

Project Description

Regional Transportation Plan

The proposed project is the Butte County 2024 RTP-SCS, which updates BCAG's previous 2020 RTP adopted in December 2020. BCAG, as both the federally-designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and the State-designated regional transportation planning agency (RTPA) for Butte County, is required by both federal and State law to prepare a long-range (at least 20-year) transportation planning document known as a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP is an action-oriented document used to achieve a coordinated and balanced regional transportation system.

Sustainable Communities Strategy

BCAG has the responsibility to prepare a SCS as part of the RTP, pursuant to the requirements of California Senate Bill 375 as adopted in 2008. The SCS sets forth a forecasted development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network and other transportation measures and policies, is intended to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from passenger vehicles and light trucks to achieve the regional GHG reduction targets set by the California Air Resources Board (ARB). In 2010, the California ARB set GHG reduction 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. The reduction targets were re-evaluated and approved by the California ARB in 2018. 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. BCAG's 2020 RTP-SCS demonstrated a 14% reduction in per capita GHG emissions for the year 2020 and an 8% reduction for 2035. These targets apply to the BCAG region as a whole for all on-road light-duty trucks and passenger vehicles emissions, and not to individual cities or sub-regions. BCAG is required to prepare a SCS that demonstrates how GHG reduction targets will be met through integrated land use, housing, and transportation planning. Thus, the RTP-SCS will address both the transportation component of the RTP, as well as the land use component of the SCS.

SB 375 specifically states that local governments retain their autonomy to plan local General Plan policies and land uses. The RTP-SCS rather is intended to provide a regional policy foundation that local governments may build upon, if they so choose. The RTP-SCS does not propose to change any land use and zoning designations; rather, the land use scenario envisioned by the RTP-SCS is based on and would be consistent with the existing local General Plan policies and land use designations as specified by the local agencies. As such, the RTP-SCS includes and accommodates the quantitative growth projections for the region based on the buildout of the local General Plans. SB 375 also requires that the RTP-SCS's forecasted development pattern for the region be consistent with the eight-year regional housing needs as allocated to member jurisdictions through the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process under State housing law.

2024 RTP-SCS Update

Under both federal and State law, BCAG must update its RTP every four years. The 2024 RTP-SCS is the long-range planning, policy, action, and financial document for the Butte County Region. The RTP-SCS covers a 20-year period from 2024 to 2045 and is an update of the 2020 RTP-SCS. The RTP-SCS identifies the region's transportation needs and issues and sets forth actions, programs, and projects to address those needs and issues. The RTP-SCS adopts policies, sets goals, and identifies financial resources to encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of a regional intermodal transportation system that would serve the mobility needs of goods and people. As described above, BCAG does not propose any land use changes, but rather the land use patterns envisioned by the RTP-SCS are based on the General Plan land use and zoning designations of the local agencies (the five incorporated cities and the county). The RTP-SCS would be consistent with the land use and zoning designations.

The 2024 RTP-SCS reflects changes in legislative requirements, local land use policies, and resource constraints since the most recent RTP was adopted on December 10, 2020. The 2024 update to the RTP-SCS is focused on implementation of the 2016 RTP, with minor updates to ensure consistency with federal, state and local planning requirements. The most notable changes that impact this RTP update include:

- Update to the Regional Transportation Guidelines for MPOs by the California Transportation Commission.
- Consistency with the goals of the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) built from the Governor's Executive Orders (EO) EO N-19-19 and N-79-20.
- California's adoption of federal performance measures and targets as required under the FAST Act transportation bill and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).
- Guidelines from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research for SB 743 (Steinberg, 2013);
- New funding for transportation projects through California's recently approved Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 (SB 1) for the next ten years;
- Minor updates to transportation projects and land use development (specifically focused on growth that has taken place since the last RTP); and
- Addition of components to the RTP to address freight and alternative fuel vehicles, including electric vehicles and autonomous vehicles.
- Increase in funding from the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program