



City of Chico

SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS REPORT



MAY 2015



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GRUB

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Butte County Association of Governments

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Public Works Department

Administrative Services Department

Fire Department

Police Department

May 2015

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 2014, three indicators show clear progress, six show moderate performance, and four show need for improvement.

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

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 annually under a separate cover.

NATURAL SYSTEMS & AGRICULTURE

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. Public Works maintains approximately 31,000 street trees and 4,000 planting sites.

Indicator

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

Trend

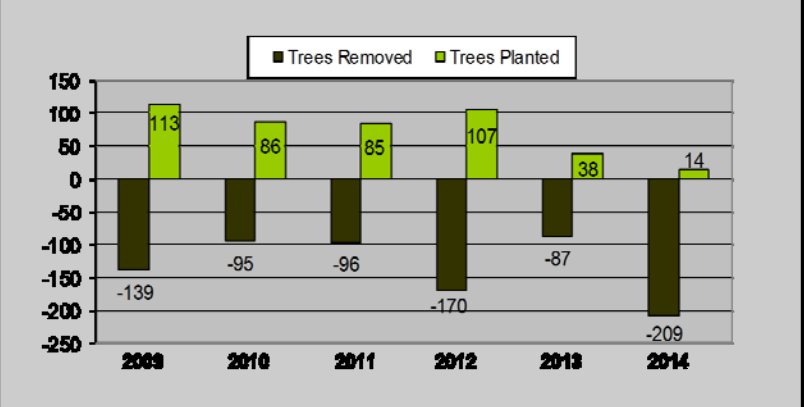
Chico's urban forest is aging, and there is a need to properly maintain and replenish it with new trees to retain the canopy's benefits. Over the past 6 years there were more trees removed from the right-of-way than planted, although new development has resulted in additional trees being planted that are not counted.

**Rating
Improvement
Area**

Recent City & Community Actions

- Council approved funding to retain a consultant for urban forest management duties, including completing the Urban Forest Management Plan, updating the City's Street Tree List, and providing technical expertise regarding tree related decisions.
- Staff continues to comment on drafts of the Butte Regional Conservation Plan. The Plan seeks to provide comprehensive species, wetland, and ecosystem conservation and contribute to the recovery of endangered species in Butte County.
- Chico's Street Tree Program has placed an emphasis on 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.
- The following tree work was conducted in 2014: 560 service requests, formative pruning on 178 trees, and traffic safety and school zone pruning on 1,102 trees.
- The City received its designation as 'Tree City USA' by the National Arbor Day Foundation.
- The BPPC is anticipated to adopt an Urban Forest Management Plan in 2015, which will direct management and maintenance programs to protect and expand Chico's urban forest.

Number of Street Trees Planted vs. Removed



Source: GSD, City of Chico.



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 PM_{2.5} 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 PM_{2.5}.

Trend

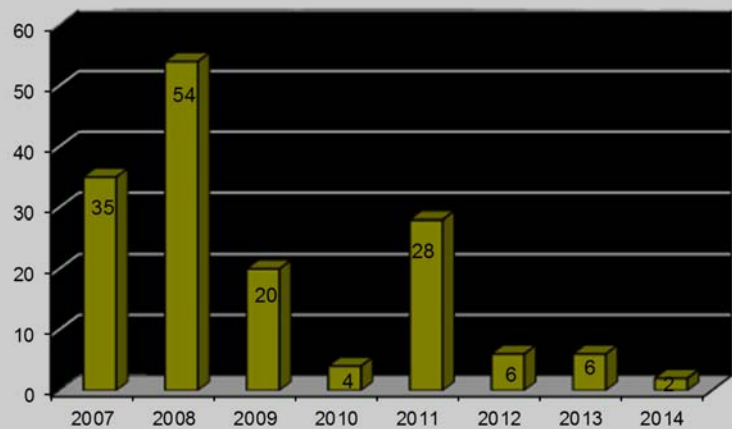
It can be difficult to identify trends for air quality measurements because of the many factors that effect them, including meteorological conditions and catastrophic events. As an example, the 2008 wildfires resulted in an unusual number of summer days where the PM_{2.5} and ozone thresholds were exceeded. The trend is improving and stabilizing, especially with ozone. The City is aggressively addressing air quality issues, including adoption of a wood-burning ordinance and collaboration with the Air District on its CEQA Handbook Update. These efforts are beneficial, but work remains.

Rating
Moderate Performance

Recent City & Community Actions

- The Air District adopted a comprehensive update to its CEQA Air Quality Handbook, which provides improved guidance for evaluating potential air quality and GHG impacts for projects that require CEQA.
- The Air District continued 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 was 1 day over the federal PM_{2.5} standard in Chico during the period of 11/01/14 through 02/28/15.
- The Air District is coordinating with EPA to implement a 3-year Woodstove Change Out program toward reducing PM_{2.5} levels. Incentive funds for this program were the result of a court settlement. Two of the three funding cycles have been completed, with 53% of the change-out projects occurring in Chico.
- EPA determined that Chico has attained and continues to attain the federal PM_{2.5} fine particulate matter ambient air quality standard. The determination recognizes air quality improvement accomplished through the efforts of the District and community. The District has submitted its emissions inventory to the State Air Resources Board to be included in the State Implementation Plan to demonstrate its objectives of reducing PM_{2.5} emissions.

