**SPONSOR:** Platform Committee

**PRESENTER:** Steve Breedlove, Butte County, 530-774-8377, srbreedlove@gmail.com

**SUBJECT: Rewrite Urban Land Use as “Land Use”**

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:** Our Land Use Plank is pretty good, but overemphasized urban planning. Land Use is policy that mediates all economic activity and should reflect that. Most of the planks on the specifics in urban design were combined under New Urbanism. A right to housing and concepts of housing justice were incorporated or strengthened. It was organized to be more coherent, as general principles, urban and rural principles, rather than a group of points. It expanded on rural areas and includes principles of permaculture design as overarching principles of organizing society on the land and makes explicit a program of transition to a post carbon geography.

**PROPOSAL:**

Proposal: Rename "Urban Land Use" as "Land Use" and address issues specific to both rural and urban land use patterns and how they interact. Make a right to land explicit.   
  
KV: GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY: democratize decision making; SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY: provide for everyone's basic needs, creating equity in housing and access to public infrastructure; ECOLOGICAL WISDOM: address climate change, pollution and metabolilc rift of capitalist markets which mediate production and consumption geographically; DECENTRALIZATION: implicit goal in financing and administration, provide for variation in how problems are addressed; COMMUNITY-BASED ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE: rebuild vibrant economies that meet human and nonhuman needs based in a localized and equitable system of exchange; RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY: permit the growth of regional cultures through the organic development of regional economies built around the natural bounty of regional ecologies

Title: Land Use

Justification:

The way we build human habitats reflects our values and order our material lives through networks of production and consumption. Currently, our human habitats have been designed to be energy and resource intensive. Moreover, rural and urban economies exist within a global framework independent of geographic context. Further, cities and rural areas have different needs and purposes and there exists (as described by, for example, Liebig and Marx) a metabolic rift in which cities extract resources and fertility from its periphery and do not return nutrients. Due to fossil energy depletion and climate change, we need to rapidly transition to a new way of organizing human settlements. A truly sustainable society will be modeled on ecosystems, cycling nutrients locally and operating within the rainfall water budget of the region. The Green Party of California proposes the following:

1. Develop general land use policies and fund projects that:

1. Implement a “zone” system for directing regional land use policy, providing a smooth and productive edge between human habitats and wild lands and seeking to integrate the production of basic needs into a human living spaces: 1) Intensive food production and social spaces and dwelling units; 2) wildland-urban interface, intensive agroforestry and silvopasture systems, and highly managed recreational lands, 3) broad acre productive systems more intensively managed; 4) extensive, low-impact use and harvesting of renewable resources, emphasizing ecosystem integrity; 5) wild spaces for biodiversity preservation and academic and spiritual learning.
2. Adhere broadly to the principles articulated in the Charter for the Congress of New Urbanism and the Transition Towns Movement (<https://www.cnu.org/who-we-are/charter-new-urbanism> & <https://transitionnetwork.org/about-the-movement/what-is-transition/principles-2/>), which incorporate pedestrian-scale design into human habitats.
3. Mandate and fund energy efficiency in our building stock and implement the “passivhaus” principles as much as financially feasible in all new construction (<http://www.passivehouse.com/02_informations/02_passive-house-requirements/02_passive-house-requirements.htm>).
4. Implement democratic planning that emphasizes subsidiarity, encourages the evolution of bioregional cultures and identities, and prevents displacement of peoples and gentrification.
5. Reduce, with the aim to eliminate, land speculation and the outsized influence of real estate developers in county and city bureaucracies.
6. Invest in historically underserved and marginalized communities to build democratic economies primarily based in the local production and consumption of goods and services.
7. Reduce the geographic distance between energy flows of production and consumption (metabolic rift), aiming for regional self-sufficiency in meeting basic needs (i.e. Housing, food, water) while developing bioregionally-appropriate agriculture, manufacturing and services sectors which produce income through trade.
8. Halt and reverse urban sprawl, ensuring degraded ecosystems and agricultural lands are restored as urbanization withdraws.
9. Declare land as a commons, to which all people have a right, and implement democratic structures to decentralize land management to the county, city or unincorporated village except for broad directives.
10. Emphasize renewable resources, harvested sustainably,+ as the primary source of communal wealth, and leverage all investment into the restoration, maintenance and productive capacities of those ecosystems.
11. Incorporate more rigorous coursework in regional ecology into compulsory schooling, deemphasizing Western scientism to open intellectual space for indigenous “ways of knowing,” and using service learning projects to restore habitat and instill a common, place-based identity.

2. Land use planning in rural areas will:

1. Integrate concepts of urban land use in rural villages, towns and other clustered settlements.
2. Implement bioregional plans for developing the ecological capacities for sustainably meeting basic needs and developing regionally-appropriate agricultural commodities and industries
3. Eliminate industrial extraction and pollution through limiting use of destructive technologies and developing alternative appropriate methods for harvesting renewable resources, such as timber, while maintaining overall ecosystem health.
4. Provide rural communities access, financial resources and management authority over timberlands proximate to human use zones to develop local commodity production and provide for fuel reduction to protect from wildfire
5. Decentralize distribution and logistics infrastructure as appropriate and network these economic centers into the regional and continental economies.
6. Collectivize and democratize commodity processing facilities (e.g. hulling, drying, packing) and distribution infrastructure, eliminating corporate hegemony over farmers and loggers.
7. Develop decentralized electric and telecommunications capacities for rural communities to reduce O&M costs and provide for community autonomy.
8. Redistribute most public lands to rural communities which will manage them, prioritizing indigenous land claims and opportunities to provide material reparations to marginalized and excluded communities.

3. Urban Land Use will transition away from the Robert Moses Model of segregationist and automobile-oriented urban sprawl toward the New Urbanist model by:

1. Using the ecological footprint model, among others, to help communities assess the burden they place on their local, regional, and global ecologies and develop plans to rectify.
2. Mandate higher-density mixed use communities and urban infill development, using land currently dedicated to parking, as well as redeveloping dilapidated building stock.
3. Transition suburbs into nodal regional cities according to these principles, reclaiming sprawl for agroecological systems and habitat restoration.
4. Collectivize and decentralize institutional control of all critical infrastructure to include electricity, water and telecommunication.
5. Implement an emergency ecological restoration jobs program to depave the urban environment, restore degraded ecosystems, bioremediate brown sites, open space for urban agriculture, improve storm and waste water management and provide recreational spaces and animal habitats (Also see Water, Wildlife and Food and Fiber Systems planks).
6. Require cities identify and develop programs for tenant farmer leases on underutilized lands, utility easements and other unused edges of the urban environment.
7. Mandate and implement regional plans for managing liquid and solid wastes (Also see Water plank).
8. Fund urban infrastructure using the Land Value Tax model, Proposition 13 reform and other means of shifting the burden from the landless to the landlord class.
9. Declare housing a human right and principal function of government, mandate emergency and transitional housing for the homeless, and provide, in building codes, for owner-built housing if it remains owner-occupied.
10. Protect and expand the amount of affordable housing and housing democracy through Land Trusts, limited equity housing, co-housing projects and tenant unions.