



City of Chico

# SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS REPORT



MAY 2012



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chico Certified Farmers' Market

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 2012

*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.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	1
NATURAL SYSTEMS & AGRICULTURE	
Biological Resources/Urban Forest .....	3
Air Quality .....	4
Climate Change .....	5
Agriculture and Local Food Production.....	6
Open Space .....	7
BUILT ENVIRONMENT	
Public Facilities & Services .....	9
Housing .....	10
Circulation .....	11
Waste Reduction & Recycling .....	12
SOCIOECONOMICS	
Economic Development .....	14
Public Safety.....	15
Arts and Culture .....	16
Community Participation .....	17

# 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.<sup>1</sup> 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 2011, one indicator shows clear progress, six show moderate performance, and six show need for improvement.

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

<sup>1</sup> 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 will be 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. The General Services Department maintains approximately 31,400 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

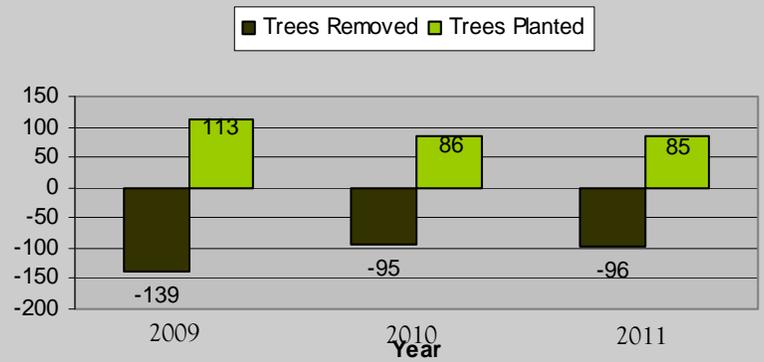
Chico's urban forest is aging, and there is a need to replenish it with new trees to retain the canopy's benefits. Over the past three years there were more trees removed from the City's right-of-way than planted. The Urban Forester is focusing resources and developing new programs to support a healthy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

**Rating**  
**Improvement**  
**Area**

## Recent City & Community Actions

- The City adopted new tree preservation regulations which address the removal, replacement, and preservation of trees city-wide on undeveloped parcels greater than 10,000 s.f.
- The City's Urban Forester continued the City's Free Street Tree Planting Program to increase the number of new trees being planted. During the last year, 95 citizens signed up for the program, resulting in 86 new trees planted. Another 50 trees are scheduled to be planted later this spring.
- The City's street tree inventory was updated, including a new street tree layer on the City's GIS mapping system, which will help the City track tree planting success and maintenance needs. The program is updated daily as City crews exam and maintain trees.
- The Bidwell Park and Playground Commission included the development of an Urban Forest Management Plan on its bi-annual work plan. The California Urban Forests Council has asked the City to use its new toolkit for developing urban forest management plans, which has put this effort ahead of schedule.
- The City was again designated as a 'Tree City USA' by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

**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](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/street_trees.asp)
- California Department of Fish & Game - [www.dfg.ca.gov/](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Sacramento) - [www.fws.gov/sacramento/](http://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<sub>2.5</sub> 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<sub>2.5</sub>.

## Trend

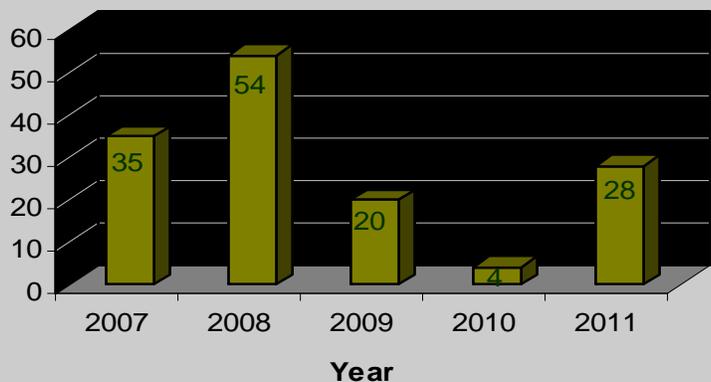
It can be difficult to identify trends for air quality measurements because of the many factors that effect them, including meteorological conditions and catastrophic events. As an example, the 2008 wildfires resulted in an unusual number of summer day where the PM<sub>2.5</sub> and ozone thresholds were exceeded. The trend has been improving, especially with ozone. The City is aggressively addressing air quality issues, including adopting a new wood-burning ordinance and collaborating with the Air District on its CEQA Handbook Update. These efforts are beneficial, but significant work remains.

