

Stakeholder Engagement

This Plan and its recommendations were shaped according to public feedback throughout the Plan process. This chapter describes an overview of the stakeholder engagement process and an overview of each activity conducted. Additional details and documentation of engagement efforts are available in Appendix B

The public was engaged with the project using multiple methods:

- ◆ A well-attended, in-person community workshop during the existing conditions analysis phase at Chico City Hall, with 97 people signing in
- ◆ An online interactive mapping tool, which received over 900 public comments
- ◆ The CATTAC, an existing committee of community members that supports Chico's active transportation community
- ◆ A public comment form on the project website, where community members could provide specific comments about active transportation in Chico
- ◆ Coverage of the project by local news media
- ◆ A series of presentations to stakeholders

Community Workshop

AUGUST 31, 2022

The first community engagement event, an in-person community workshop, was held on August 31, 2022, at Chico City Hall from 5:00 to 7:00PM. The purpose of this workshop was to introduce the project and collect feedback from the attendees on challenges, barriers, and needs related to the transportation network. This workshop also provided project background and objectives, an overview of initial findings relating to existing conditions, and education around active transportation planning concepts.



Attendees reviewing the engagement boards and maps provided at the workshop.

During the workshop, the project team provided an overview of the Chico Active Transportation Plan project and goals and gave instructions for providing feedback as participants arrived to the drop-in style meeting. Feedback from the event was added to the data analyzed as part of the Existing Conditions chapter and used to establish a baseline for developing and analyzing improvement options for the Active Transportation Plan.

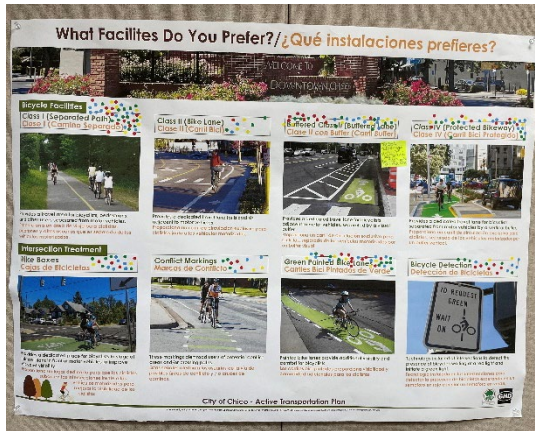
The workshop provided an opportunity to comment on six outreach boards or provide general comments on index cards. The six outreach boards formed the primary basis of the engagement. Two boards displayed images of different types of bicycle or pedestrian facilities. The following bicycle facilities and intersection treatments were displayed:

- ◆ Class I (Multi-Use Path)
- ◆ Class II (Bike Lane)
- ◆ Buffered Class II (Buffered Bike Lane)
- ◆ Class IV (Protected Bikeway)
- ◆ Bike boxes
- ◆ Conflict markings
- ◆ Green painted bike lanes
- ◆ Bicycle detection



The following pedestrian facilities and intersection treatments were displayed on a second board:

- ◆ Curb extensions
- ◆ Median refuge island
- ◆ High-visibility crosswalk
- ◆ Pedestrian hybrid beacon
- ◆ Yield to pedestrians sign
- ◆ Leading pedestrian interval
- ◆ Advanced stop bar
- ◆ Rectangular rapid flashing beacons



Bicycle facilities and intersection treatment board used at the workshop. Full size images are available in Appendix B

Workshop participants had the opportunity to place small dot stickers to note which types of facilities they preferred on each board. This feedback was used to understand which types of bicycle or pedestrian facilities and intersection treatments were preferred by the community members at the workshop.

Four additional boards were displayed, each with a detailed map of a different area of Chico, with the following focus areas:

- ◆ Downtown Chico and Western Chico
- ◆ Southern Chico
- ◆ Northern Chico
- ◆ Eastern Chico and Upper Bidwell Park

For these boards, workshop participants had the opportunity to place “sticky notes” or write

directly on the boards as a means of providing input. These comments were generally location-specific and related to walking and bicycling in Chico. Over 150 such comments were received. Project staff later compiled and digitized these comments.



Board depicting Downtown Chico used at the workshop. Full size images are available in Appendix B

Workshop participants could also provide general (non-location specific) written comments on index cards to submit to project staff.

Feedback from both engagement methods at the workshop centered around the following themes:

- ◆ Bicycle infrastructure and connectivity
- ◆ Pedestrian infrastructure and connectivity
- ◆ Pavement quality of existing bicycle or pedestrian facilities
- ◆ Safety or perceived safety of walking and bicycling

Engagement with the outreach boards was geographically diverse, but Downtown Chico and western portions of the city received the most comments. Overall, comments throughout Chico highlighted a desire for increased connectivity of the bicycle and pedestrian network.

Respondents highlighted areas where they observed portions of the existing bicycle and pedestrian network ending but had a desire for these facilities to be extended. This included gaps in the Bikeway 99 network as well as places where existing Class II facilities transitioned to Class III or ended altogether. Responses about the pedestrian network



followed a similar theme. Respondents especially highlighted the need for more visible pedestrian crossings throughout Chico.

Many respondents highlighted concerns with perceived safety while walking and bicycling. These concerns about safety were especially focused on K-12 schools. Similarly, many respondents highlighted concerns about conflicts between motor vehicle traffic and people walking or bicycling. Concerns about these conflicts were most concentrated in the following areas:

- ◆ Traveling to or from California State University, Chico
- ◆ Students going to or from Chico High School and other area schools
- ◆ People walking or bicycling from the west side of Chico to the east (crossing SR 99)
- ◆ People walking or bicycling on/across SR 32

Additional responses expressed concerns about the quality of existing facilities. Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of pavement on bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Lower and Upper Bidwell Park. Similarly, some responses also expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of pavement on Class II bicycle facilities throughout Chico.

