



City of Chico

SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS REPORT



MAY 2013



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Downtown Chico Business Association

GRUB

Butte County Air Quality Management District

Butte County Association of Governments

California Water Service Company

Building & Development Services Department

Capital Projects Services Department

Finance Department

Fire Department

General Services Department

Housing & Neighborhood Services Department

Police Department



May 2013

Sustainability in Chico means maintaining a culture of stewardship to enhance our natural environment, economic interests, and quality of life for present and future generations.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On April 12, 2011, Chico’s City Council adopted an innovative and comprehensive General Plan. The new General Plan reflects the community’s commitment to building a sustainable future. Sustainability entails aligning the built environment and socioeconomic activities with nature’s constraints and opportunities. Central to this concept is meeting both present and future needs through a balance of three considerations: maintenance of a healthy and equitable society, protection of the environment, and ongoing prosperity of the local economy. These components are interdependent and equally important.

The General Plan calls for the development of indicators to gauge progress in advancing its sustainability-related policies and goals.¹ An indicator serves as a proxy, or representation, to gauge the status of a larger issue. The indicators included in this report have been selected because they are understandable, quantifiable, and valuable for generating community dialogue.

A starting place, or base year, has been established for each indicator to reflect the state of the indicator at a particular point in time. A base year is a point of reference to demonstrate movement toward or away from a goal over time.

To highlight recent trends and progress, one of the following ratings is applied to each indicator:

- Clear Progress
- Moderate Performance
- Improvement Area

This report is divided into elements addressing three subjects: **Natural Systems and Agriculture, Built Environment,** and **Socioeconomics**. Each element is further refined into sections. For 2012, two indicators show clear progress, seven show moderate performance, and four show need for improvement.

Clear Progress	Moderate Performance	Improvement Area
Ag & Local Food Production Community Participation	Air Quality Public Facilities & Services Housing Circulation Waste Reduction & Recycling Economic Development Arts & Culture	Bio Resources/Urban Forest Climate Change Open Space Public Safety

This report will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the Chico 2030 General Plan Annual Report, which considers and measures additional topics that are closely linked with community sustainability. The Indicators Report may help direct program development, and assist with developing Board and Commission work plans and departmental work programs.

¹ The General Plan directs using groundwater levels as an indicator. Butte County has an ongoing effort to comprehensively monitor groundwater levels, including data from Cal Water for the Chico area. The 5-6 page excerpted section from Butte County’s Groundwater Status Report regarding the state of Chico’s groundwater level monitoring are provided to Council and Commission annually under a separate cover.

NATURAL SYSTEMS & AGRICULTURE

Biological Resources/ Urban Forest

Goals

Protect and conserve sensitive species and habitats; Provide a healthy and robust urban forest

Background

Chico's distinct natural setting is home to a wide variety of plants and animals, a number of unique natural communities, and highly sensitive biological and wetland resources. Protecting and restoring native habitat is the most effective method for preserving natural diversity. The City recognizes known locations of sensitive, threatened, or endangered species and requires that they be protected consistent with state and federal guidelines. The General Plan limits urban expansion in areas with sensitive biological resources and calls for City participation in regional planning efforts to protect and preserve sensitive habitat.

In addition, Chico has a healthy urban forest that provides important aesthetic benefits, energy savings from its shade canopy, areas of refuge from summer temperatures, and foraging

and nesting locations for fauna. Chico's urban forest

creates a significant sense of pride and community identity. Since 1984, the City has been designated as a 'Tree City USA' by the National Arbor Day Foundation. The General Services Department maintains approximately 31,000 street trees and approximately 4,000 planting sites.

Indicator

Number of street trees planted versus the number of trees removed in the City's right-of-way.

Trend

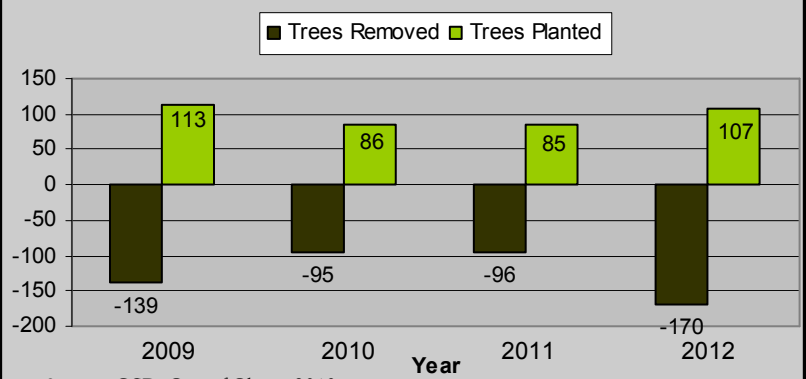
Chico's urban forest is aging, and there is a need to properly maintain and replenish it with new trees to retain the canopy's benefits. Over the past four years there were more trees removed from the City's right-of-way than planted. The Urban Forester is focusing resources and developing new programs to support a healthy urban forest.

Rating
Improvement
Area

Recent City & Community Actions

- An early Draft of the Butte Regional Conservation Plan was released in 2012. The Plan seeks to provide comprehensive species, wetlands, and ecosystem conservation and contribute to the recovery of endangered species in Butte County.
- The Urban Forester continued the City's Free Street Tree Planting Program to increase the number of new trees being planted.
- The City's street tree inventory and service request program continues to be updated, although some streets remain to be inventoried. Last year, City crews completed 671 requests averaging approximately 3 hours of labor per request.
- The main focus of Chico's Street Tree program is traffic and school zone safety, as well as formative pruning on young trees. Formative pruning improves the structure of trees to reduce future maintenance costs.
- 2014 will be the City's 30th year as a designated 'Tree City USA' by the National Arbor Day Foundation.
- The BPPC is due to adopt the Chico Urban Forest Management Plan in May 2013, which will direct management decisions to protect and expand Chico's urban forest.

Number of Street Trees Planted vs. Removed



Web Links & Other Resources

- City of Chico Street Tree Program - www.ci.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/street_trees.asp
- California Department of Fish & Wildlife - www.dfg.ca.gov/
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Sacramento) - www.fws.gov/sacramento/

Goals

Improve year-round air quality; Meet state and federal air quality standards

Background

Chico is located in the Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin and air quality is locally regulated by the Butte County Air Quality Management District (District). Due to physiographical, meteorological, and human activities, the air quality in Chico occasionally does not meet all state and federal air quality standards. Wood burning has been identified as a major source of PM2.5 pollution in the area during the winter. During summer months, the City has experienced non-attainment levels of ozone pollution, though most of this pollution travels to the area from urban areas to the south and southwest. Poor air quality contributes to health problems such as asthma, lung disease, and heart disease. Air quality monitoring is performed by the District.

Indicator

The City measures its progress in this area by tracking the number of days annually that the Chico air quality monitoring station exceeds federal ambient standards for ozone or PM2.5.