**Rating Improvement Area**

## Recent City & Community Actions

- The Air District has initiated an update of its CEQA Air Quality Handbook, which will aid jurisdictions in terms of quantifying and mitigating air quality impacts during environmental review.
- BCAG expanded and improved regional and Chico B-Line routes to enhance on-time performance and overall service, which has resulted in increased ridership.
- The City completed Phase I of its award-winning Highway 99 Corridor Bikeway Project, which consists of a 7-mile long contiguous bike path and bicycle related facilities generally paralleling the SR 99 corridor. Enhanced alternative circulation reduces air quality impacts.
- Council adopted an ordinance prohibiting wood burning (with exceptions) during the no burn curtailment period as designated and advised by the Butte County Air Quality Management District under its voluntary program.
- 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 is working closely with EPA to secure incentive funds for a Woodstove Change Out program toward reducing PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels.

## Number of Days over Ozone or PM<sub>2.5</sub> Federal Standard



## Web Links & Other Resources

- Butte County Air Quality Management District - [www.bcaqmd.org/](http://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 will maintain a Climate Action Plan that identifies programs and actions to meet Council's GHG reduction goal.

## Indicator

Following adoption of 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 will lay out the framework for future City efforts to address climate change.

**Rating**  
**Improvement Area**

## Recent City & Community Actions

- The City completed a draft of the Climate Action Plan (CAP). The CAP outlines measures to be implemented to reach the City's 25% greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal.
- According to the report *California's Solar Cities 2012*, among cities with at least 50,000 residents, Chico has the most solar generation capacity per resident. In absolute terms, Chico has the 10th most photovoltaic capacity of any city in California, right behind Oakland.
- The City began implementation of the PG&E Innovators Pilot Grant to conduct whole-house energy performance audits, install weatherization and energy efficient measures, and provide energy consultations to 100 homes.
- The City's Zoning Code was amended to promote renewable energy devices (e.g., solar panels), including allowances to development standards for height and setbacks, and a provision for staff level architectural review.
- Last year, the City updated its existing Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance, which requires energy and water efficiency upgrades at the point-of-sale of a home, prior to transfer of ownership. Upgrades include items such as insulation, programmable thermostats, water heater insulation, and draft elimination.
- CUSD recently installed six solar arrays with a seventh due later this year. The two largest installations are in the parking lots at Chico and Pleasant Valley High, which total 1139 kw production and offset over 80% of the two schools electrical bills. The other arrays are at Marsh Junior, Little Chico Creek, the CUSD Corporation Yard, and on top of the new buildings at Chico High.

## Total Annual GHG Reductions

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



## Web Links & Other Resources

- Sustainability Task Force - [www.ci.chico.ca.us/government/minutes\\_agendas/sustainability\\_task\\_force.asp](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/government/minutes_agendas/sustainability_task_force.asp)
- CSUC: Our Sustainable Future - [www.csuchico.edu/sustainablefuture/practices/](http://www.csuchico.edu/sustainablefuture/practices/)
- PG&E Climate Smart - [www.pge.com/climatesmart/](http://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), eight 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.

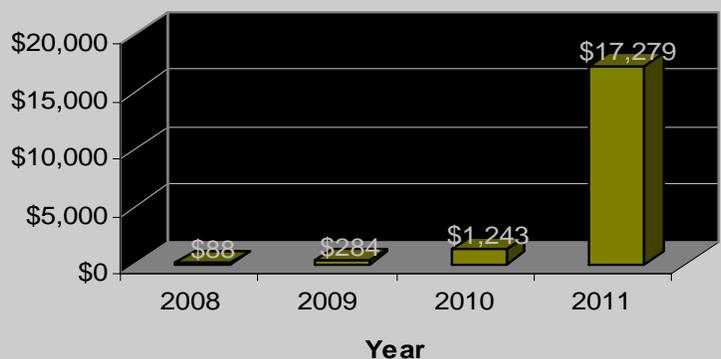
**Trend:** The increase in use of EBT cards at farmers' markets is promising with much of the upswing due to the Chico Certified Farmers Market accepting EBT starting in late 2010. The Thursday Night Market recently added EBT technology, and an incentive program for using EBT at markets is underway.