A more detailed summary of the workshop and feedback provided is available in Appendix B.

DECEMBER 7, 2022

The second community workshop was held on December 7, 2022, at Chico City Hall from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. The purpose of this workshop was to garner feedback from the community on the proposed bicycle and pedestrian facility recommendations. At the workshop, four quadrant maps representing four parts of the City of Chico were provided on tables, each with a detailed map of a different area of Chico with the following focus areas:

- ◆ Downtown Chico and Western Chico
- ◆ Southern Chico
- ◆ Northern Chico

◆ Eastern Chico and Upper Bidwell Park
 Workshop attendees were able to provide input on the proposed recommendations with “sticky notes,” pens, and markers. Additional boards were placed around the room to describe the types of improvements that could be seen on the quadrant maps. These boards were consistent with the boards shared at the first workshop.



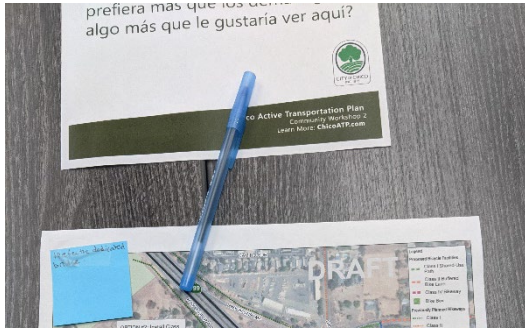
Comment board depicting the Avenues neighborhood

A map of existing and planned facilities and maps that specifically showed the entire city with both pedestrian and bicycle facility recommendations broken out were displayed on the walls. Flyers with workshop information and a QR code to access the online version of the interactive mapping tool were available around the room. Tables set up with a coloring activity for children were placed in the back of the room, though no children were present at this meeting. Instructions were placed on each table that asked the following questions:

- ◆ What do you think of these recommended improvements?
- ◆ What types of pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities do you prefer? (Refer to facility board for information)
- ◆ Is there anything you would like to see changed or added?



All prompts and informational boards were provided in both English and Spanish.



Small board showing alternative bikeway Option #2 for Eaton Road across SR 99 with Spanish language prompt



Participants engaging with workshop materials

Workshop attendees were geographically diverse. People from all four quadrants of the City attended the workshop and comments were provided on every map placed throughout the room. Project staff fielded many questions and received feedback on the recommendations.

Over 170 public comments were left in the form of handwritten “sticky notes” placed on workshop maps and boards as well as those submitted via an online map.

Feedback from both engagement methods centered around the following themes:

- ◆ Bicycle infrastructure improvements and accessibility
- ◆ Pedestrian infrastructure improvements and accessibility
- ◆ Maintenance concerns, including pavement condition of existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure

- ◆ Traffic calming and crossings, including safe routes to nearby schools and the university
- ◆ Personal safety concerns while walking and bicycling

Additional responses expressed concerns about existing bikeway design, including disapproval of existing bicycle lane widths that include gutter pans, as currently experienced by bicyclists riding in Class II bicycle lanes along East Avenue, noting they can feel too narrow and dangerous.

Several respondents commented where they agreed with bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure recommendations. One recommendation that received several comments in agreement was a proposed Class IV two-way protected bikeway along the Eaton Road overcrossing of SR 99, with many acknowledging that providing physical separation between bicyclists and motor vehicles would be a significant improvement. Some also noted that this alternative made sense financially.

Others noted where they may not agree with recommendations based on their experiences navigating specific neighborhoods and corridors, including siting of neighborhood traffic circles or selection of certain bicycle facility classifications along a particular roadway.

OCTOBER 19, 2023

The third and final workshop was held at City Hall from 5:00 to 7:00 PM and received comments on the Public Draft Plan. The final recommendations maps were placed around the room with printed copies of the Plan for people to review. Comments were generally supportive of the document with some making additional recommendations that were outside the scope of the Plan or could be implemented at a later time alongside other improvements.