Number of Days over Ozone or PM_{2.5} 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. Consistent with that tradition, the City Council has made climate change and GHG emission reduction community priorities. Chico has not waited for State directives 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 600 cities pledging to reduce GHG emissions. In 2008, Chico prepared an 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 Council approved a GHG emissions reduction target of 25% below 2005 levels by the year 2020. To achieve this goal, the City maintains a Climate Action Plan (CAP) that identifies actions to meet the City's GHG reduction goal.

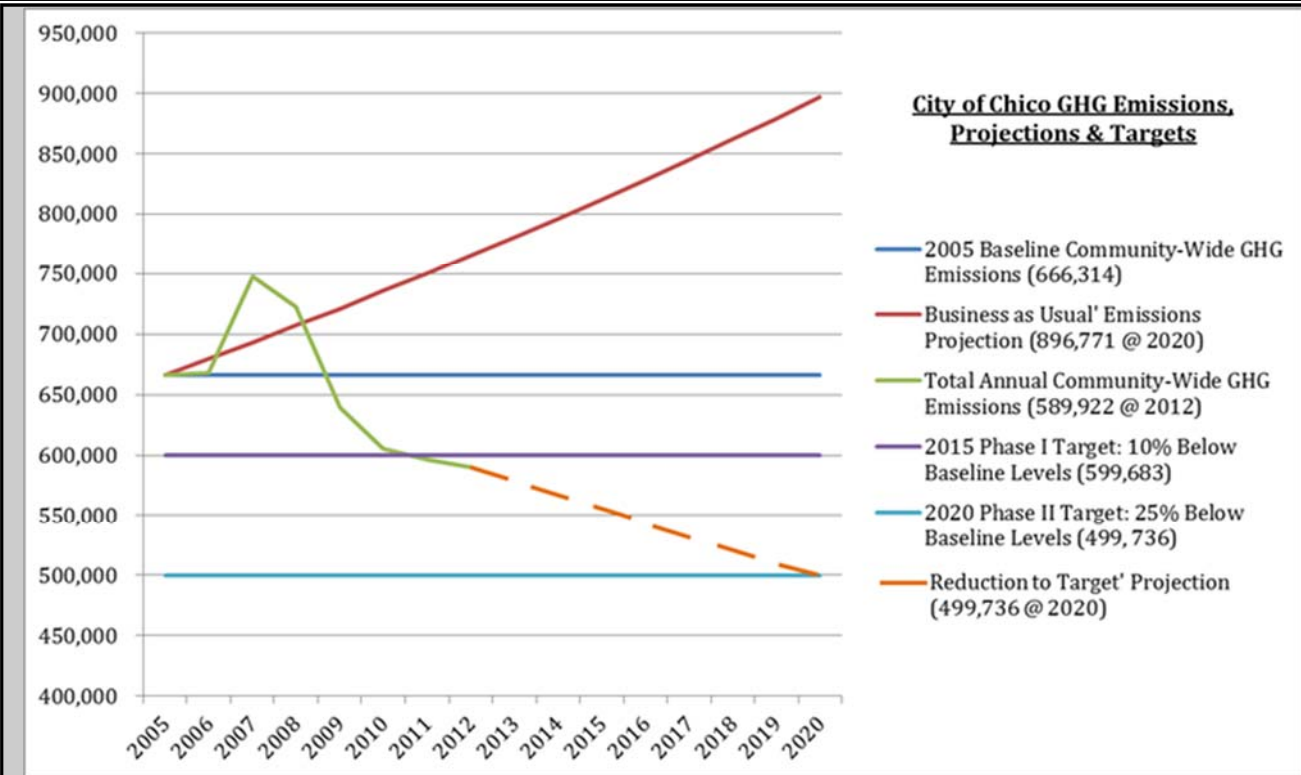
Indicator

The indicator is a combination of GHG emissions estimates for tonnage of waste sent to the landfill, sales of gasoline and diesel fuel, and electricity and natural gas consumption for the Chico area converted to metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (MT CO₂e) (the metric used to measure GHG emissions). Data is available through 2012.

Trend

State and local efforts have helped reduce GHG emissions. While the indicator reflects a promising trend, there is significant work ahead to achieve the City's lofty GHG reduction goal. The CAP includes monitoring and implementation of additional actions. Implementation of state mandates directing a more sustainable grid mix and new higher efficiency fuel requirements will have a significant effect on reducing GHG emissions. Continued work by the City, STF, and community to address climate change must remain a priority.