Trend

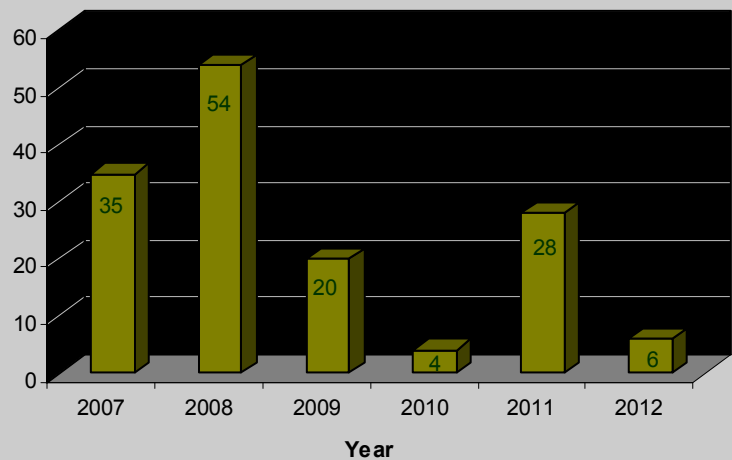
It can be difficult to identify trends for air quality measurements because of the many factors that effect them, including meteorological conditions and catastrophic events. As an example, the 2008 wildfires resulted in an unusual number of summer days where the PM2.5 and ozone thresholds were exceeded. The trend has been improving, especially with ozone. The City is aggressively addressing air quality issues, including adoption of a wood-burning ordinance and collaborating with the Air District on its CEQA Handbook Update. These efforts are beneficial, but significant work remains.

Rating
Moderate
Performance

Recent City & Community Actions

- The Air District continues to work with the City on revisions to its CEQA Air Quality Handbook, which will aid jurisdictions in terms of quantifying and mitigating air quality impacts during environmental review.
- The City completed the SR99 Corridor Bikeway Project, which consists of a 7-mile long contiguous bike path and bicycle related facilities generally paralleling the SR99 corridor. Enhanced alternative circulation reduces air quality impacts.
- The Air District continues to participate in the Carl Moyer Memorial Air Quality Standards Attainment Program, which provides incentive grants for cleaner-than-required engines, equipment and other sources of pollution providing early or extra emission reductions.
- The Air District expanded its outreach and education efforts for the *Check Before You Light* program which encourages voluntary curtailment of wood burning during periods of forecasted poor air quality. This effort supports the City's wood burning curtailment ordinance. There were no days over the federal PM2.5 standard in Chico during the period November 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013, based on preliminary monitoring data!
- The Air District is working closely with EPA to secure incentive funds for a Woodstove Change Out program toward reducing PM2.5 levels.

Number of Days over Ozone or PM2.5 Federal Standard



Source: Air Resources Board AQMIS website. 2008 data reflects extreme wildfire events.

Web Links & Other Resources

- Butte County Air Quality Management District - www.bcaqmd.org/



Goals

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions Citywide; Reduce vehicle-generated pollutants; Adapt to climate change

Background

The City has long valued environmental stewardship and preservation. Consistent with that tradition, the City Council has made climate change and greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction community priorities. Chico has not waited for State directives or programs to address GHG emissions and climate change. In 2006, Chico's Mayor signed the U.S. Conference of Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, adding Chico to a group of over 600 cities pledging to reduce GHG emissions. In 2008, Chico prepared a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, which estimated the amount of heat-trapping gases that the community released to the atmosphere in the baseline year of 2005. In 2008, the City Council approved a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 25 percent below 2005 levels by the year 2020. To achieve this goal, and as directed by the

Chico 2030 General Plan, the City maintains a Climate Action Plan that identifies programs and actions to meet the City's GHG reduction goal.

Indicator

As directed by the Climate Action Plan, the City will annually estimate total GHG reductions. This information will be included in future versions of this report.

Trend

Significant City and community effort has already gone into reducing GHG emissions. The City's Climate Action Plan lays out the framework for future City efforts to address climate change, including monitoring and the identification of additional measures, if necessary, to meet the City's GHG reduction goal.

Rating
Improvement Area

Recent City & Community Actions

- The City Council approved a Climate Action Plan (CAP). The CAP outlines measures to be implemented to reach the City's 25% GHG emissions reduction goal.
- The City implemented the PG&E Innovators Pilot Grant to conduct whole-house energy performance audits, install weatherization and energy efficient measures, and provide energy consultations to approximately 100 homes. The program resulted in homes being compliant with the City's RECO Ordinance.
- The City participated in the Butte County Alternative Fuel Sector Group pilot program, which was formed to bring public and private entities together to plan and deploy alternative fuels opportunities to reduce GHG emissions and create new jobs in this quickly emerging field. A key outcome of the program is Butte County and area cities becoming a member of the Sacramento Clean Cities Coalition.
- *Forbes Magazine* highlighted the top 10 cities having the most hybrid and electric car models, and Chico ranked 8th with 6.06% of all registered vehicles in the Chico area being hybrid and 0.17% electric.
- The City's Zoning Code was amended to promote renewable energy devices (e.g., solar panels), including allowances to development standards setbacks, and a provision for staff level architectural review.
- The City's General Plan received the Merit Award from the American Planning Association in the category of Comprehensive Planning, Small Jurisdiction, particularly for its support of sustainability efforts, including reducing GHGs.

Total Annual GHG Reductions

No data for 2012. With adoption of the Climate Action Plan, the City will now be annually estimating total GHG reductions beginning in 2013. This data will be included in the Indicators Report starting in 2014.



Web Links & Other Resources

- Sustainability Task Force - www.ci.chico.ca.us/government/minutes_agendas/sustainability_task_force.asp
- CSUC: Our Sustainable Future - www.csuchico.edu/sustainablefuture/practices/
- PG&E Climate Smart - www.pge.com/climatesmart/

Goals

Preserve agricultural resources; Support a healthy local food system

Background

A sustainable food system is one which supports and promotes the health of individuals, communities, and the natural environment. It requires infrastructure and networks that support the life cycle of food, from production to waste recovery. It makes nutritious food available and increases food security.

Butte County is a leader in organic agriculture. Local producers have undertaken significant efforts to certify organic production and Chico's farmers markets are an outlet for those products and have become a vital part of the local economy. The local food system in Chico currently includes four farmers markets (2 are year round), nine community gardens, one food co-op, and many local restaurants and grocers serving or selling local food.

Indicator

The City measures its progress in this area by tracking Electronic Balance Transfer (EBT) card (or food stamp card) sales at local farmers markets. The majority of Chico's farmers markets allow food vendors to sell eligible food products to individuals with EBT cards by setting up a central point of sale terminal that debits the amount requested by the customer in exchange for tokens that can be used to shop at the market. EBT sales at Chico's farmers markets serves as an indicator of the community's growing understanding of the benefits of buying fresh, nutritious, local products.