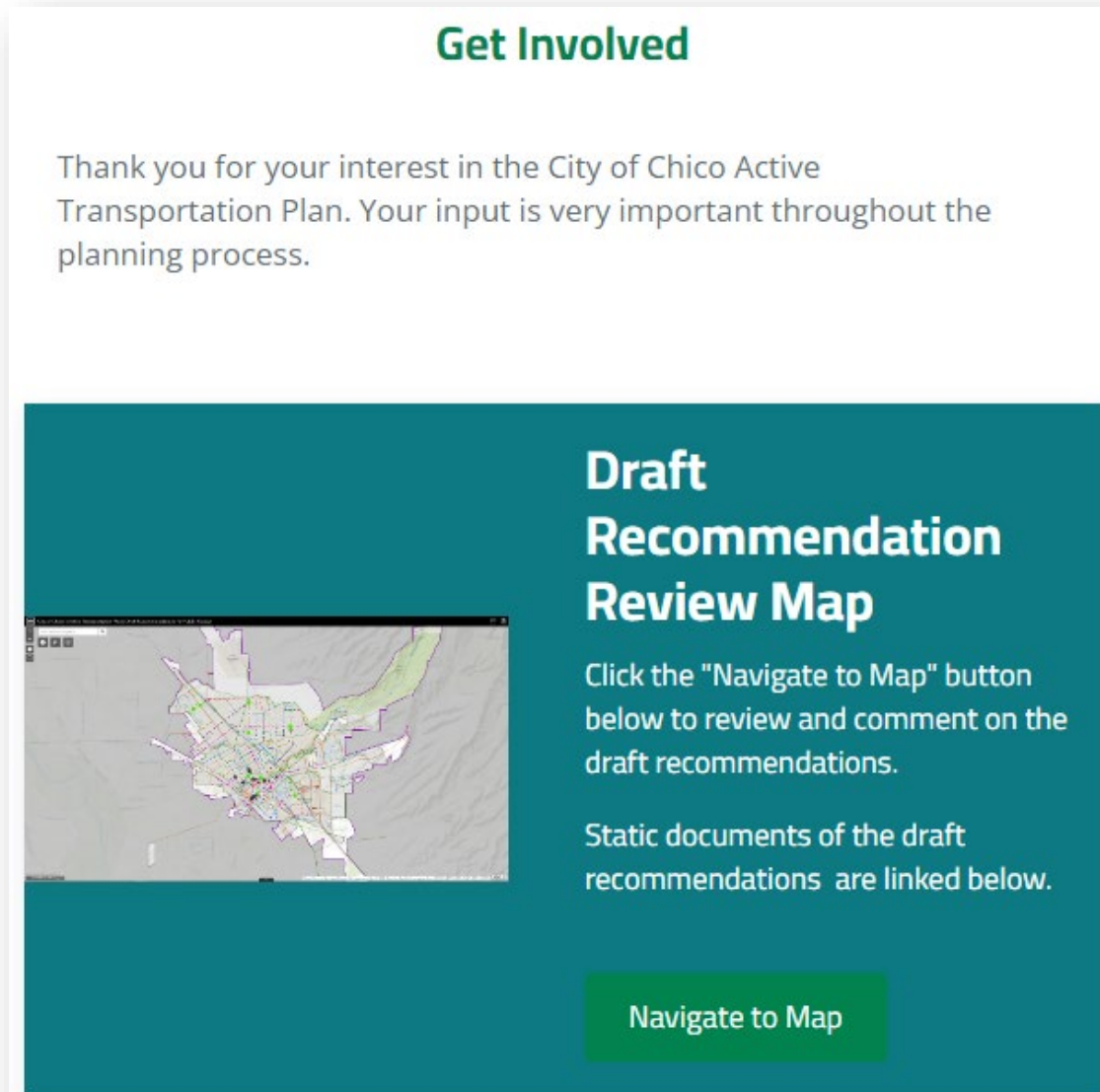
Appendix B contains a full overview of comments received at the workshops via the online map.



Website

A project website was developed, containing information about the planning process, active transportation topics, and engagement opportunities. The website included an interactive map for visitors to leave location-specific comments, described below, as well as

a project survey. The Draft Plan and recommendations were also shared on the project website. The website additionally contained a public comment form, where community members could provide general or specific comments related to their experiences with active transportation in Chico or the Draft Plan.



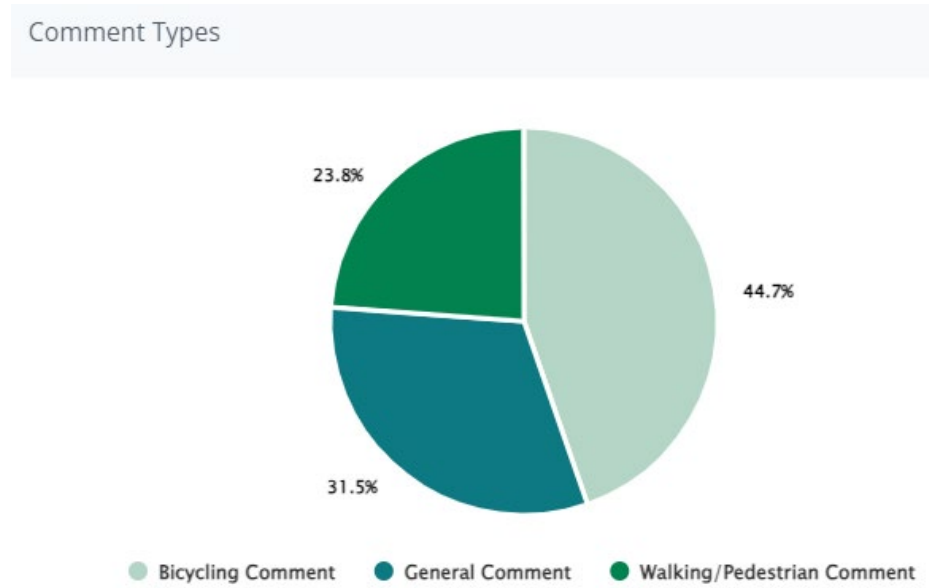
Screenshot from the "Get Involved" page on the project website where users were able to review draft recommendations on an interactive map



Online Mapping Tool

An interactive mapping tool was posted on the project website. This tool contained an interactive map of Chico and a tool to leave feedback on active transportation in specific areas of the City. The tool accepted input from July 2022 through September 2022.

Community members were encouraged to place digital ‘pins’ on the map in specific locations to add concerns. These ‘pins’ could be categorized as bicycle-related, pedestrian-related, or general comments. Respondents could also view and respond to pins by others. This included the ability to leave comments on pins added by others, respond to other comments, and vote on pins through a “like” or “dislike” feature.