Rating Improvement Area



Recent City & Community Actions

- CUSD is moving forward with a Strategic Energy Plan, including solar power plans that will cost \$12M over 5 years.
- Butte County adopted a Climate Action Plan for the unincorporated areas of the County. The plan received a Merit Award from the American Planning Association.
- The City launched its Sustainability website at www.chicosustainability.org. The site contains important information for residents and businesses interested in reducing GHG emissions and saving money. The site contains the results of a recently completed community-wide greenhouse gas emissions inventory for the years 2005-2012.
- The Sustainability Task Force is focused on implementing the City's Climate Action Plan. It is collaborating with the Chamber, DCBA, and Sierra Nevada Brewery to sponsor a Sustainable Business Series that highlights practical and profitable changes businesses can make in the areas of energy efficiency, alternative transportation, water conservation, and recycling/reuse.
- Over the past 8 years, Chico State has reduced institution-wide GHG emissions by over one third, including significant reductions in emissions from electricity consumption and transportation!

Web Links City of Chico Sustainability Website - www.chicosustainability.org PG&E Climate Smart - www.pge.com/

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 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 (two are year round), twelve 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.

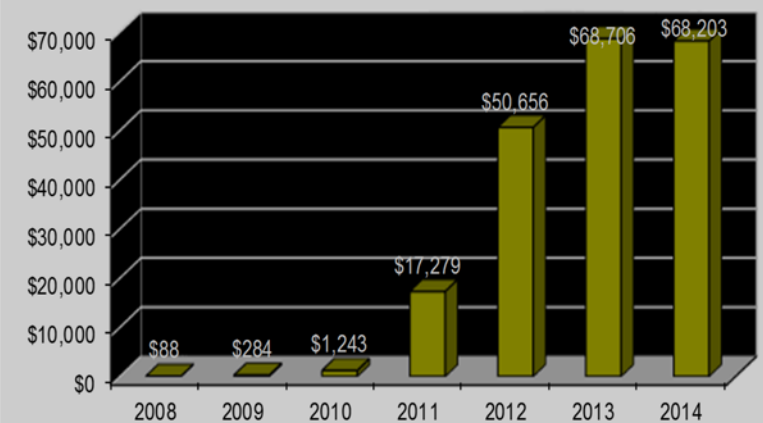
Trend: EBT card use at farmers markets grew quickly and has now stabilized. The success is due to the CCFM accepting EBT in late 2010 and the Thursday Night Market adding EBT technology in 2012. A grant-funded EBT incentive program at markets, and the popularity of the markets, has also greatly benefited EBT use.

Rating
Clear
Progress

Recent City & Community Actions

- The CSUC Research Foundation is implementing a \$500k grant, which focuses on the community's nutritional needs, creates incentives for EBT use at farmers' markets, provides technical assistance to markets, covers up-front costs for markets serving low-income growers, expands community gardens, and develops culinary exhibitions for the community.
- BEC established a second community garden on City-owned property near Oak Park.
- CUSD is implementing a \$44k grant to enhance its Farm to Schools program.
- The CSU, Chico Research Foundation is implementing a \$400k grant for a farm-to-school program in Butte elementary schools to increase both familiarity with and consumption of California grown crops.
- Butte County has prepared a draft Ag Mitigation Ordinance to mitigate the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. The Board of Supervisors will consider the final ordinance in 2015.
- The Northern California Regional Land Trust is implementing a 'Buy Fresh Buy Local' program to expand marketing opportunities, and provide assistance to area specialty crop producers in order to increase profitability and build secure and sustainable local economies.
- In 2014, the North Valley Food Hub launched online to help small- and medium-sized growers connect with buyers to overcome barriers to wholesale local food markets. The site allows buyers (e.g., restaurants, distributors, independent groceries) to find locally grown products, and assists growers with accessing new markets and expanding business.

EBT Sales at Chico's Farmers Markets



Source: CSUC Research Foundation.



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.

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. In 2015, Grant funding will provide for capital improvements on site. Neighbors have pledged \$17,000 annually for 3 years for maintenance and ranger patrol. Management will continue on an as needed basis until funding can be identified.	Yes	Yes	20
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, but there is no 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 on an 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 the 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 on an as needed basis. No long-term management plan is in place.	No	No	0
South Chico Preserve	14.9	Minimal maintenance completed on an as needed basis. No management plan in place.	No	No	0
South Deadhorse Slough	50	Minimal maintenance completed on an as needed basis. No management plan in place.	No	No	0
Total Acreage	5012.1	City-owned Open Space with a Funded Management Plan			3949

Recent City & Community Actions

- The City was awarded a \$1M grant under the State to implement the Comanche Creek Management Plan, which includes developing trails, a bike/pedestrian bridge over the creek, and other amenities.
- CNPS coordinated 1,370 hours of volunteer invasive plant and trash removal in open spaces, and received a grant from Waste Management to pay for roller bins for the projects.
- Friends of Bidwell Park supervised 1,004 hours of volunteer

invasive plant and trash removal in Bidwell Park, and also received a \$4k mini-grant from the City to pay Jesus Center clients employed by Safe & Clean DCBA to pick up trash twice a week in Lost Park and other areas of Bidwell Park.