**Rating**  
Moderate  
Performance

## Recent City & Community Actions

- With adoption of the Chico 2030 General Plan, the City reconfirmed its commitment to the Greenline, which provides a firm boundary between urban uses and prime agricultural lands on the community's western edge.
- The DCBA-run Thursday Night Market has taken the steps necessary to become an EBT-enabled market and will be accepting EBT cards in 2012 and beyond.
- Development standards in the City's Zoning Code were amended to promote and allow more agricultural uses by right, including small animal keeping and community gardens.
- The Northern California Regional Land Trust received a grant to expand its Buy Fresh Buy Local program. The purpose of the grant is to expand marketing opportunities, and provide assistance and training to area specialty crop producers to increase profitability and build more secure and sustainable local economies.
- At the request of GRUB and residents at Murphy Commons, the City approved a grant of license for a community garden at this affordable housing project.
- GRUB received a \$500,000 grant to form a coalition that will focus on the community's nutritional needs, create incentives for EBT recipients at farmers' markets, provide technical assistance to markets, help cover up-front costs for markets serving low-income growers, expand the number of community gardens, and develop culinary exhibitions.
- At the request of BEC, the City approved a grant of license for a 1-acre community garden on City-owned land at Humboldt/Notre Dame Avenue.

## EBT Sales at Chico's Farmers' Markets



## Web Links & Other Resources

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

**Goal:** Preserve and 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
<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>5012.1</b>				<b>3929</b>

**Recent City & Community Actions**

- The City partnered with key stakeholders to obtain a \$907,000 State Water Board grant to enhance wetlands, increase floodplain capacity, restore native vegetation, establish cultural planting areas, construct a walking trail, and provide public education at Verbena Fields 20-acre former gravel mining quarry located along Lindo Channel.
- The BPPC approved the Comanche Creek Greenway Man-

agement Plan/Improvement Project. These documents will guide future activities in the Greenway, as funding permits.

- The Teichert Ponds Restoration Plan was finalized and all permits obtained. Staff continues coordination with the Teichert Ponds Restoration Foundation, and submitted a grant application seeking funding to implement the Plan.
- As part of the Recreational Trails Grant Middle Trail Rehabilitation Project, the Park Division oversaw nearly 3,000 feet of sustainable improvements to Middle Trail.

**Web Links & Other Resources**

- Chico Parks Division - [www.chico.ca.us/general\\_services\\_department/park\\_division/home\\_page.asp](http://www.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/home_page.asp)
- Northern California Regional Land Trust - [www.landconservation.org/](http://www.landconservation.org/)
- Teichert Ponds Restoration Foundation - [www.chicoteichertponds.wordpress.com/](http://www.chicoteichertponds.wordpress.com/)
- Chico Creek Nature Center - [www.bidwellpark.org/](http://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.

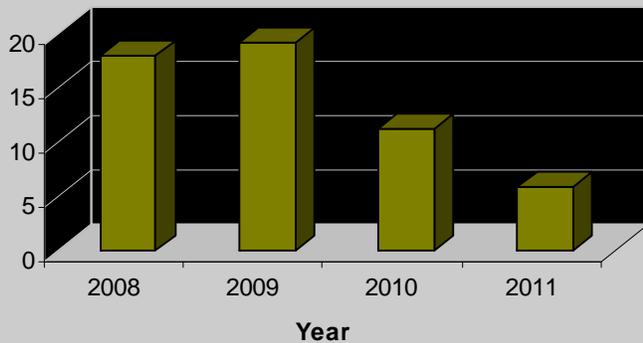
**Trend:** Annual water usage in Chico has decreased from approximately 301 GPCD in 2004 to approximately 218 GPCD in 2011.