Comments from engagement by category

Figure 26: Online Mapping Tool

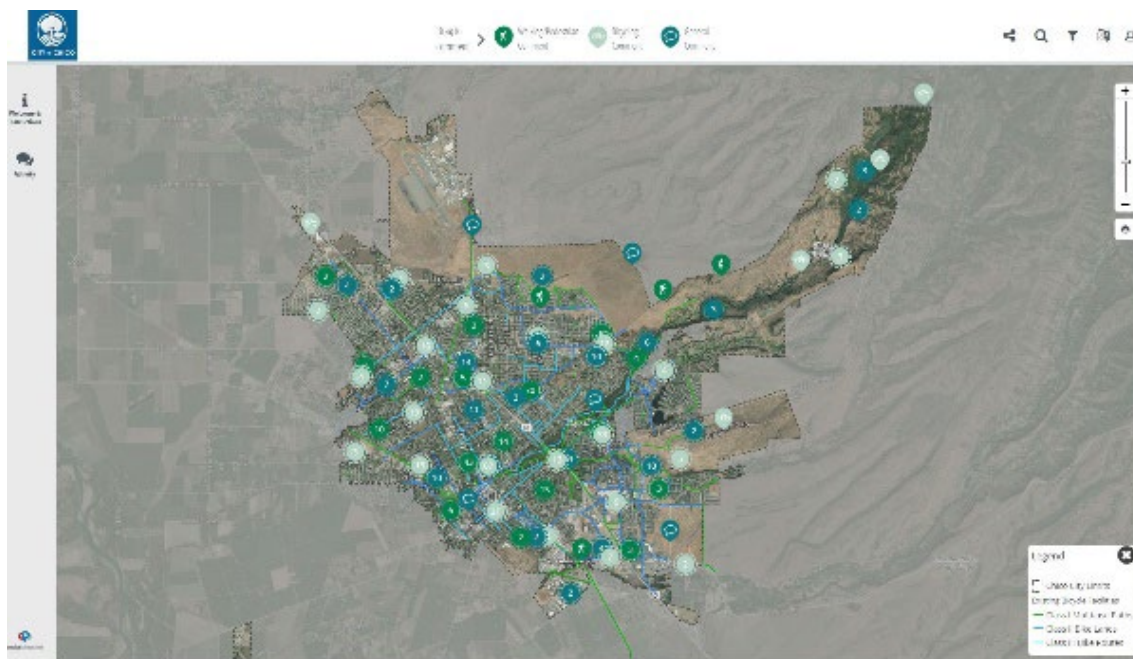
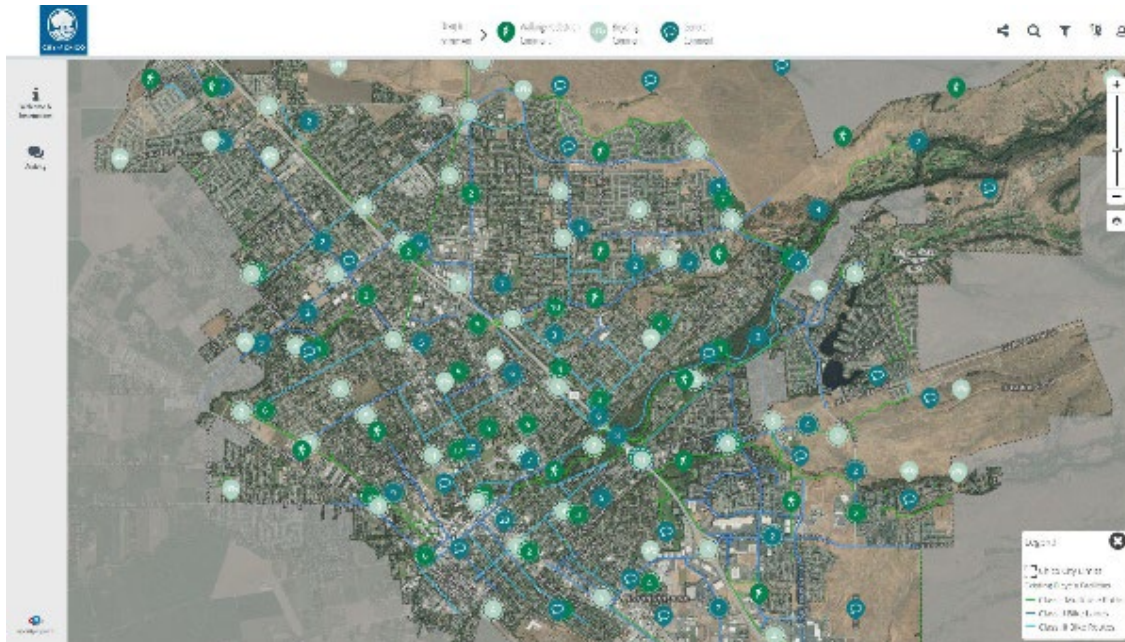


Figure 27: Online Mapping Tool Zoomed In



More precise locations of map comments as users zoomed in

Figure 28: Online Mapping Tool Comment



A bicycle-related pin with comments and likes



More than 1,000 comments were entered on the map by the community. Appendix B contains a full overview of responses received via the online interactive mapping tool.

All comments were reviewed during the recommendations development process to assist in developing responsive recommendations. Figure 29: Distribution of Comments Received depicts a distribution of comments received in the online tool. Comments included the following themes:

TRAILS

- ◆ Desire for additional parking at trailheads to protect nature by reducing motor vehicle access to Upper Bidwell Park
- ◆ Desire to continue Guardian Trail to Forest Ranch

AMENITIES & LANDSCAPING

- ◆ Interest in slowing speeding motor vehicle traffic with landscaped medians and art
- ◆ Need for additional safe, secure bicycle parking in Downtown
- ◆ Desire for speed feedback signs to deter speeding by motorists
- ◆ Ensuring that as few trees as possible are removed as part of infrastructure projects

BICYCLE CONNECTIONS & SEPARATION

- ◆ Concerns about narrow widths of existing bicycle facilities
- ◆ Desire for new connections between the existing bicycle facilities along the creek and the rail trail

- ◆ Request for bike lanes that connect to all schools, particularly Chico High School

CROSSING & INTERSECTIONS

- ◆ Difficulty crossing East 1st Avenue at Esplanade on foot or by bicycle due to high motor vehicle speeds
- ◆ Interest in new, safe east-west pedestrian connection(s) across SR-99
- ◆ Request for high visibility pedestrian crosswalks at numerous locations

MAINTENANCE

- ◆ Concerns about pavement condition of bicycle facilities
- ◆ Request for fresh striping on existing bicycle facilities where lines have faded over time
- ◆ Calls for maintenance of overgrown vegetation and collection of trash from public areas, like parks and trails