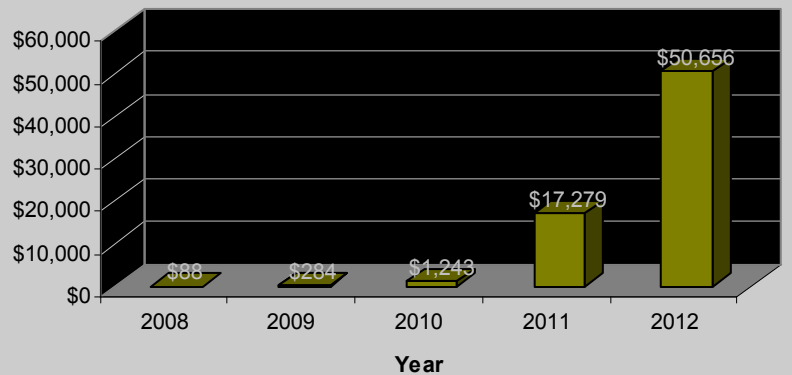
Trend: The increase in use of EBT cards at farmers markets is promising with the initial upswing due to the Chico Certified Farmers Market accepting EBT in late 2010 and the Thursday Night Market adding EBT technology in 2012. A grant-funded EBT incentive program at markets has also greatly benefited EBT use.

Rating
Clear
Progress

Recent City & Community Actions

- The DCBA-run Thursday Night Market is now accepting EBT cards.
- Development standards in the City's Zoning Code were amended to promote and allow more agricultural uses by right, including bee and animal keeping and community gardens.
- The City collaborated with a CSUC graduate class to develop an inventory of sites appropriate for community gardens and shared the results with local, interested parties.
- The Northern California Regional Land Trust continues implementation of its 'Buy Fresh Buy Local' program, which will expand marketing opportunities, and provide assistance and training to area specialty crop producers to increase profitability and build more secure and sustainable local economies.
- GRUB and residents at Murphy Commons developed a community garden at this affordable housing project.
- The CSUC Research Foundation received a \$500k grant from CDEA to form a coalition to focus on the community's nutritional needs, create incentives for EBT recipients at farmers' markets, provide technical assistance to markets, cover up-front costs for markets serving low-income growers, expand community gardens, and develop culinary exhibitions.
- Following the successful establishment of the Humboldt Community Garden, BEC has proposed a second community garden on City-owned property near Oak Park.
- Friends of Independent Living Services received a \$400k grant to promote growing, selling, buying, and preparing specialty crops for individuals with systemic barriers to access.

EBT Sales at Chico's Farmers Markets



Source: CSUC Research Foundation, 2013.



Web Links & Other Resources

- Butte County Agricultural Department - www.buttecounty.net/AgriculturalCommissioner.aspx
- Certified Farmers' Market - www.chicocertifiedfarmersmarket.com/
- Thursday Night Market (DCBA) - www.downtownchico.net/
- GRUB - www.grubchico.org/
- Chico Grange Hall - www.chicogrango.org/

Goal: Preserve and effectively manage open space

Background: Chico residents enjoy a wealth of accessible public open space unparalleled in the North Valley. Open space provides habitat and movement corridors for wildlife, as well as recreational, educational, aesthetic and other benefits to the community. Open areas within and around the community are a defining characteristic of Chico. The City owns significant open space resources, which are managed for resource preservation, as well as lower impact recreational uses such as hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking. Examples of City open space include Bidwell Park, Bidwell Ranch, Teichert Ponds, Lindo Channel, and the Comanche Creek Greenway. There are additional open space holdings in the area managed by resource agencies and non-profit organizations. In some cases, funding resources are inadequate for proper maintenance and management of these lands.

ance and management of these lands.

Indicator

City-owned open space with a funded management plan.

Trend

The City owns significant open space, including large contiguous holdings protecting vernal pool areas and creekside greenways. While these areas are protected, much of the land has no management program, and no ongoing maintenance and management funding. General Plan Action OS-2.1.1 calls for the development of an Open Space Master Plan to catalogue the City's open space holdings, ensure that management and maintenance programs are in place, and identify long-term funding sources.

Rating Improvement Area

City-owned Open Space with a Funded Management Plan

Open Space Areas	Acres	Status	Mngmt. Plan?	Funded Activities?	Acreage w/ Funded Plan
Bidwell Park	3621	Activities in Bidwell Park are consistent with the Bidwell Park Master Mngmt. Plan, and the City funds maintenance activities annually. Staff seek grants and other opportunities to implement the programs and policies in the Management Plan.	Yes	Yes	3621
Foothill Park Preserve	292	The site is managed and maintained by a third party consistent with the Foothill Park Preserve Management Plan. Management and monitoring was funded as mitigation for development on adjacent properties.	Yes	Yes	292
Verbena Fields Restoration Site	16	This site is located along Lindo Channel and through a grant was transformed into a passive park with an accompanying restoration plan. The site is maintained by GSD. While the plan lays out basic site design and steps for establishing native vegetation, it will be updated in the future with a focus on long-term maintenance.	Yes	Yes	16
Bidwell Ranch	760	A draft management plan has been developed as part of the effort to develop the site as a wetland mitigation bank. As that effort moves forward, a funding source will be identified and established to implement the management plan.	Yes (Draft)	No	0
Comanche Creek Greenway	20	The Comanche Creek Management Plan was approved by the BPPC in 2012. No funding has been identified to maintain the site. Management will continue on an as needed basis until funding can be identified.	Yes	No	0
Teichert Ponds	39	This site is currently maintained for its use as a stormwater facility. A site restoration plan has been developed to address stormwater detention, recreation and education, and habitat enhancement. Staff is seeking funding to implement the restoration plan.	Yes	No	0
HillView Preserve	10	This property has a maintenance district used to fund maintenance. The property does not have a management plan.	No	Yes	0
Lindo Channel (Sandy Gulch)	129	Lindo Channel is maintained by DWR to ensure flood conveyance, but there is no management plan. Weed control, trash cleanup, and other activities are completed as needed basis. Management concepts are being developed for a future management plan.	No	No	0
Little Chico Creek Greenway	53	The channel is maintained by DWR to ensure flood conveyance, but there is no management plan. Homeless encampment removal, trash cleanup, and invasive plant removal occurs as needed.	No	No	0
Wildwood Vernal Pool Preserve	3.5	This site is located between Wildwood Park and Sycamore Diversion Channel, and maintenance activities are conducted as needed basis.	No	No	0
Eaton Road Preserve	3.7	This property is a set aside for the future Eaton Rd. connection to Manzanita Ave. Maintenance is completed as needed basis. No long-term management plan is in place.	No	No	0
South Chico Preserve	14.9	Minimal maintenance completed as needed basis. No management plan in place.	No	No	0
South Deadhorse Slough	50	Minimal maintenance completed as needed basis. No management plan in place.	No	No	0
Total Acreage	5012.1				3929

Recent City & Community Actions

- The California Native Plant Society coordinated 630 volunteer hours at Teichert Ponds to remove over 15,000 privet and 5,000 olive trees, and to pick up trash.
- The BPPC approved the Comanche Creek Greenway Management Plan/Improvement Project to guide future activities in the Greenway. As part of its workplan, the BPPC will explore funding sources to implement the Comanche Creek management plan and improvements.

