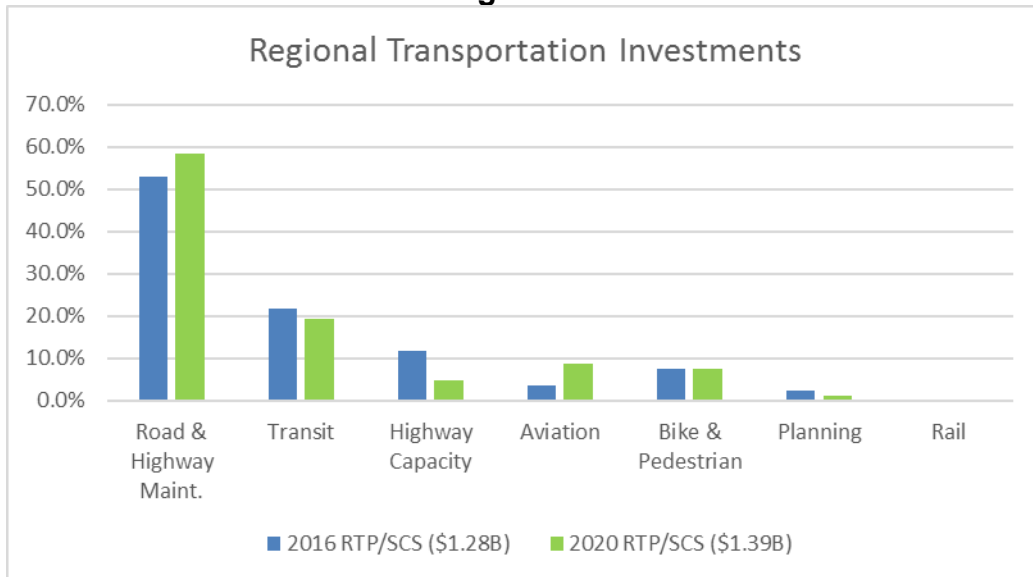
In preparing the regional growth forecasts and land use patterns for the SCS, BCAG utilized modeling tools developed with grant funding, obtained in 2010, from the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) and Caltrans. These tools have allowed BCAG to look at land use on a micro level and determine their relation to the transportation system. Various updates and improvements were made to the models for the 2020 SCS. Details regarding the tools and BCAG’s transportation forecasting for the RTP/SCS are available in Appendix 6-6.

## **Regional Transportation Investment and the SCS**

The SCS is based upon a financially constrained regional transportation system which services the transportation needs of the region by investing in highways, local streets and roads, transit, aviation, rail, and non-motorized transportation (bike and pedestrian). Each of these areas of investment are described in detail in Chapters 6 through 11. This forecasted transportation system, when combined with the land use forecasts in the RTP/SCS, contributes to meeting the region’s greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Included in Figure 4-8 is a summary of the regional transportation investments included in the 2016 RTP/SCS and the 2020 RTP/SCS. In comparison, the greatest decreases from the 2016 RTP/SCS to the 2020 RTP/SCS have been in Highway Capacity and Transit. Highway Capacity investments have decreased from 12% of the 2016 RTP/SCS investments to 4.8% of the 2020 RTP/SCS. This is reflective of the overall reduction of State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds and the completion of SR 70 Segment #1 widening. Transit has also decreased from 21.7% in the 2016 RTP/SCS to 19.2% in the current plan. This is reflective of decreased overall ridership associated with lower planned population totals as well as impacts from the Camp Fire. The greatest increases in funding percentages are within the Roadway & Highway Maintenance and Aviation categories. Roadway & Highway Maintenance funds have increased from 53% of the 2016 RTP/SCS investments to 58% of the 2020 RTP/SCS, mainly due to the introduction of Senate Bill 1 funding. Aviation increased from 3.5% of the 2016 RTP/SCS investments to 8.7% of the 2020 RTP/SCS with the awarding of Federal Aviation Administration grant funds to the region. Bike & Pedestrian, Planning, and Rail funds have been mostly unchanged.

**Figure 4-8**



## **SCS Planning Partners and Public Outreach**

In 2010, BCAG partnered with the cities of Biggs, Chico, Gridley, Oroville, the Town of Paradise, County of Butte and the Local Agency Formation Commission to develop the forecasted development pattern for the 2012 SCS. This partnership included the exchange of planning assumptions, review and comments regarding the information to be considered, and the development of land use scenarios. This partnership has continued with the 2020 SCS update. These partners were active in the review of the revised growth forecasts, new 6<sup>th</sup> cycle Regional Housing Needs Plan, and provided the latest available land use information.