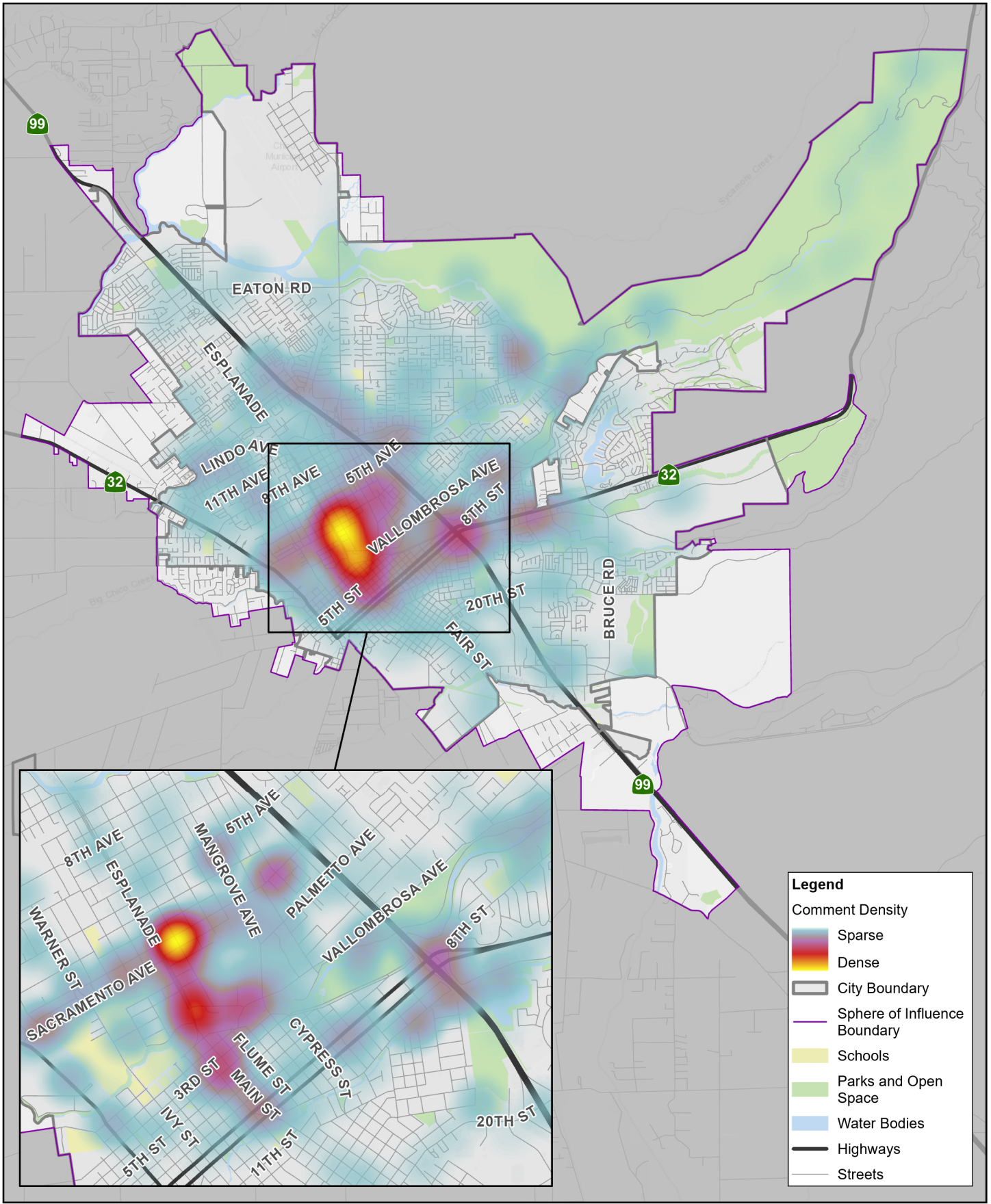
PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Making Downtown more inviting to pedestrians by rerouting cut-through traffic
- ◆ Completing pedestrian network where today sidewalk abruptly ends
- ◆ Desire to reduce conflict between pedestrians and bicyclists on sidewalks

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS

- ◆ Desire for longer pedestrian crossing times at traffic signals adjacent to schools
- ◆ Not enough crosswalks near schools to allow for safe access
- ◆ Request to properly map/document existence of Chico State Bicycle Path



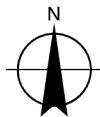
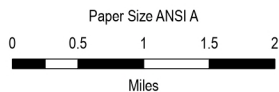


Legend

Comment Density

- Sparse
- Dense

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence Boundary
- Schools
- Parks and Open Space
- Water Bodies
- Highways
- Streets