- Staff reinitiated discussions with state and federal agencies to transform the city-owned Bidwell Ranch property into a wetland mitigation bank, which in turn could provide funding for site maintenance and management.
- The Parks Division completed over 6,000 feet of trail rehab and improved ADA accessibility near Horseshoe Lake as part of the Recreational Trails Grant Middle Trail Rehabilitation program. The City also submitted a grant request for \$260k to continue trail rehab work in Upper Bidwell Park.

Web Links & Other Resources

- Chico Parks Division - www.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/home_page.asp
- Northern California Regional Land Trust - www.landconservation.org/
- Teichert Ponds Restoration Foundation - www.chicoteichertponds.wordpress.com/
- Chico Creek Nature Center - www.bidwellpark.org/

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Goals

Provide cost-effective and efficient public facilities & services; Ensure a sustainable water supply; Eliminate failing septic systems

Background

A fundamental responsibility of a City is to provide public facilities and services to the community. Cost-effective and efficient public services and infrastructure are vital to the overall health and well-being of a community. New development and redevelopment generates a need for expanded public facilities. In addition, existing development must be periodically retrofitted with modern services. Chico’s vision for a sustainable future includes addressing service needs while recognizing resource limitations and the need for increased efficiency and conservation.

Indicator A: The City and County are working to eliminate septic systems that are the cause of nitrate hot spots that have the potential to pollute groundwater. Tracking the total annual acreage of new sewer connections in the Nitrate Action Areas will help measure the City’s success in providing sewer service.

Trend: Sewer mains will be extended throughout the nitrate hot spot areas by 2017. The difficulty remains getting residents to hook-up to the system. Tracking this trend will help determine if additional hook-up programs or incentives are needed.

Indicator B: The Tuscan aquifer is a groundwater reservoir providing municipal and agricultural water to the area. Its protection is of great importance. Cal Water is responsible for providing a safe and sustainable water supply. Tracking per capita water consumption will help measure progress in conserving this resource.

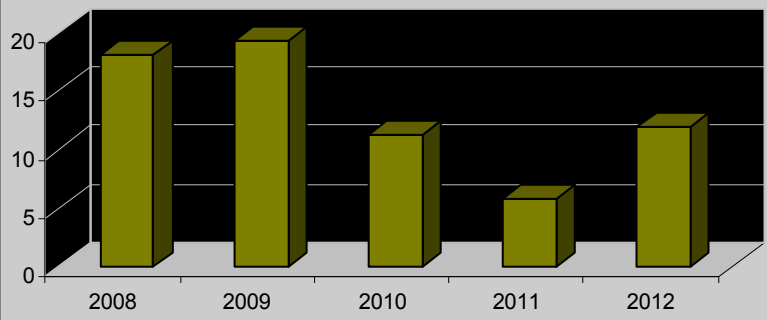
Trend: Annual water usage in Chico has decreased from approximately 301 GPCD in 2004 to approximately 222 GPCD in 2012.

Rating
Moderate Performance

Recent City & Community Actions

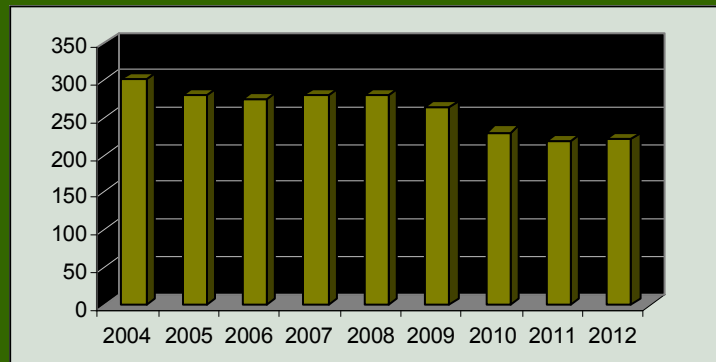
- As part of the Nitrate Compliance Program, the City extended sewer mains to Area 2N (neighborhoods east of the Esplanade, west of Cohasset Rd., and along East Ave.), bringing the project to 50% complete. All phases of the project are due to be complete in 2016.
- *Government Fleet Magazine* recognized the City’s fleet as being in the top 100 (#84) in North America. The City’s fleet was noted for ongoing replacement fund savings, use of new technology, and maintaining service levels while navigating budget/staff reductions.
- GSD helped keep the community’s streets, storm drains and waterways clean by: 1) collecting 44,635 CY of leaf material during the annual collection program; 2) sweeping 27,785 curb miles and collecting 5,877 CY of material from streets; 3) servicing 86 storm water interceptors and 271 storm drain inlets capturing 59.35 CY of material; and, 4) performing illegal encampment cleanups removing 49.5 CY of trash from our creeks.
- Utilizing Block Grant funds and PG&E rebates, GSD replaced over 1,200 street lights with LED lamps significantly reducing energy consumption and generating cost savings.

Indicator A—Acreage of New Sewer Hook-ups



Source: GIS, City of Chico, 2013.

Indicator B—Gallons of Water Used Per Capita Per Day



Source: Cal Water, 2012.

Web Links & Other Resources

- Chico Sewer and Storm Drain Webpage - www.ci.chico.ca.us/building_development_services/sewer/sewer_storm_drain.asp
- City of Chico General Services Department - www.ci.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/home_page.asp
- Chico Urban Area Nitrate Compliance Program - www.nitratecompliance.org/
- Cal Water Service Company - www.calwater.com/index.php
- Butte County Dept. of Water & Resource Conservation - www.buttecounty.net/Water_and_Resource_Conservation.aspx

Goals

Increase housing opportunities for all people; Increase home-ownership; Retain capacity to achieve housing goals

Background

Chico offers an exceptionally attractive residential environment in the North Valley. To address demand, the City strives to provide an adequate supply of housing in a range of costs to meet the demand of all income groups. The City also collaborates with local groups to address the special housing needs of the elderly and disabled, as well as provide opportunities for first-time homebuyers. These objectives must be pursued within the constraints of today's housing market.

Chico has established goals to ensure that new housing is compatible with the existing community character and is sensitive to the area's environmental conditions. The City works to increase the number of affordable housing units and implement smart sustainable development principles that encourage

mixed-use and transit-friendly development.

