



BUTTE UTILITY-SCALE SOLAR GUIDE VISION STATEMENT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VISION STATEMENT

Through community, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors meetings, the County crafted the following vision statement, which reflects a shared community aspiration for Butte County's renewable energy future:

Butte County is a place for clean, abundant, and renewable energy supported by technological innovation. Energy generated within the county contributes to economic development, environmental protection, reduced dependence on fossil fuels, and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Butte County's economy is sustained and promoted through the use of the Solar Energy Overlay. Locally-produced clean energy also supports an affordable and reliable power network for local residences, businesses and agricultural operations as well as throughout the state. Utility-scale solar facility development complements the County's scenic qualities, avoids impacts to agricultural resources, and is sited and designed in harmony with Butte County's communities, residential neighborhoods, and cities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Developed with community and decision-maker input, the following principles support the County's vision statement on renewable energy and will guide utility-scale solar development in Butte County.

Agriculture

Ensure that utility-scale solar facilities support and strengthen agriculture in Butte County. Explore methods to locate facilities in a manner that will complement agriculture.

Biological Resources

Locate utility-scale facilities away from sensitive habitat for special-status plant and animal species.

Scenic Quality

Design and locate new utility-scale solar facilities to protect the unique visual and scenic character of Butte County.

Water Resources

Ensure that new utility-scale solar facilities do not have a negative impact on Butte County's invaluable water resources, through effects on water supply, water quality, or groundwater recharge.

Economic Development

Generate new jobs and revenues by attracting new businesses that design, manufacture, install, and decommission solar facilities and that desire access to an abundant supply of local renewable energy.

Property Owner Coordination

Coordinate with property owners to assist them in the application and review process. Involve adjacent property owners to ensure that they are not negatively impacted by new solar facilities.

Local Preferences

Engage local communities and neighborhoods in decision-making for new utility-scale solar facility applications.

Broadly Shared Benefits

Promote a clean energy future that benefits the citizens of Butte County by diversifying the County's energy sources and setting the County on a path towards future energy independence and cost savings.

Utilities Coordination

Incorporate utility planning and facilities into the creation of the Utility-Scale Solar Guide.

Impact Assessment

Identify and appropriately address potential environmental impacts before approving new solar facilities. Consider slope stability and geotechnical hazards when considering impacts to adjacent properties. Consider impacts throughout the lifespan of the facility, including its decommissioning and removal.

Residential Neighborhoods

Ensure that the location, design, and operation of new utility-scale solar facilities maintain property values and minimize negative impacts to residential neighborhoods and properties.

Technological Requirements

Consider the technological and economic requirements of energy providers in the development of design guidelines.

Stakeholder Cooperation

Build partnerships between cities, utilities, businesses, and residents in both urban and rural areas to plan for a shared clean and reliable energy future.

Land Use Planning

Provide consistency with the Butte County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Climate Action Plan.