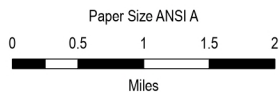
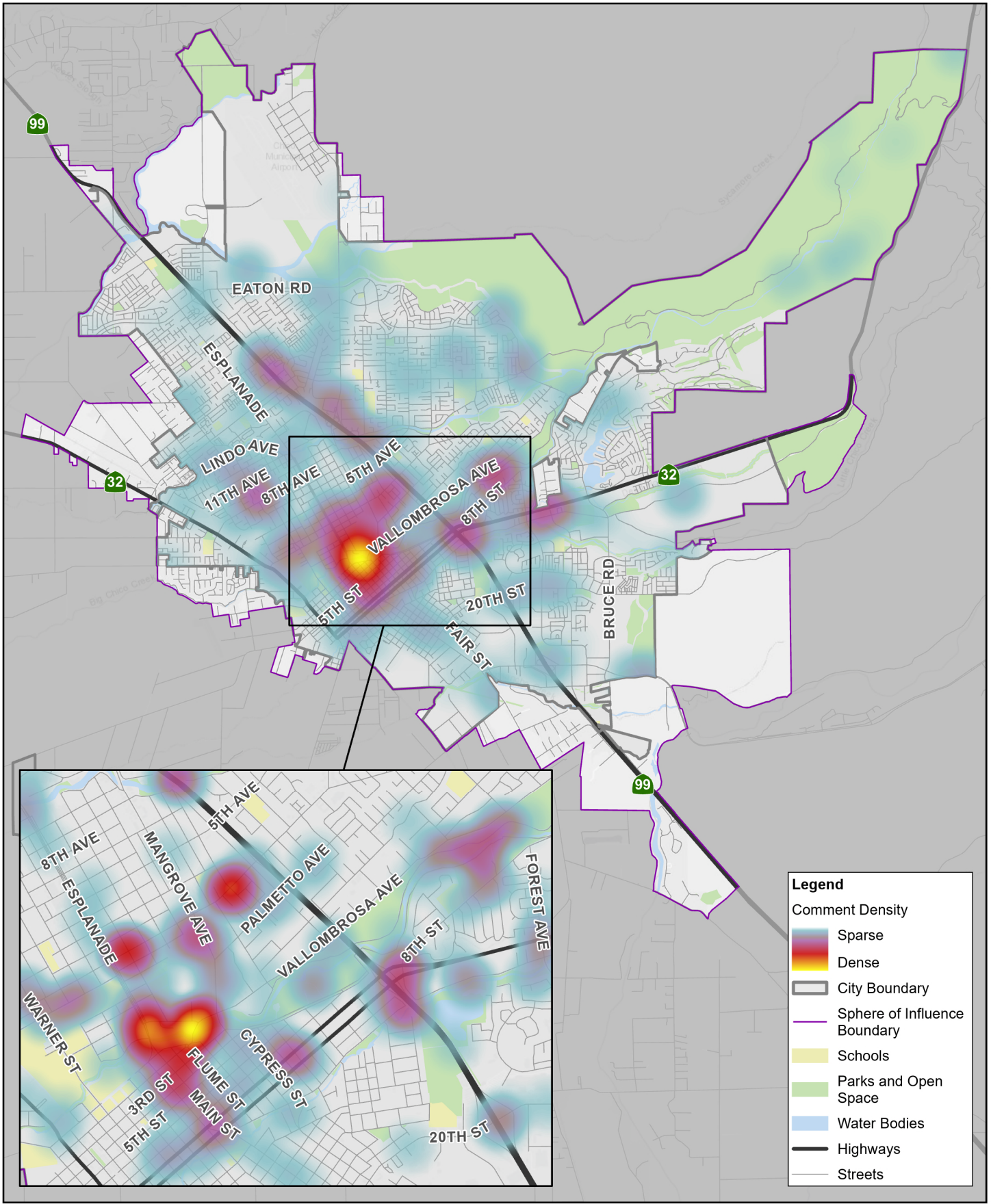


**CITY OF CHICO
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

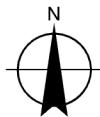
**DENSITY OF INTERACTIVE
PROJECT MAP COMMENTS - ALL
COMMENT CATEGORIES**

Project No. 12575135
Revision No. A
Date Dec 2023

FIGURE 29



Map Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
 Horizontal Datum: North American 1983
 Grid: NAD 1983 StatePlane California II FIPS 0402 Feet