Indicator

Percentage of Chico households paying more than 50 percent of income toward rent.

Trend

The number and proportion of rent-burdened households has hovered between 31 and 35 percent over the last five years. The City has aggressively pursued opportunities to fund new affordable housing in partnership with affordable housing developers during this period. Despite this progress, high unemployment, job losses and increasing rents have continued to present affordability challenges, particularly for low-income renters. Over the next two years, the City will pursue Housing Element programs that address the challenges presented by elimination of RDA funding, including a Housing Trust Fund and an Inclusionary Housing Program.

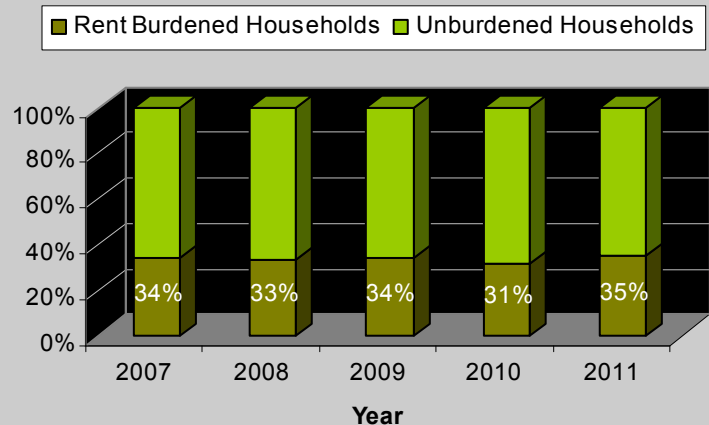
Rating
Moderate
Performance



Recent City & Community Actions

- The City-funded Harvest Park project, a 90-unit affordable housing complex for families located on East Avenue, is under construction.
- The Chico Community Shelter Partnership received City funds to expand the Torres Shelter with a dining room, kitchen, check-in area and overflow space.
- The City funded predevelopment work for Valley View Apts., a 14-unit complex for low-income young adults. Residents will share the adjacent Torres Shelter kitchen as part of a vocational training program.
- The City committed funding and approved North Point Apts., a 50-unit affordable housing complex for families. This project located on North Esplanade is under construction.
- Assisted with City funding, CHIP completed a subdivision of 13 homes with solar panels for low-income first-time homebuyers.
- Habitat for Humanity began construction on three homes for low-income first-time homebuyers in the South Chapman neighborhood.
- The State's dissolution of the City's Redevelopment Agency has greatly hampered the City's ability to fund and develop affordable housing.

Percent of Households Paying >50% of Income Toward Rent



Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey.



Web Links & Other Resources

- City of Chico Housing Office - www.ci.chico.ca.us/housing_neighborhood_services/housing/housing.asp
- Housing Authority of Butte County - www.butte-housing.com/
- Community Housing Improvement Program - www.chiphousing.org/
- Habitat for Humanity (Butte County) - www.buttehabitat.org/
- Community Action Agency of Butte County - www.buttecaa.com/

Goals

Reduce the use of single-occupant motor vehicles; Ensure safe and efficient movement of people and goods; Increase bicycle and pedestrian access; Support effective and affordable public transportation

Background

Using transportation other than driving can be good for our health, budgets, and the environment. Transportation options include taking the bus, carpooling, bicycling and walking. The City plays an important role in creating corridors that are safe and accessible for pedestrians and bicyclists, and promoting alternative transportation.

The City’s 2008 greenhouse gas emissions inventory found that most of the community’s greenhouse gas emissions are transportation related. The City seeks to establish and enhance its integrated, multimodal transportation network to increase travel mode choice, improve goods movement, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and limit capital infrastructure costs.

Indicator A: Miles of new bikeways City-wide.

Indicator B: Total number of B-Line riders annually.

Trend: The SR 99 Bikeway project (funded by Federal stimulus money) provided a boon for the City’s bikeway system. Chico has been successful in procuring grant monies, but grants do not provide a reliable funding source as can be seen from the 2012 data. Identifying new funding and incorporating multi-modal infrastructure into capital projects will help expand and improve the City’s bikeway system.

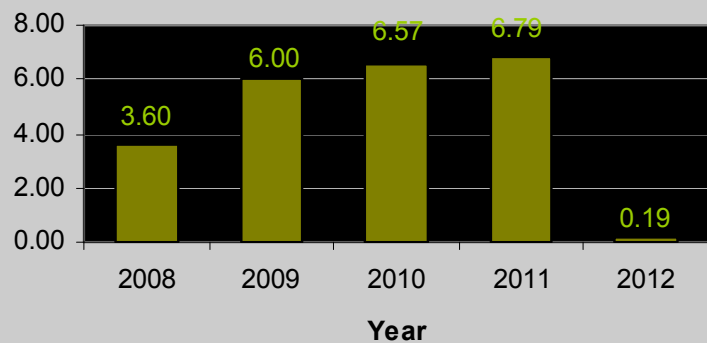
Trend: B-Line ridership dropped over several years, but is showing a rebound this past year. BCAG is investing resources into promoting its use and enhancing service, which will be critical to continued ridership increases.

Rating
Moderate
Performance

Recent City & Community Actions

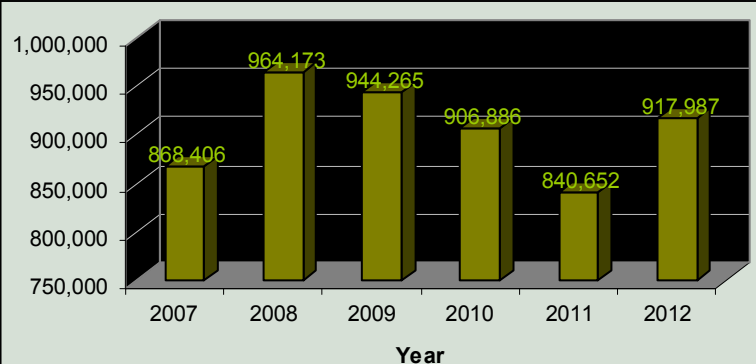
- The City received grant funding from the Strategic Growth Council to update the Chico Bicycle Master Plan, which will begin in 2013.
- With installation of a bike bridge over Little Chico Creek, the SR99 Bikeway Project is complete providing a 7-mile long continuous bike/ped facility that closely parallels the highway.
- The City installed additional “countdown” style pedestrian signal heads in the Downtown providing additional pedestrian safety and improved traffic flow.
- The first phase of the Downtown Couplet Project was completed. When complete, the project will improve bicycle/pedestrian safety, vehicular movement, and increase parking.
- Utilizing a Safe Routes to Schools grant, the City improved Manzanita Avenue at its intersection with Marigold Avenue. Sidewalks and bike lanes were built to fill existing gaps, which will serve three schools: PV High, Marigold Elementary, and Loma Vista. This effort also included a highly successful safety education outreach program for students.
- The Chico community was recognized as a Silver Level Bike Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists, which is awarded to communities with “remarkable commitments” to bicycling.
- The City of Chico (as a public corporation) was recognized as a Bronze Level Bike Friendly Business by the League of American Bicyclists, which is awarded to businesses doing “wonderful things” for its employees and the bicycling community.