**Rating**  
**Moderate Performance**

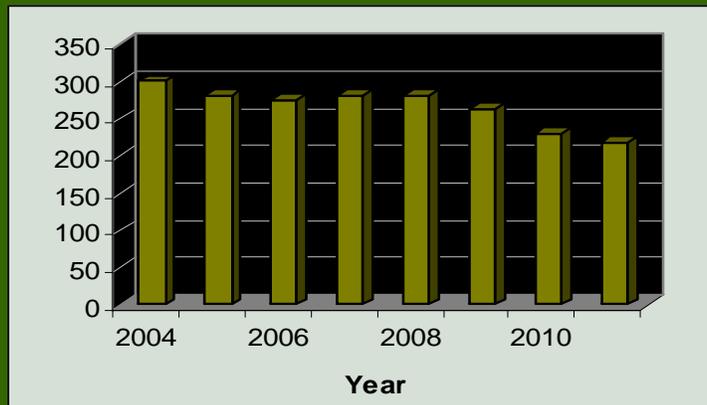
**Recent City & Community Actions**

- As part of the Nitrate Compliance Program, the City extended sewer mains to the Chapman/Mulberry neighborhood, and along Humboldt Ave. and the Dayton/Pomona Ave. area, bringing the program to 35% complete.
- 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.
- GSD installed new meter technology at the Transit Center parking lot, including a station that accepts coin, bills and credit cards, in order to increase payment convenience. This is the first step in a plan to improve the parking experience for Downtown visitors.
- GSD helped keep the community’s streets, storm drains and waterways clean by: 1) collecting 34,170 CY of leaf material during the annual collection program; 2) sweeping 29,126 curb miles and collecting 6,006 CY of material from streets; and 3) performing illegal encampment cleanups removing 28 CY of trash from our creeks.
- The City achieved \$77,097 in fuel savings through fleet optimization and inventory reduction.

**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](http://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](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/home_page.asp)
- Chico Urban Area Nitrate Compliance Program - [www.nitratecompliance.org/](http://www.nitratecompliance.org/)
- Cal Water Service Company - [www.calwater.com/index.php](http://www.calwater.com/index.php)
- Butte County Dept. of Water & Resource Conservation - [www.buttecounty.net/Water\\_and\\_Resource\\_Conservation.aspx](http://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% of income toward rent.

## Trend

The number and proportion of rent-burdened households has decreased moderately over the last four years, which is noteworthy given the current economic conditions. 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.

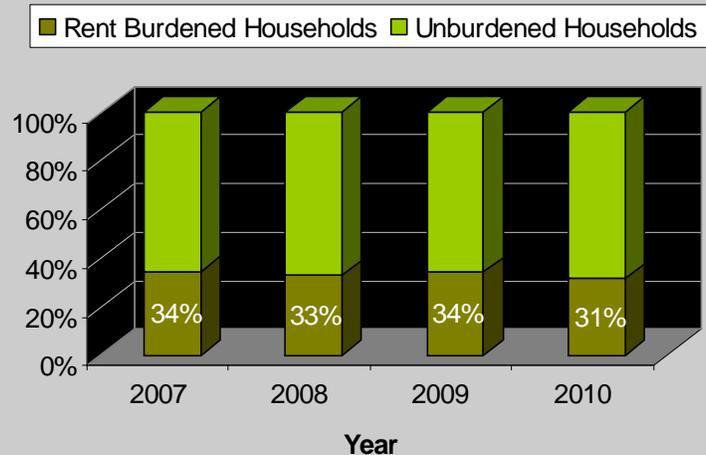
**Rating**  
Moderate  
Performance



## Recent City & Community Actions

- The City committed funding and approved the Harvest Park project, a 90-unit affordable housing complex for families on East Avenue west of Orchard Supply.
- The Chico Community Shelter Partnership and City collaborated to secure funding to expand the Torres Shelter to include dining and kitchen facilities which will also provide overflow space for guests.
- The City committed funding and approved the North Point Apartments, a 50-unit affordable housing complex for families on North Esplanade.
- The Parkside Terrace, Villa Serena, and Habitat Greens projects were completed last year, together totaling 104 affordable housing units. Green building features were incorporated, such as an efficient hydronic water heating system, location adjacent to grade-separated bike paths with ample bike parking, solar panels, and drought-tolerant landscaping.
- The State's dissolution of the City's Redevelopment Agency will greatly hamper the City's ability to fund and develop affordable housing in the future.