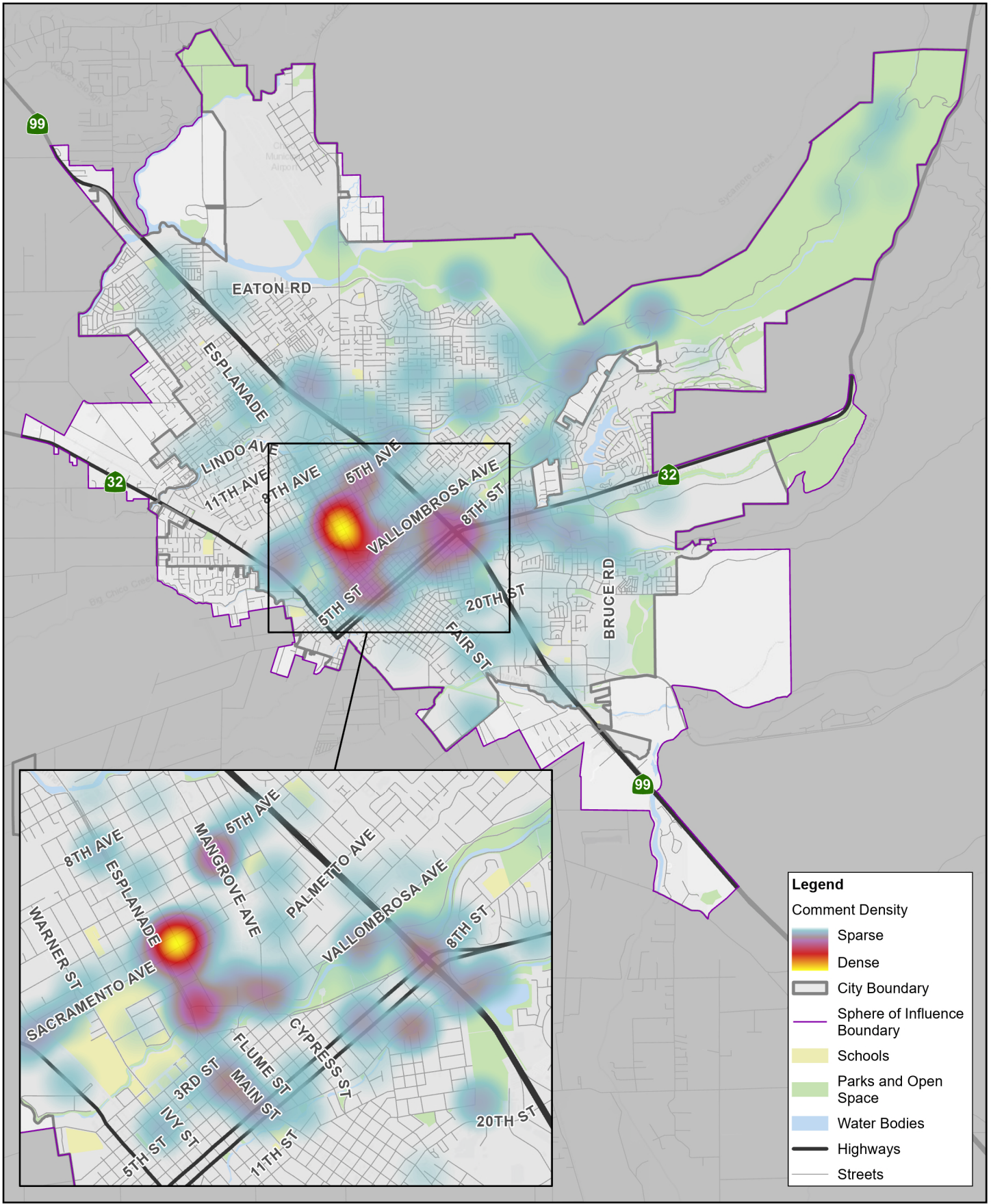


**CITY OF CHICO
 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

**DENSITY OF INTERACTIVE
 PROJECT MAP COMMENTS -
 BICYCLE COMMENTS**

Project No. 1257135
 Revision No. A
 Date Dec 2023

FIGURE 30



Legend

Comment Density

- Sparse
- Dense

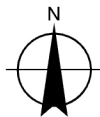
- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence Boundary
- Schools
- Parks and Open Space
- Water Bodies
- Highways
- Streets

Paper Size ANSI A

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Miles

Map Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Horizontal Datum: North American 1983
Grid: NAD 1983 StatePlane California II FIPS 0402 Feet

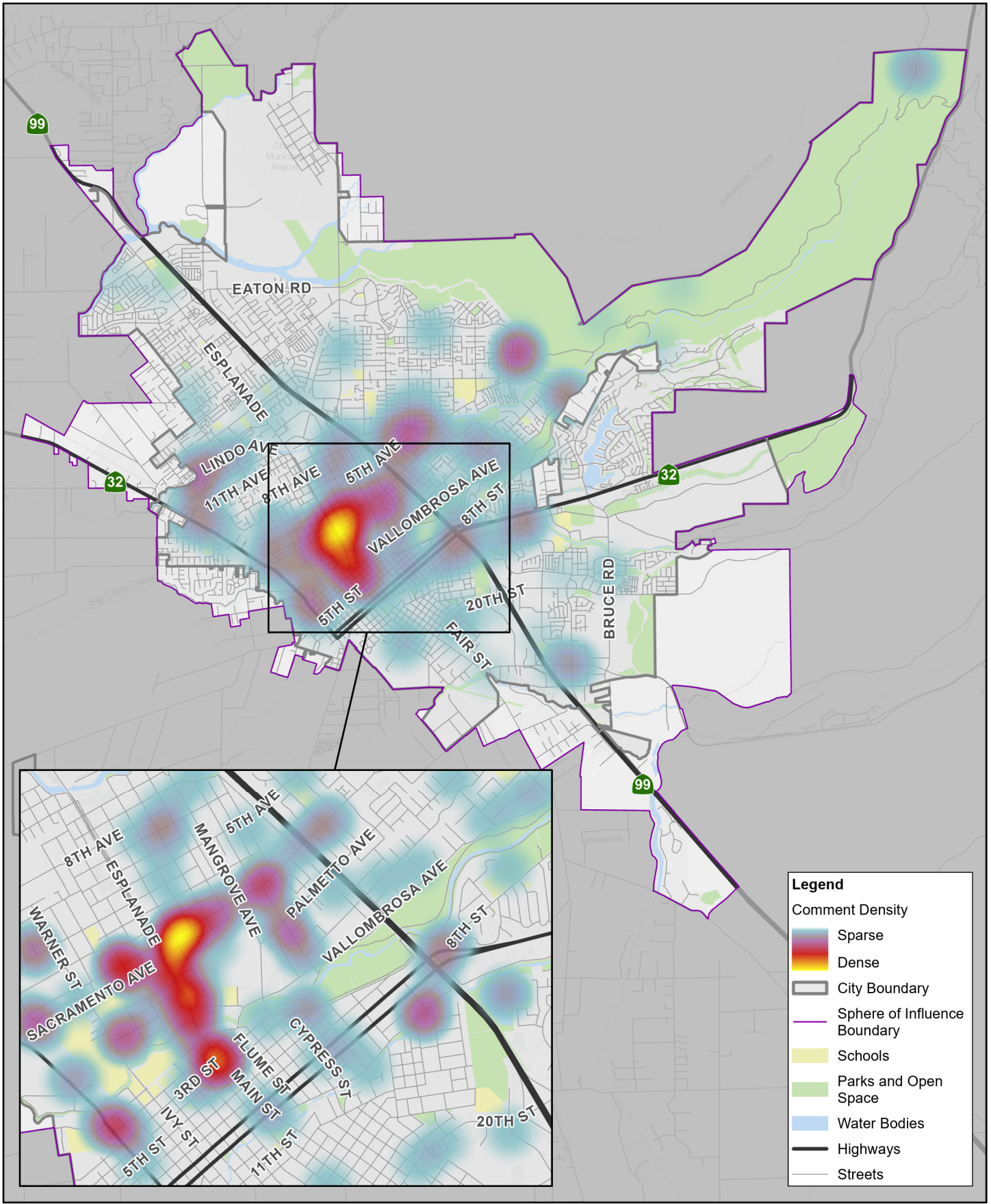


**CITY OF CHICO
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

**DENSITY OF INTERACTIVE
PROJECT MAP COMMENTS -
GENERAL COMMENTS**

Project No. 12575135
Revision No. A
Date Dec 2023

FIGURE 31

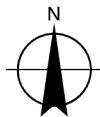
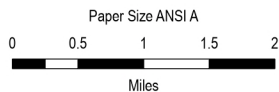