Indicator A—Miles of New Bikeways



Source: Engineering Dept., City of Chico, 2012.

Indicator B—Annual B-Line Ridership



Source: BCAG, 2013.

Web Links & Other Resources

- Chico Traffic Engineering Division - www.ci.chico.ca.us/building_development_services/traffic/traffic_engineering.asp
- BCAG’s B-Line - www.blinetransit.com/
- Butte Bike Coalition - www.buttebicyclecoalition.org/
- Chico Velo Cycling Club - www.chicovelo.org/main/

Goals

Provide solid waste collection services that meet or exceed state requirements for source reduction, diversion, and recycling

Background

Living produces waste materials. The earth's resources are finite so reducing waste by limiting consumption of natural resources and by recycling are priorities for the City. Through contracts with two waste hauling companies, the City provides solid waste collection and disposal, as well as recycling services to the community. In addition, the City runs a popular street side leaf pick-up program from mid-October through mid-January of each year. Green yard waste is disposed of at the City's Compost Facility near the Chico Municipal Airport. Finally, local residents are able to recycle and properly dispose of household hazardous waste at the Butte Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility located near the Chico Municipal Airport. These services combined help the City meet or exceed state requirements for source reduction, diversion, and recycling.

Indicator A: Annual amount of waste disposed at the Neal Road Waste and Recycling Facility.

Indicator B: Annual amount of waste disposed per capita per day.

Trend: Progress continues to be made in the areas of source reduction, diversion, and recycling. There are clear opportunities, however, to further enhance waste reduction and recycling in Chico.

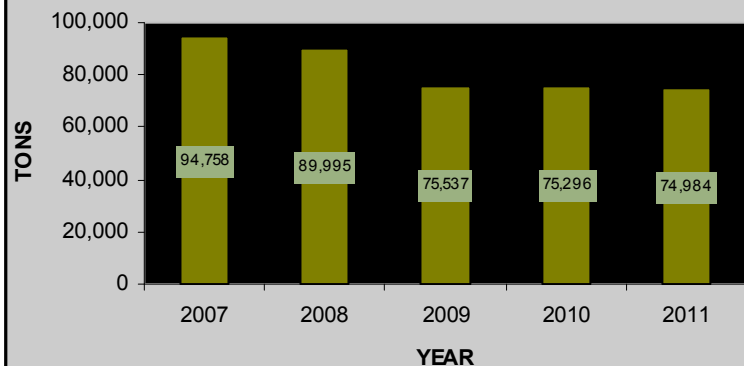
Trend: Progress in this area has been good, but there are ample opportunities through education and enhanced services to further reduce per capita waste disposal.

Rating
Moderate
Performance

Recent City & Community Actions

- The City worked with local waste haulers and CLIC to begin implementation of a Multifamily Recycling Project to encourage apartment complex tenants and property owners to recycle. A \$38,000 grant was obtained from CalRecycle to implement the program.
- Butte County entered into an agreement with Ameresco Energy to capture methane gas emitted at its Neal Road Facility to generate 2.2 megawatts of electricity. This is enough electricity to power about 1,400 households, and will also reduce CO2 emissions equivalent to removing 17,000 cars from the road.
- The City entered into a contract with a company to compost the biosolids from the City's wastewater facility, which will divert approximately 2,000 tons of material from the landfill. The program is scheduled to begin in 2013.
- In compliance with AB 341, the City worked with waste haulers and the North Valley Property Owners Association to notify and encourage businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of waste per week, or multifamily projects of 5 units or more, to provide recycling service.

Indicator A—Amount of Waste Disposed Annually



Source: City of Chico, GSD, 2013.

Indicator B—Amount of Waste Disposed Per Capita



Source: Chico, GSD, 2013.

Web Links & Other Resources

- Chico GSD/Solid Waste and Recycling - www.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/solid_waste_and_recycling/solid_waste_and_recycling.asp
- Waste Management (Chico) - www.northvalley.wm.com/chico.asp
- Recology (Butte Colusa Counties) - www.recolgybuttecolusa.com/
- Neal Road Landfill - www.buttecounty.net/Public Works/Divisions/Solid Waste/Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility.aspx

SOCIOECONOMICS

Goals

Support a vibrant and diverse economy; Enhance regional tourism opportunities

Background

Economic development efforts are meant to improve and maintain economic vitality. The City’s role is to foster a positive climate for economic development, ensure the readiness of physical conditions to support development, target public investments to support local prosperity, create partnerships within the region to help attract investment, and ensure a quality of life that supports the local economy. Chico offers a range of business opportunities in industry, retail, and tourism. Export businesses compete successfully in global markets with many of these ventures having grown out of a connection with CSU, Chico and relying on the skilled workforce from the University and Butte College. Chico is also a major retail center in the North State with national retailers serving the region, and a thriving Downtown creating a vibrant commercial center. The community also serves as a tourism destination focused around outdoor education and recreation, agriculture, wildlife and natural resources, and arts and culture.

Indicator A: Annual sales tax revenue.

Trend: The city-wide sales tax revenue trend was obviously poor consistent with the global economic recession. Recent data reflects that the economy has hit the bottom, and that sales tax revenue is trending up. This past year’s sales tax revenue is slightly above the 2007/2008 fiscal year.

Indicator B: Annual sales tax revenue for Downtown.

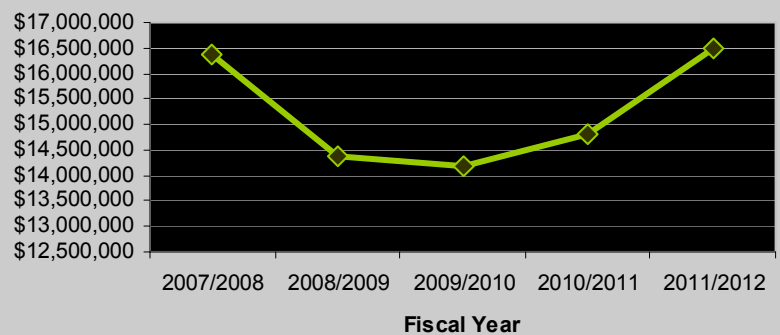
Trend: The upturn in sales tax revenue for the Downtown appears to have started a year earlier than city-wide, and revenue this past year continues to look strong. This is a promising trend for Downtown businesses.