Percent of Households Paying >50% of Income Toward Rent



## Web Links & Other Resources

- City of Chico Housing Office - [www.ci.chico.ca.us/housing\\_neighborhood\\_services/housing/housing.asp](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/housing_neighborhood_services/housing/housing.asp)
- Housing Authority of Butte County - [www.butte-housing.com/](http://www.butte-housing.com/)
- Community Housing Improvement Program - [www.chiphousing.org/](http://www.chiphousing.org/)
- Habitat for Humanity (Butte County) - [www.buttehabitat.org/](http://www.buttehabitat.org/)
- Community Action Agency of Butte County - [www.buttecaa.com/](http://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 grants monies, but grants do not provide a reliable funding source. Identifying new funding and incorporating multi-modal infrastructure into capital projects will help expand improve the City’s bikeway system.

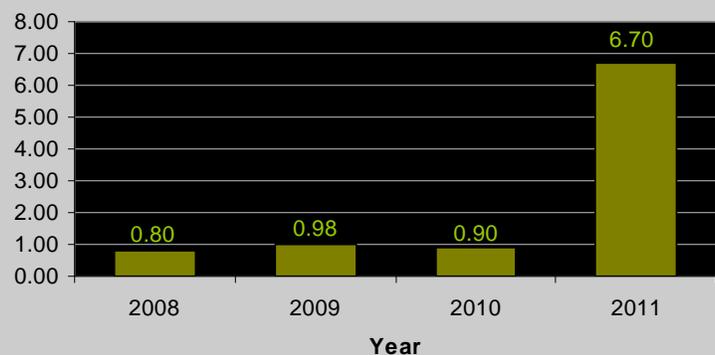
**Trend:** B-Line ridership has shown a steady increase over the past 5 years. BCAG continues to invest resources into promoting its use and enhancing service, which will be critical to continued ridership increases.

**Rating**  
Moderate  
Performance

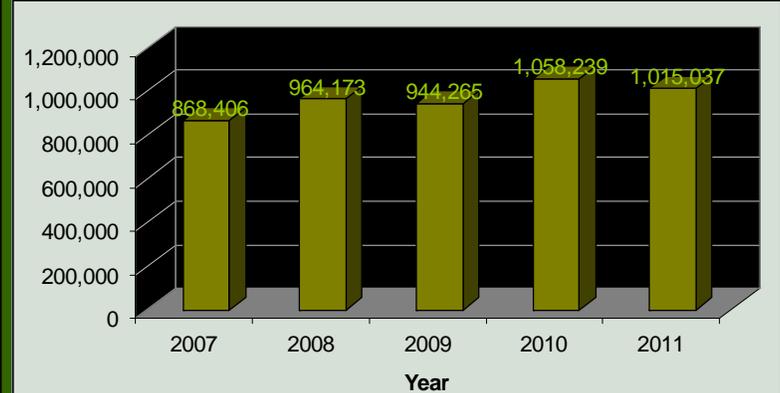
**Recent City & Community Actions**

- BCAG adjusted a number of B-Line routes to improve on-time performance and establish an express route through major points of destination every 15 minutes. Ridership is increasing!
- The first phase of the SR 99 Bikeway Project was completed. In its final configuration, the award-winning project will be a 7-mile long continuous bicycle and pedestrian facility that closely parallels the SR 99 corridor.
- Significant improvements were made in the Barber Neighborhood, including rehabilitating street pavement, replacing damaged or installing new sidewalks, and incorporating ramps to ADA standards along 14 blocks.
- The E. 5th Avenue Reconstruction project between Mangrove and Esplanade was completed, which included street reconstruction, sidewalks, traffic-calming features, enhanced parking, and bike lanes.
- In partnership with a developer, a traffic signal at Esplanade/Nord Highway was installed to improve traffic control and pedestrian safety.
- The City secured a Safe Routes to Schools grant to improve Manzanita Avenue at its intersection with Marigold Avenue. Sidewalks and bike lanes will be built to fill existing gaps, which will serve three schools: Pleasant Valley High, Marigold Elementary, and Loma Vista.
- Chico is recognized as a bronze level bike friendly community by the League of American Bicyclists, and has submitted an application for a higher rating.