Additional public and stakeholder participation in the development of the SCS and forecasted development pattern were implemented through the BCAG Public Participation Plan (PPP). The BCAG PPP was amended by the BCAG Board of Directors in March 2010 to implement the required outreach efforts contained in SB 375 and reaffirmed by the Board in 2015 and again in April 2019. The PPP provides direction for public involvement activities conducted by BCAG and contains the procedures and strategies used by BCAG. A complete summary of BCAG's SCS public involvement efforts are contained in Appendix 6-7.

## **Implementation Actions for the Sustainable Communities Strategy**

BCAG has prepared a list of key implementation actions which support the land use and transportation strategies included in the 2020 RTP/SCS and contribute to the passenger vehicle greenhouse gas reductions included in the plan. These actions will be reviewed by the California Air Resources Board (ARB) as part of the evaluation and approval of 2020 RTP/SCS. In addition, BCAG will review and adjust these actions with each new update cycle of the RTP/SCS. Table 4-7 includes the 14 key actions.

**Table 4-7  
2020 RTP/SCS Implementation Actions**

	SCS Strategy	
	Land Use	Transportation
<b>Implementation Actions</b>	Manage growth in a manner which allows the region to meet passenger vehicle greenhouse gas reduction targets while preserving farmland and natural resources, providing opportunities for affordable housing, by increasing mixed use development and development in areas with existing infrastructure, increasing housing and jobs near transit, and providing local housing for the local workforce.	Serve the transportation needs of the region in a manner which allows the region to meet passenger vehicle greenhouse gas reduction targets through improved and expanded transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and enhanced linkages between travel modes, while maintaining the existing road network and minimizing the addition of general purpose road lanes.
Manage the California Department of Housing and Community Development - Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grant funds for the purpose of providing financial and technical assistance to member agencies land use planning efforts which are focused on increasing housing production in the region that is consistent the the 2020 RTP/SCS.	✓	
Develop a Regional Housing Needs Plan which is consistent with the 2020 RTP/SCS and in a manner which better positions member agencies to accelerate infill and affordable housing development.	✓	
Prepare a Post Camp Fire Regional Population and Transportation Study to address the immediate need for updated population, housing, employment, and travel information for the Butte County region, along with estimates of future travel, land use, and housing associated with the redistribution of population.	✓	✓
Develop guidelines for implementation of SB 743 in Butte County for the purpose of assisting member agencies and CEQA lead agencies in transitioning to vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the preferred transportation analysis metric required under SB 743.	✓	✓
Develop a Regional General Permit (RGP) and In-Lieu Fee instrument for the purpose of streamlining future development projects included in the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) & Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) which supports Senate Bill (SB) 1 – The Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017.	✓	✓
Coordinate the update of planning tools (i.e., regional planning datasets, land use allocation model, and travel demand model) and provide to member agencies for the purpose informing and updating local land use and transportation plans.	✓	✓
Provide technical assistance to applicants of Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program funds for the purpose of constructing affordable housing and supportive multi-modal transportation projects which are consistent with the land use and transportation strategies included in the 2020 RTP/SCS.	✓	✓
Coordinate local approvals, final permitting, and begin implementation of the Butte Regional Conservation Plan.	✓	✓
Develop a vision plan for extending daily passenger rail service from Sacramento to Oroville and Marysville, including identification of the necessary improvements to rail depot stations in Oroville and Marysville.		✓
Analyze routing and timing plans, operating and capital costs, fare structure, park and ride opportunities in disadvantaged communities, number and type of buses required, and develop a marketing plan for providing commuter bus service between the cities of Chico and Sacramento.		✓
Update the Regional Long-Range Transit and Non-motorized as a component of the Post-Camp Fire Study for the purpose of maximizing future transit usage following the Camp Fire.		✓
Secure and administer regional Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funds for the purpose of provide operating and capital assistance to Butte Regional Transit to reduce greenhouse gas emission and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities.		✓
Pursue funds through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) for the purpose of expanding and improving transit and rail service in the region and creating connections to the high-speed rail system.		✓
Prepare the Butte Regional Transit Routing Study to examine the current fixed route system to identify improvements to routing headways, bus stop locations and other changes that will make fixed route service more attractive to non-users. The goal of the study will be to increase ridership and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The study will be coordinated with member agencies, social service agencies, non-profit organizations, and the public.		✓