Legend

Comment Density

- Sparse
- Dense

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence Boundary
- Schools
- Parks and Open Space
- Water Bodies
- Highways
- Streets



**CITY OF CHICO
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

**DENSITY OF INTERACTIVE
PROJECT MAP COMMENTS -
WALKING/PEDESTRIAN COMMENTS**

Project No. 12575135
Revision No. A
Date Dec 2023

FIGURE 32

Online Survey

To gather community feedback for the Chico Active Transportation Plan, an online survey was posted on the Project website to understand the community's perspective about the current state of walking and bicycling in the City of Chico. The City circulated information about the survey on the City website and via social media, and the project team sent information on the survey to identified stakeholders on the project contact list via email. The survey was available from August 5 to September 9, 2022.

A total of 152 responses were received. Survey results included the following themes:

RESPONDENTS VALUE CHICO AMENITIES

Survey respondents cited most frequently Bidwell Park, Downtown, trees, parks, and community as their favorite things about living in Chico.

MOST BICYCLISTS DO NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE

While nearly 80 percent of respondents reported currently riding a bicycle in Chico, only 1/3 of those respondents reported feeling comfortable while doing so.

Looking at non-bicyclists, over half of respondents who do not currently ride a bicycle in Chico cited motorists driving too fast and a lack of dedicated bicycle lanes as their reasons for not bicycling.

DRIVERS DO NOT STOP FOR PEDESTRIANS

Most survey respondents did not agree that drivers stop and allow pedestrians to cross the street in Chico. Just under 27 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that drivers *do* stop.

CAREGIVERS ARE NOT COMFORTABLE WHEN THEIR CHILDREN BICYCLE

While 37.5 percent of respondents had children in their care who ride bicycles, of that group,

nearly 75 percent did not feel comfortable when children in their care rode bicycles.

Of the respondents with children in their care who did not ride bicycles in Chico, the most frequently cited reasons were a lack of dedicated bicycle lanes, motorists driving too fast, as well as a lack of interest from the child(ren).



Children bicycling to school

OVERGROWN VEGETATION CREATES MOBILITY CHALLENGES

Over 53 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that overgrown vegetation creates challenges for people walking or bicycling in Chico.

UNMET DEMAND TO WALK TO PARKS, BICYCLE TO DOWNTOWN

When asked which destinations they would walk to if they felt more comfortable walking or crossing the street in Chico, nearly 78 percent of respondents chose parks, the most-selected choice. When asked which destinations they would bicycle to if they felt more comfortable riding their bicycle in Chico, nearly 86 percent of respondents chose Downtown, the most-selected choice.

PRIORITIZE ENHANCED CROSSWALKS, IMPROVED BICYCLE FACILITIES ON STRESSFUL ROADS

When asked to prioritize pedestrian network improvements, respondents most frequently chose to address challenging crossings by implementing enhanced crosswalks. Respondents were also asked to prioritize improvements to the bicycle network and most frequently chose to improve and/or add bicycle facilities on roads that are stressful to bicyclists.



HIGH VISIBILITY MARKINGS, BICYCLE PATHS

When shown photo examples of roadway features and enhancements designed to improve safety and comfort, nearly 62 percent of respondents stated they would feel more comfortable crossing the street at challenging intersections if those intersections had high visibility markings. Similarly, when bicycling, 91 percent of respondents would feel most comfortable riding on a path that is completely separate from motor vehicle traffic.

IMPROVE BIKEWAY 99 FROM VALLOMBROSA AVENUE TO MANZANITA AVENUE

When given a list of options for how and where to improve Bikeway 99, a plurality of survey respondents wanted to improve the bikeway between Vallombrosa Avenue and Manzanita Avenue.

RESPONDENTS ARE MOSTLY WHITE, 30-64 YEARS OLD, WITHOUT YOUNG CHILDREN, WITH 10+ YEARS IN CHICO

Demographic questions were also collected to provide detail on who may have been reached by the survey and who chose to respond; the results can also indicate where gaps may exist in outreach and/or willingness to respond. Nearly 60 percent of respondents were between 30 and 64 years old with the largest group of respondents identifying as women and nearly 87 percent of respondents identifying as white. Just over nine percent selected 'prefer not to answer' while eight percent identified as Latino or Hispanic. Nearly 43 percent of respondents have lived in Chico for longer than 25 years, with almost 73 percent of respondents living in Chico ten years or more. About 62 percent of respondents have no children living at home while 77 percent have no older adults (over 65 years old) living at their home.

CATTAC

The City of Chico has an existing committee of local community members, known as the Chico Active Transportation Technical Advisory Committee. The CATTAC consists of local community members and staff from the City and makes recommendations to the City's Public Works Engineering Director. The mission of the CATTAC is as "an action-oriented committee that supports Chico's active transportation community. The intent of the CATTAC is to help guide the City's efforts in providing safe, effective, and accessible transportation options for citizens and visitors of the City of Chico."

The CATTAC were consulted and engaged throughout the project.

Stakeholder Engagement

Through early 2023, several presentations were provided to interested stakeholders. Amongst those groups were Enloe Medical Center, BCAG, and CUSD. All provided comments on the Plan.

Media Coverage

Several local news providers in Chico shared information with the community regarding the project. This coverage included written articles, television news segments, and radio segments. Coverage included the following, with further details in Appendix B:

- ◆ Television news segment of an interview with City staff, aired on KRCR on August 17, 2022
- ◆ Written article in the Chico Enterprise-Record on August 24, 2022, which shared community input opportunities and information about Community Workshop 1
- ◆ Television news segment regarding community input on the project, aired on KNVN Action News Now on August 31, 2022.