**Indicator A—Miles of New Bikeways**



**Indicator B—Annual B-Line Ridership**



**Web Links & Other Resources**

- Chico Traffic Engineering Division - [www.ci.chico.ca.us/building\\_development\\_services/traffic/traffic\\_engineering.asp](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/building_development_services/traffic/traffic_engineering.asp)
- BCAG’s B-Line - [www.blinetransit.com/](http://www.blinetransit.com/)
- Butte Bike Coalition - [www.buttebicyclecoalition.org/](http://www.buttebicyclecoalition.org/)
- Chico Velo Cycling Club - [www.chicovelo.org/main/](http://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.

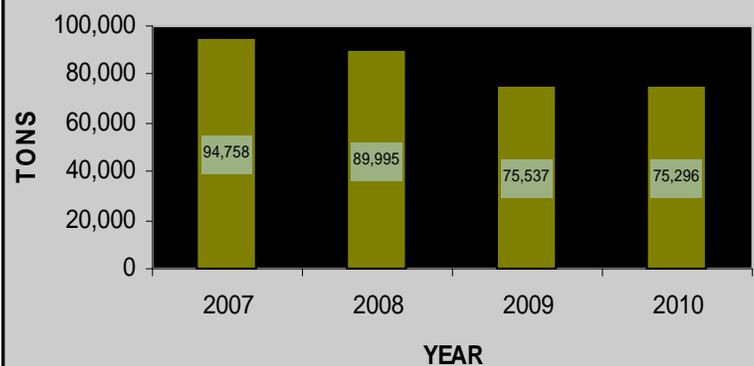
**Trend:** Progress in this area has been good, but there are ample opportunities through education and enhanced services to further reduce per capita waste disposal.

**Rating**  
Moderate  
Performance

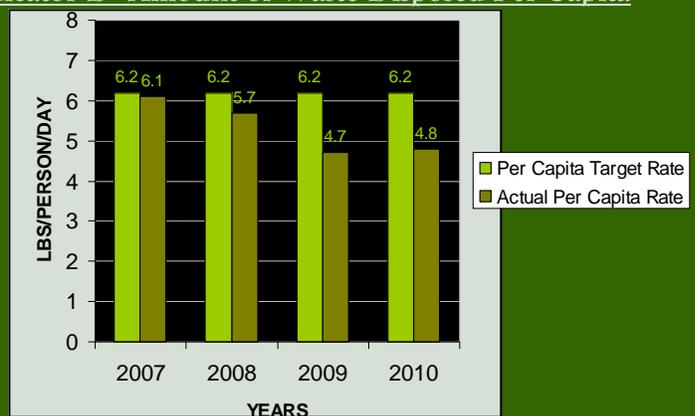
## Recent City & Community Actions

- The City worked with the local waste haulers and CLIC to conduct a Multifamily Recycling Pilot Project to encourage tenants and property owners from 4 apartment complexes to recycle. A \$38,000 grant was obtained from CalRecycle to expand the program in the coming year.
- Butte County entered into an agreement with Ameresco Energy to collect methane gas at its Neal Road Facility to generate power. The project will produce over 2 megawatts of electricity. The project will also reduce CO2 emissions equivalent to removing more than 17,000 cars from the road.
- Staff is negotiating with a company to compost the biosolids from the City's wastewater treatment plant, which would divert approximately 2,000 tons of materials from the landfill.
- AB 341 goes into effect this year requiring businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of waste per week or multifamily projects of 5 units or more to provide recycling. The law requires the City to conduct a commercial recycling education/outreach effort, monitor program implementation, and report to CalRecycle annually on compliance.

## Indicator A—Amount of Waste Disposed Annually



## Indicator B—Amount of Waste Disposed Per Capita



## 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](http://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](http://www.northvalley.wm.com/chico.asp)
- Recology (Butte Colusa Counties) - [www.recologybuttecolusa.com/](http://www.recologybuttecolusa.com/)
- Neal Road Landfill - [www.buttecounty.net/Public Works/Divisions/Solid Waste/Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility.aspx](http://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 has been obviously poor consistent with the global economic recession. There is a sign that the economy has hit the bottom, and that sales tax revenue is starting to pick up. This past year’s sales tax revenue is still well below the 2007/2008 fiscal year.