- Parks completed Phase I of the Monkey Face Trail reroute and rehab to address erosion concerns and improve access.
- The Teichert Ponds Foundation is collaborating with Parks, Mosquito Abatement, and others to install kiosks at the Ponds to provide education and enhance site management.

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

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.

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: 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.

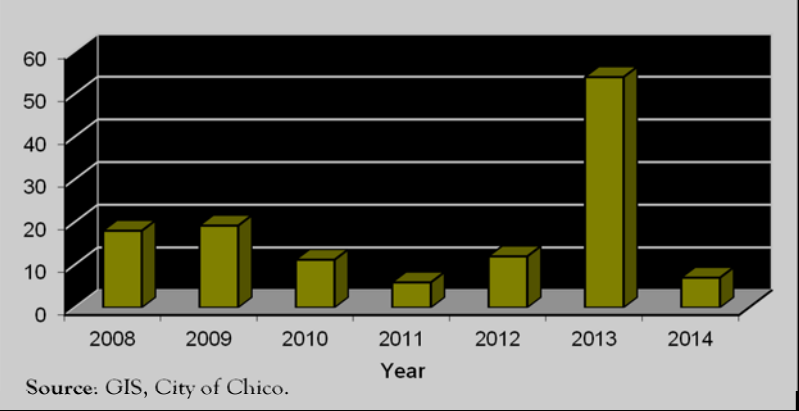
Trend: Annual water usage in Chico has decreased from approximately 301 GPCD in 2004 to approximately 188 GPCD in 2014.

Rating
Moderate Performance

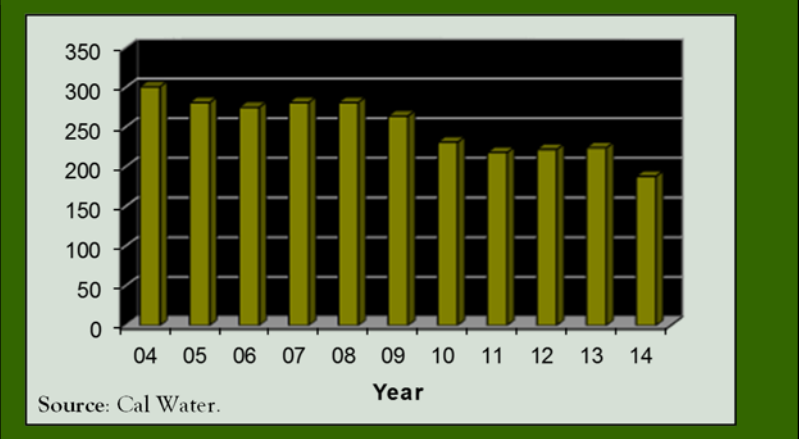
Recent City & Community Actions

- As part of the Nitrate Compliance Program, the City continued extension of sewer mains into Area 2S (the neighborhood bounded by Mangrove, Lindo Channel, and Vallombrosa), bringing the project to well over 70% complete. The project will be complete in 2017.
- Governing Magazine ranked the City’s Fleet as #89 in the Nation during the 100 Best Fleet annual competition. The fleet’s score was based on continued replacement fund savings, use of technology, and maintaining high service levels.
- DPW helped keep the community’s streets, storm drains and waterways clean by: 1) collecting 32,385 CY of leaf material during the ongoing annual collection program; 2) sweeping 26,433 curb miles and collecting 1,809 CY of material from streets; 3) servicing 73 storm water interceptors and 282 storm drain inlets capturing 49.28 CY of material; and, 4) performing illegal encampment cleanups removing 188 tons of debris within City greenways.
- The City and Butte LAFCo entered into an agreement that will facilitate the connection of County parcels to city sewer in the high Nitrate Areas of Concern, particularly in the Chapman and Mulberry neighborhoods.

Indicator A—Acreage of New Sewer Hook-ups



Indicator B—Gallons of Water Used Per Capita Per Day



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 seven years. The City has aggressively pursued opportunities to fund new affordable housing in partnership with affordable housing developers during this period. Despite this progress, unemployment, job losses and increasing rents have continued to present affordability challenges, particularly for low-income renters. In the coming 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.