Rating
**Moderate
Performance**

Recent City & Community Actions

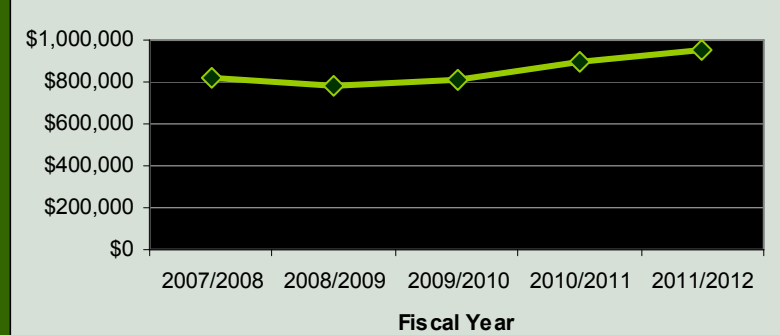
- The City and Chamber collaborated to develop strategies to improve the local business climate based on outcomes of a Business Summit. That effort resulted in several initiatives, including a Permitting Improvement Workshop, business outreach events, a task force to support enhanced broadband, and formation of a Business Services Team.
- The City helped secure a nearly \$800k grant for an alternative fuels pilot project. The 1,000 GPD bio-fuel facility to be developed by Springboard Biodiesel, a Chico manufacturer, scored higher than any other proposal in the state.
- The City, in cooperation with the Chamber, the DCBA, and Tri-Counties Bank, has initiated a Retail Market Analysis that will provide a comprehensive profile of the Chico retail market. The findings will be promoted through workshops and will aid in targeting and attracting new retailers to Chico.
- Build.com is North America’s second largest internet home improvement retailer, and completed relocation and expansion in Chico to accommodate substantial employment growth.
- ChicoStart, an initiative of Innovate North State, received City approval to utilize City Hall office space to create a center for Chico start-up companies, which provides the physical and virtual infrastructure that web, software, mobile apps and new media start-ups need to succeed.
- The unemployment rate in Chico was 10.9% in March 2013 compared to 12.5% in April 2012. The unemployment rate in Chico peaked in October 2010 at 14.0% and is now 3.1 percentage points lower.

Indicator A—Annual Sales Tax Revenue



Source: Finance, City of Chico, 2013.

Indicator B—Annual Sales Tax Revenue for Downtown



Source: Finance, City of Chico, 2013.

Web Links & Other Resources

- City ED webpage - www.chicoeconomicdevelopment.com/
- Chico Chamber of Commerce - www.chicochamber.com/
- Downtown Chico Business Association - www.downtownchico.net/
- Center for Economic Development - www.cedcal.com/welcome/
- 3 Core - www.3coreedc.org/
- Chico Economic Planning Corporation - www.cepc.com/

Goals

Ensure safe neighborhoods; Reduce crime; Provide effective and efficient fire protection

Background

Generally, Chico is a safe and healthy city. Maintaining a safe and secure environment is one of the highest priorities for the community. To ensure that Chico neighborhoods remain safe places to live, the City strives to reduce crime and provide efficient and timely fire fighting capacity. A critical issue for the future is finding a balance between the community's desire for a high level of public safety service and the City's limited fiscal resources to provide a full range of municipal services.

Indicator A: Chico Police Department staffing compared to average western cities, and number of filtered calls for service.

Trend: The past 6 years reflect a problematic trend for law enforcement in Chico. As the City's population grows so does the number of calls for service. Conversely, the number of sworn officers per 1,000 population is steadily dropping and remains below the average officer/population ratio for other similar sized western cities. All available sworn personnel have been re-assigned to street patrol operations, except detectives.

Indicator B: Chico Fire Department engine call to at scene response time at the 90th percentile.

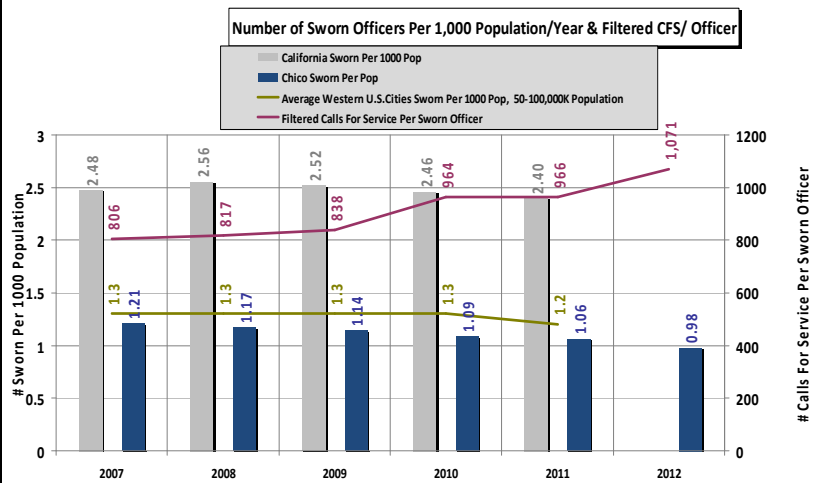
Trend: Call to at scene response time has remained consistent over the past 6 years, however, the Department strives for a five minute thirty second response time at the 90th percentile. The Department utilizes computer modeling to analyze station locations, staffing, and company placement to maintain and enhance response times and reliability.

Rating Improvement Area

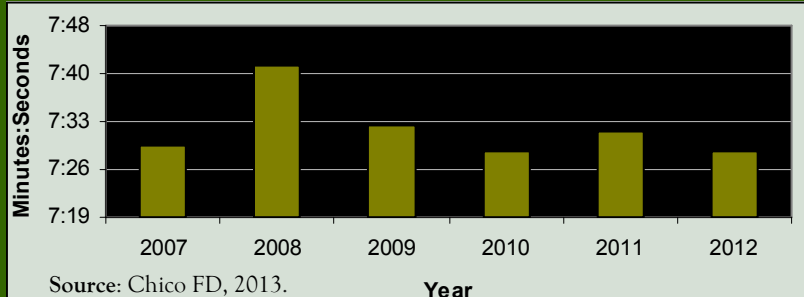
Recent City & Community Actions

- Chico Fire received a grant award for the purchase of new Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs). They will replace outdated AEDs that are deployed on all engines and trucks.
- Chico Fire received another grant award to complete the federally mandated narrow-banding of all radios. The funding allowed the department to complete the upgrades prior to the deadline of January 1, 2013.
- Animal Services completed its first full year operating the City animal shelter, which was previously operated by Butte Humane Society under contract with the City. Approximately 3,945 animals came through the facility.
- To more effectively address noise problems throughout the community, Chico PD oversaw revisions to the City's noise ordinance, which was passed by Council in Fall 2012.
- Police Chief Trostle successfully established his administration and his presence and involvement in the community.
- Chico PD command staff focused efforts on four major areas of public safety: 1) Crime and Violence, 2) Alcohol and/or Drug Abuse, 3) Homelessness and related problems, and 4) Mental Health issues.
- Chico PD designed a new patrol vehicle that will be phased in over the next few years: Black and White Chevy Caprices with a logo/watermark of Bidwell Mansion (see photo to right).