**Indicator B:** Annual sales tax revenue for Downtown.

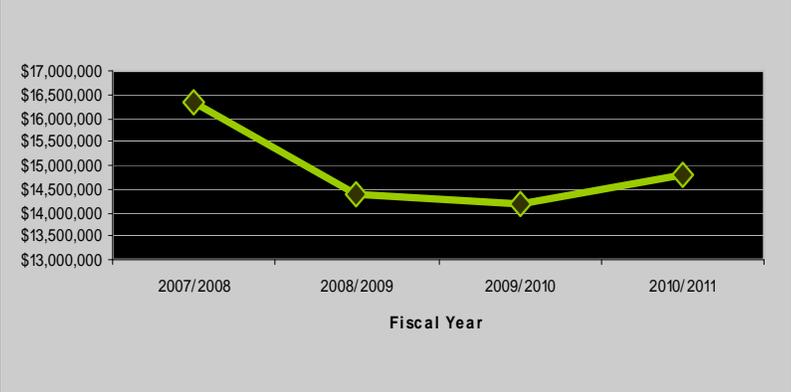
**Trend:** The upturn in sales tax revenue for the Downtown appears to have started a year earlier than city-wide, and revenue this past year is ahead of the 2007/2008 fiscal year. This is a promising trend.

**Rating  
Improvement  
Area**

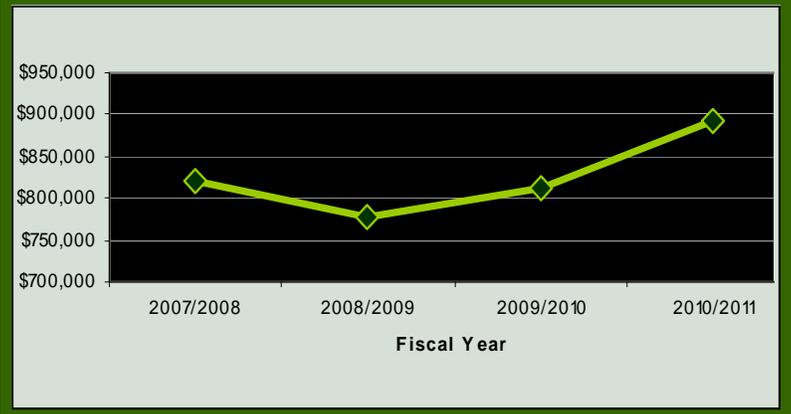
**Recent City & Community Actions**

- The City collaborated with the Chamber of Commerce to develop strategies to improve the business climate based on outcomes from a Chamber-sponsored Business Summit. That effort combined with the recommendations from the Innovation Scorecard prepared by GROWCalifornia has provided guidance for the investment of City resources to support the priorities of the local business community.
- The City assisted in a grant submittal to secure \$758,200 for an alternative fuels pilot project in Chico. The 1,000 gallon per day biofuel facility to be developed by Springboard Biodiesel, a local manufacturer, has successfully competed in the first round of the proposal review process, scoring higher than any other proposal in the state.
- The City partnered with the County to reconstruct Hegan Lane. This major improvement to the appearance and access to the Hegan Lane Industrial Park is part of the City’s economic development efforts in this area.
- Build.Com, which is based in Chico, is North America’s fastest growing internet retailer and added substantial new jobs in the past year.
- The first State of the Community event was held in February 2012. Representatives from the State, County, City, CARD, CSUC, Butte College, and CUSD each presented a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis on their respective agency.
- The Chamber of Commerce presents a monthly Business Spotlight at Council meetings highlighting and recognizing local businesses and their contribution to our community.

**Indicator A—Annual Sales Tax Revenue**



**Indicator B—Annual Sales Tax Revenue for Downtown**



**Web Links & Other Resources**

- City ED webpage - [www.chicoeconomicdevelopment.com/](http://www.chicoeconomicdevelopment.com/)
- Chico Chamber of Commerce - [www.chicochamber.com/](http://www.chicochamber.com/)
- Downtown Chico Business Association - [www.downtownchico.net/](http://www.downtownchico.net/)
- Center for Economic Development - [www.cedcal.com/welcome/](http://www.cedcal.com/welcome/)
- 3 Core - [www.3coreedc.org/](http://www.3coreedc.org/)
- Chico Economic Planning Corporation - [www.cepc.com/](http://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:** Police Department staffing, crime, calls for service, and population.