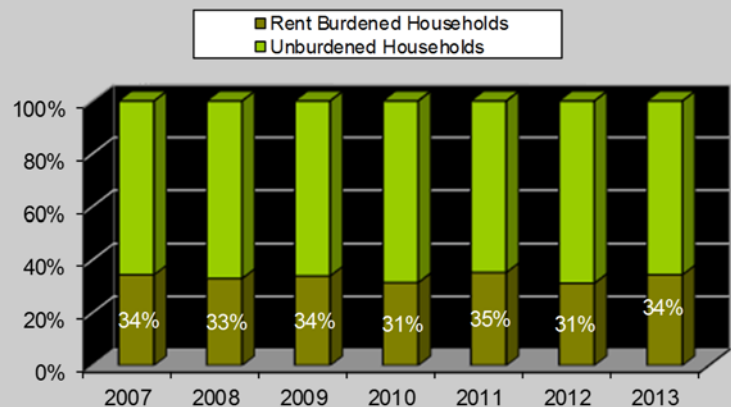
Rating
Moderate
Performance



Recent City & Community Actions

- The City adopted a new Housing Element to guide efforts to develop and preserve housing.
- The Torres Shelter expansion was completed, which includes a dining room, kitchen, check-in area, and overflow space to serve 20 additional guests.
- Habitat completed construction on two additional homes for low-income first-time homebuyers in the South Chapman neighborhood.
- A new alley, including sewer and other infrastructure, was constructed to serve six future homes for low-income buyers in the South Chapman neighborhood.
- Eight low income homeowners in the Nitrate Compliance Areas of the city were assisted with grants to connect to the City sewer.
- The City partnered with local nonprofits and businesses to establish the North Valley Housing Trust, which is a local housing trust that can fund and develop affordable housing. The Trust received State funds to further its goals.
- The City allocated funds for the construction of a 14-unit supportive housing project to serve persons with mental illness.

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 SR99 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 and 2014 data. Identifying new funding sources and incorporating multi-modal infrastructure into capital projects will help expand and improve the bikeway system.

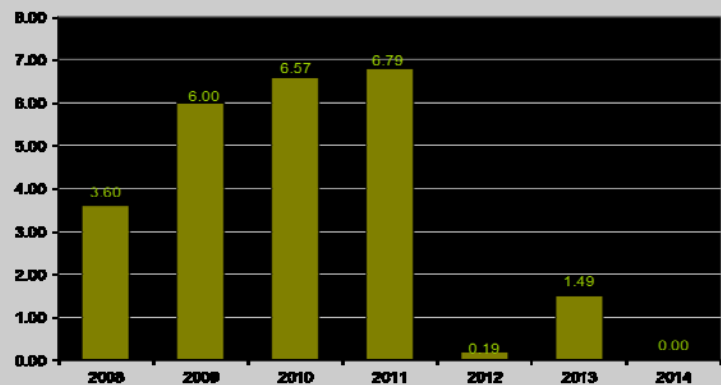
Trend: B-Line ridership dropped over several years, but has shown a steady rebound over the past several years. BCAG is investing resources into promoting its use and enhancing service (e.g., smart phone apps, improved routes, increased headways), which will be critical to continued ridership increases.

Rating
Moderate
Performance

Recent City & Community Actions

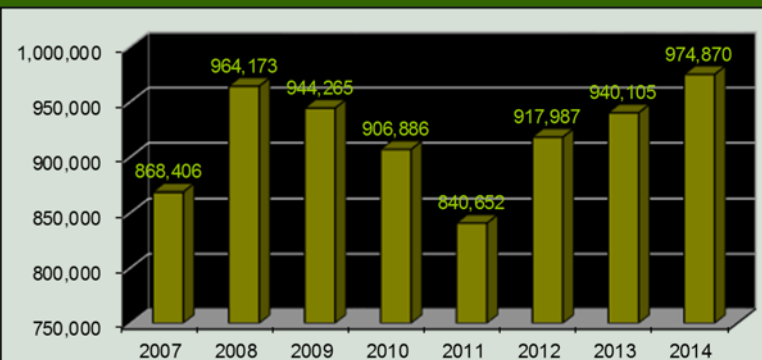
- The City received a \$1M grant to implement the Comanche Creek Greenway Plan, which includes new bike/ped facilities.
- Caltrans and City are collaborating to install bike/ped improvements along Nord Avenue, including a ped signal at the Nord Bike Path to CSUC and additional bike lane width near Big Chico Creek.
- The City’s Traffic Division is finalizing plans to improve bike/ped movement and safety along the highly utilized Ivy Street student travel corridor.
- The City has initiated a comprehensive update to its Bicycle Master Plan with funding from a State grant program.
- The City’s Traffic Division is coordinating with CUSD to identify safety needs at all school facilities, including crosswalk markings, signage, lighting, and additional sidewalk to connect schools to neighborhoods and encourage walking and biking.
- The Couplet Project Phase 2 was completed, including a pedestrian refuge at Memorial/ Esplanade, 1000’ of a multi-use bike/ped path connecting the Esplanade to CSUC and Downtown, and improvements to Children’s Park.
- The City is applying for a Safe Routes to Schools grant to improve connections and bike/ped safety to Chapman Elementary School.
- On-street bike parking increased in the Downtown core with a conversion of a diagonal parking space.

Indicator A—Miles of New Bikeways



Source: Engineering Dept., City of Chico.

Indicator B—Annual B-Line Ridership



Source: BCAG.

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 opportunities to further enhance waste reduction and recycling in Chico, which will be pursued under a new waste franchise agreement.