Indicator A—Staffing Ratio Comparison and Service Calls



Indicator B—Response Times at the 90th Percentile



Web Links & Other Resources

- Chico Fire Department - www.ci.chico.ca.us/fire/home_page.asp
- Chico Police Department - www.ci.chico.ca.us/police/home_page.asp

Goals

Support public art and expand its role in providing quality of life and economic vitality; Promote and expand participation in cultural activities and special events

Background

Chico is a culturally rich community with an arts industry that is a growing contributor to the local economy and quality of life. The City seeks to increase public access to art and culture, heighten awareness of existing cultural resources in the community, and broaden opportunities for local artists and performers.

Landmarks and public art (street murals, sculptures, etc.) provide focus and structure within the City and give greater meaning to the urban experience. One of the goals of the General Plan is to expand the City's role in enhancing cultural opportunities. Visitors are drawn to the area to enjoy the rural scenery, arts and cultural activities, recreation, and special events.

There is an opportunity to build upon existing tourist attractions.

Indicator

The City measures its progress in this area by tracking annual transient occupancy tax, or TOT, which is a reflection of the community's draw as an arts and culture destination (e.g., art shows, special events, sports, recreation, etc.).

Trend

TOT is a reflection of many factors, and the current recession has likely had a greater impact on its recent downturn than anything else. The last year's steady increase in TOT is promising. The growing popularity of Chico's numerous annual events, and the addition of new ones, bodes well for the community's growing identity as an arts and culture destination.

Rating
Moderate
Performance

Recent City & Community Actions

- The Arts Commission conducted a survey of the general public so that its work priorities would more closely align with the community's desires for arts and culture.
- An artist was included in the design of bicycle parking options for the Downtown Couplet Project which will include functional and imaginative designs to encourage ridership.
- PG&E hired a local artist to design/fabricate a decorative screen for its transformer at City Hall as a way to soften the visual impact and to mitigate its potential as a graffiti magnet.
- Marketing Chico as an arts and culture destination continues to be supported with the City-funded Artoberfest marketing campaign, which contributes to increased sales and transient occupancy taxes. Other marketing efforts include partnering with the Chico Arts Center to promote the Open Studio Tour, and with the Chico Visual Arts Alliance to produce a map/brochure/website listing galleries and studios open to the public.
- AHDC worked with the City and the Nature Center to install art in the newly constructed Parkside Terrace Apartments.
- The City worked with the Hmong community to facilitate the design and installation of the donation of a sculpture commemorating General Vang Pao who is revered by the Hmong people. This effort resulted in a message of inclusivity to a population that often feels disenfranchised.
- The Arts Commission inaugurated its first Youth Arts Awards in 2012 recognizing young local artists.

Annual Transient Occupancy Tax



Source: Finance, City of Chico, 2013.



Web Links & Other Resources

- City Arts Program - www.ci.chico.ca.us/arts_commission/home_page.asp
- Artoberfest - www.artoberfest.org/
- Chico Art Center - www.chicoartcenter.com/
- Mechoopda Indian Tribe - www.mechoopda-nsn.gov/
- Downtown Chico Business Association - www.downtownchico.net/
- Chico Museum - www.chicomuseum.org/

Goals

Increase community participation in addressing local issues and needs

Background

Active community participation is critical to community success. It engages the community's special talents and interests and empowers its citizenry. In addition, active citizens tend to be informed citizens, and local government performs best with an informed community. The City supports community participation by welcoming it, creating valuable roles for residents to play, actively reaching out to build participation, and creating and supporting meaningful volunteer opportunities. In addition, the community has countless service organizations, business groups, and non-profits that volunteer tens of thousands of hours to help others, address local needs, and improve the community.

Indicator

The City measures its progress in this area by tracking participation (in volunteer hours) in the City-sponsored Make a Difference Day and Earth Day events.

Trend

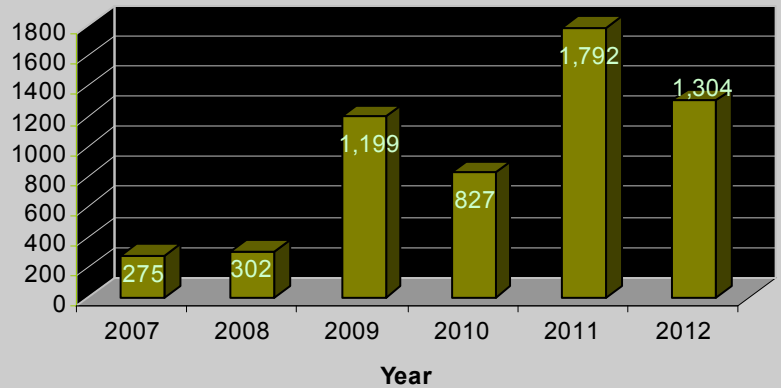
Quantifying volunteer hours and community participation in local decision-making for the betterment of the City is an impossibility. However, the result of this interest and passion can be seen everyday throughout the community. Harnessing that energy is critical, and the City's hiring of a full-time volunteer coordinator has helped connect residents, organizations, and businesses to opportunities to make a difference. The steady increase in volunteer participation in the two City-sponsored volunteer events (as well as total "tracked" volunteer hours in the Park) over the past 6 years is a direct reflection of the community's commitment to be actively involved in improving Chico.

Rating
Clear Progress

Recent City & Community Actions

- In 2012, through the City's Park Volunteer Program, volunteers contributed 19,800 hours of work to Bidwell Park and other Chico Greenways. Tasks included litter cleanup, weed removal, trail work, planting of natives, painting, internships, and Park Watch.
- Several local groups, including elementary schools, families and fraternities are participating in the Adopt-A-Site program. These groups work independently to maintain their adopted park sites.
- An ad-hoc group has been working for over a half year to develop the Clean and Safe Chico program, which includes a goodwill ambassadors program to provide information and a street pastors program for ministering to the homeless in Downtown.
- Numerous non-profits conduct extensive volunteer work throughout the community, including the Friends of Bidwell Park, CA Native Plant Society/Mt. Lassen Chapter, Stream Team, and Butte Environmental Council.
- The Park Division manages thousands of volunteers annually during structured work days, including Earth Day (April), Upward Bound Community Service Day (July), Creeks Cleanup (September), and Make a Difference Day (October).

Participation in Chico's Make a Difference Day Events



Source: GSD, City of Chico, 2013.



Web Links & Other Resources

- City of Chico Volunteer Program - www.ci.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/volunteering.asp
- Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE) - www.aschico.com/cave
- Friends of Bidwell Park - www.friendsofbidwellpark.org/