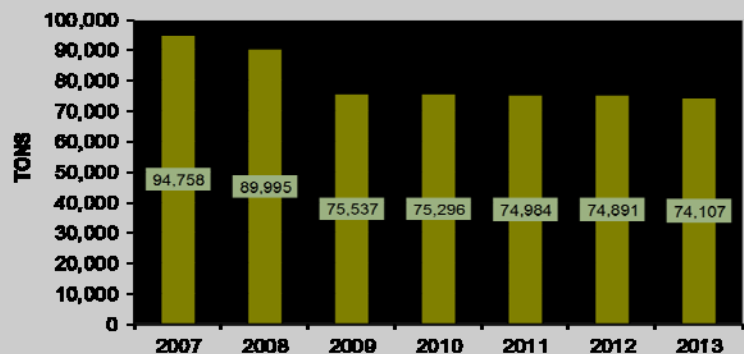
Trend: Progress in this area has been good, but there are ample opportunities through education and enhanced services to further reduce per capita waste disposal.

Rating
Moderate Performance

Recent City & Community Actions

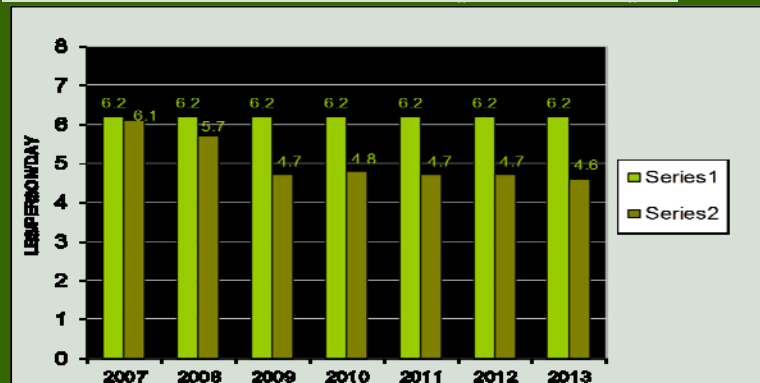
- Butte County approved a solid waste franchise zone system for residential solid waste collection for the unincorporated areas of the County, including portions surrounding Chico. The new system, to be implemented in 2015, establishes new recycling zones that will reduce the number of solid waste trucks traveling residential streets.
- The City is working with a company to compost biosolids at the wastewater facility, which would divert approximately 2,000 tons of material from the landfill.
- In May 2014, Council adopted an ordinance to restrict the use of single-use plastic bags. Beginning January 1, 2015, grocery stores and other large retailers who carry a full line of groceries can no longer provide single-use plastic bags upon carryout, and must charge a minimum of 10 cents per paper bag used.
- The City's consultant, 3Core, continues to evaluate options for a solid waste franchise system, which will be considered by Council in 2015.

Indicator A—Amount of Waste Disposed Annually



Source: City of Chico, GSD.

Indicator B—Amount of Waste Disposed Per Capita



Source: Chico, GSD.

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.recologybuttecolusa.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: City-wide sales tax revenue trended consistent with the global economic recession. Over the past 4 years, data reflects that the economy has hit the bottom, and that sales tax revenue is on the rise. This past year’s sales tax revenue is well above the 2007/2008 fiscal year.

Indicator B: Annual sales tax revenue for Downtown.

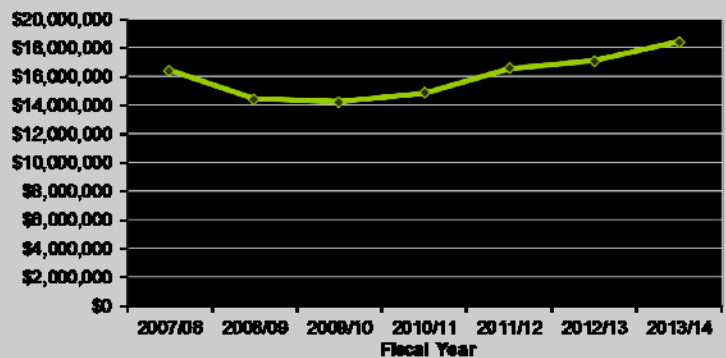
Trend: The upturn in sales tax revenue for Downtown started a year earlier than city-wide, and tax revenue over the past 5 years continues to grow topping \$1M the last 2 years! This is a promising trend for Downtown businesses.

Rating
Clear
Progress

Recent City & Community Actions

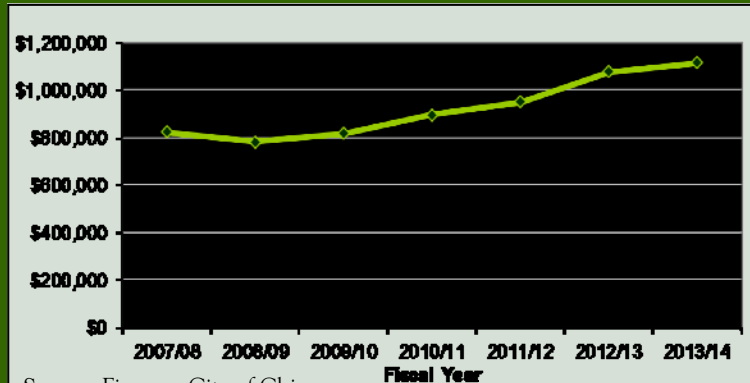
- Team Chico was awarded the CALED Grand Prize Award for top Economic Development Program in the state of California! Deciding criteria included job creation and equity raised.
- The Building Division went live with a new “on-line” permitting system for certain building permit types saving time and money for local contractors.
- According to Bureau of Labor statistics, the unemployment rate for the Chico metropolitan area was 7.9 in February 2015, compared to 10.1% in February 2014 and 11.6% in February 2013. The unemployment rate in Chico peaked in January 2011 at 15.2% and is now 7.3 percentage points lower.
- The City is implementing a \$400k EPA grant to inventory and assess brownfield sites in South Chico with the greatest potential to lead to re-development and business expansion.
- Team Chico is working on a Chico branding project that will help promote Chico as a place live, do business, go to college, recreate, visit, shop, and more.
- DCBA adopted the Downtown Ambassador Program and the Jesus Center Clean-Up Brigade and continues to raise funds for these valuable programs that supplement services regarding cleanliness and safety in the Downtown corridor.
- Council authorized the hiring of an airport manager in the 2014-15 fiscal year to allow for a more concerted effort to be given to economic growth at the airport.

Indicator A—Annual Sales Tax Revenue



Source: Finance, City of Chico.

Indicator B—Annual Sales Tax Revenue for Downtown



Source: Finance, City of Chico.

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: Number of Part 1 crimes per 1,000 population versus number of sworn officers per 1,000 population.

Trend: The past 4 years reflect an ongoing problematic trend for law enforcement in Chico. The City’s population grows as does the number of Part 1 crimes (e.g., homicide, sexual assault, robbery, etc.) while the number of sworn officers per 1,000 population is steadily dropping and remains below the average ratio for other similar sized western cities. Most sworn personnel have been reassigned to street patrol operations, except detectives.

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

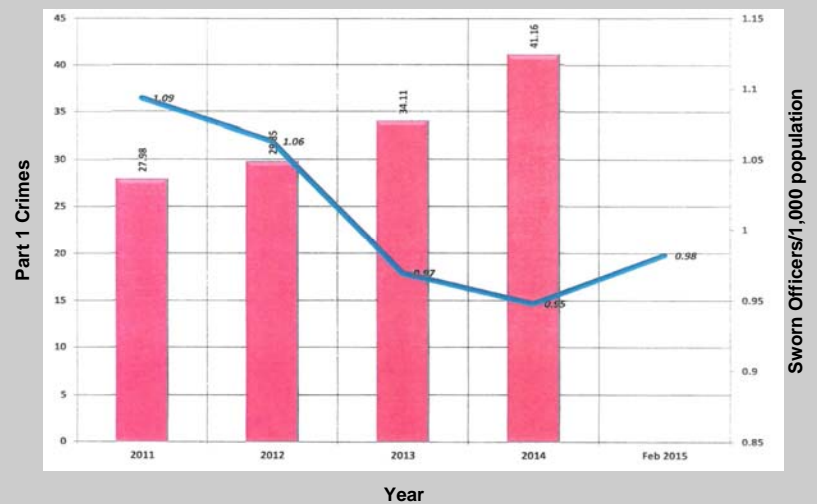
Trend: Call to at scene response time has shown a promising trend the past 3 years, however, the Department strives for a five minute thirty second response time at the 90th percentile. The Department utilizes computer modeling to analyze station locations, staffing, and company placement to maintain and enhance response times and reliability.

Rating
Moderate
Performance

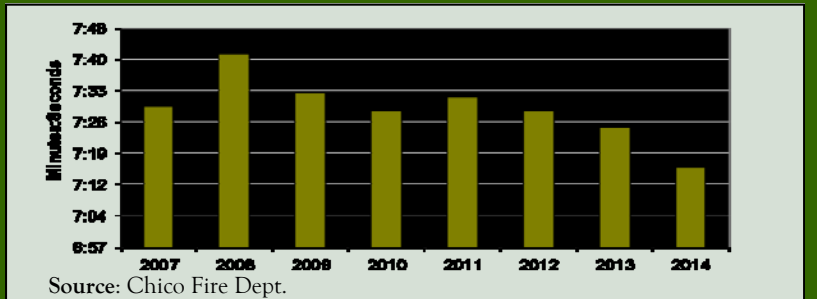
Recent City & Community Actions

- Thanks to SAFER grant funding, Chico Fire graduated an academy of 14 new firefighters—the largest academy in Chico’s history.
- Council approved a new fire response model based upon mission tasked rapid response teams. Further, a 2-person squad is now responding to medical emergencies in the central district, and \$1.2 M was authorized to purchase a new quint/aerial ladder truck.
- A Community Risk Reduction Division was added to Chico Fire with a mandate to mitigate fire/disaster threats to the community.
- Council passed the Police Staffing Plan to restore Chico PD’s officer count to 83, as well as reinstitute the Target Team, Gang Unit, Traffic Team, and other special units.
- Chico PD experienced significant change during 2014 with the retirement of Chief Trostle and a captain. Mike Dunbaugh is serving as the interim chief, returning to PD after serving as its chief from 1992-1996.
- While PD staffing remains a challenge, innovative patrol deployment allowed for dedicated Downtown patrols. The new deployment model will be utilized to meet community needs until the new staffing plan is fully realized through the hiring and training process.
- Chico PD is utilizing a Cal GRIP grant to fund a police officer, and re-establish the youth gang-prevention program for the next two years.

Indicator A—Part 1 Crimes vs. Sworn Officers



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

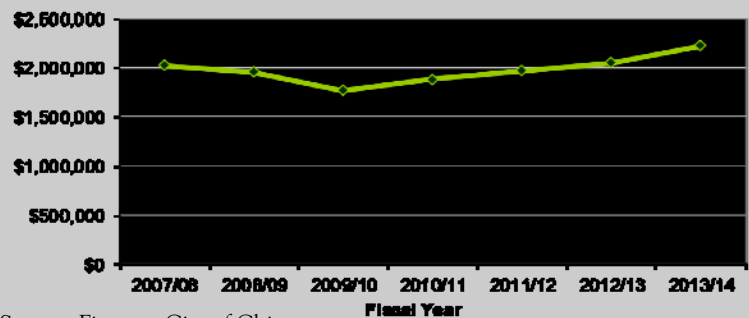
TOT is a reflection of many factors, and the recession likely had a greater impact on the past downturn than anything else. The last four year's steady increase in TOT is promising. The growing popularity of Chico's numerous events, and the addition of new ones, bodes well for the community's growing identity as an arts and culture destination. The loss of staff dedicated to promoting the arts and reduced city funding for local organizations is concerning.

Rating Improvement Area

Recent City & Community Actions

- Due to funding considerations, Council reduced City Arts Commission meeting to two a year (down from six).
- The Chico Arts Foundation initiated an interactive walking tour guide to the many stand-alone public art pieces in Chico, as well as a restoration campaign for Chico's art installations.
- At the request of the Arts Commission, the City funded a community survey to quantify the economic benefits of local arts and cultural events and programs. The data shows that support for the arts creates economic stimulus through generating tax revenue, supporting local jobs, and driving tourism. The survey results are available on the Chico Arts Foundation webpage.
- Renovations took place at the iconic Chico Veterans Memorial Hall on The Esplanade, which is now home to the Museum of Northern California Arts, or MONCA.
- Development of the Chico Arts Foundation (CAF) continues, which would serve as the funding arm of the Chico Arts Commission.

Annual Transient Occupancy Tax



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 partnerships, 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

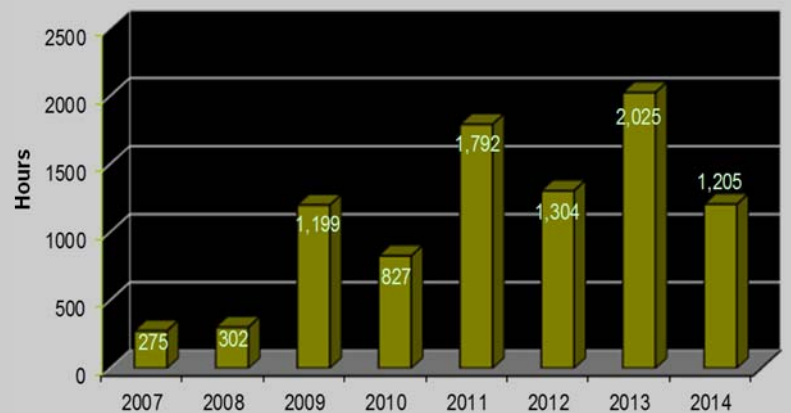
Quantifying volunteer hours and community participation in local decision-making for the betterment of the City is an impossibility. However, the result of this interest and passion can be seen everyday throughout the community. Harnessing that energy is critical, and the City's commitment to a volunteer coordinator has helped connect residents, organizations, and businesses to opportunities to make a difference. The increase in volunteer participation in the two City-sponsored volunteer events (as well as total "tracked" volunteer hours in the Park) over the past 8 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 2014, Park Watch and other community volunteers contributed 28,500 hours of work to Bidwell Park and other Chico Greenways. Tasks included litter cleanup, weed removal, trail work, planting of natives, and painting.
- With the loss of the Park Services Coordinator, a park intern stepped in to coordinate and support the City's volunteer program in 2014. A new Park Services Coordinator was hired in early 2015!
- 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.
- The Clean and Safe Chico program continues its successful goodwill ambassadors program to provide information and a street pastors program for ministering to the homeless in Downtown.
- BEC's Bidwell Park and Chico Creeks Cleanup event totaled 450 volunteers!
- The Friends of Comanche Creek Greenway logged 1,400 hours in 2014, removing invasive plants and trash.

Participation in Chico's Make a Difference Day Events



Source: DPW, City of Chico.



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/