**Trend:** The past 8 years reflect a long-term pattern for law enforcement in Chico. The City population continues to grow with an increasing number of calls for service, while simultaneously there is a reduction in the ratio of sworn officers per 1,000 population and the ability to take reports. The most favorable trend indicated is a continued decrease in more serious Part 1 crimes (e.g., homicide, rape, robbery).

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

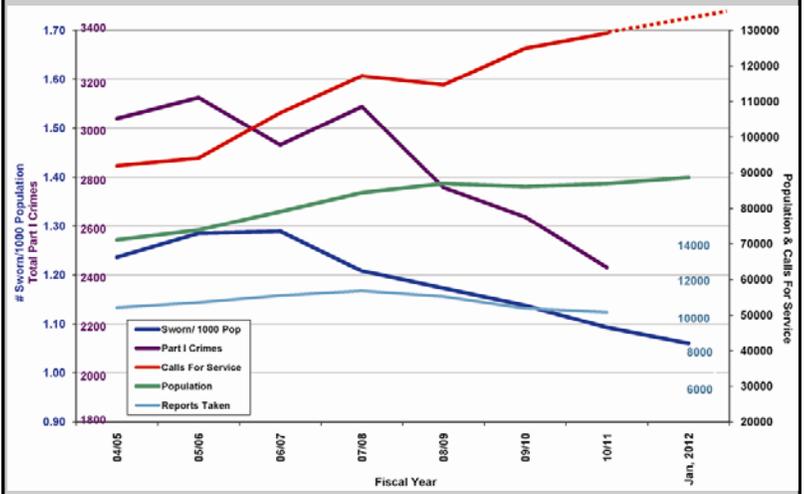
**Trend:** Call to at scene response time has remained consistent over the past 5 years, however, the Department strives for a five minute thirty second response time at the 90th percentile. The Department utilizes computer modeling to analyze station locations, staffing, and company placement to maintain and enhance response times and reliability.

Rating  
Improvement  
Area

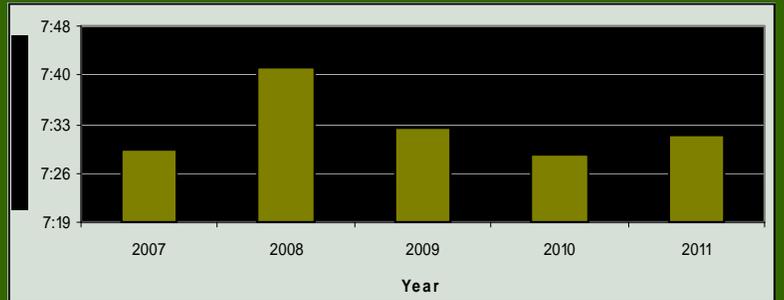
**Recent City & Community Actions**

- Chico Fire received a grant award of \$437,000 for the purchase of a single-type self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). 77 SCBAs were purchased, and all personnel received training, which will greatly enhance firefighter safety.
- Chico Fire received a grant award of \$68,000 for the replacement of a Fire Safe House mobile training prop to increase public awareness of installing and maintaining smoke alarms and the importance of home escape plans.
- Chico PD actively participated in the passage of a state law which would serve to assist in mitigating the regional Labor Day event on the Sacramento River.
- Chico PD initiated and completed a community survey to evaluate citizen perception of safety, citizen opinions about police priorities and the level of citizen satisfaction with the Department.
- Chico PD held a community meeting to discuss issues related to racial profiling in policing.
- A new policy manual for police operations was completed and is being utilized, including revisions to the policy relating to providing services to limited English speaking populations.
- Chico PD held a series of community meetings as part of an effort to amend the City's Noise Ordinance to make it more effective in addressing chronic noise problems throughout the community.

**Indicator A—Staffing, Crime, Service Calls & Population**



**Indicator B—Response Times at the 90th Percentile**



**Web Links & Other Resources**

- Chico Fire Department - [www.ci.chico.ca.us/fire/home\\_page.asp](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/fire/home_page.asp)
- Chico Police Department - [www.ci.chico.ca.us/police/home\\_page.asp](http://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**

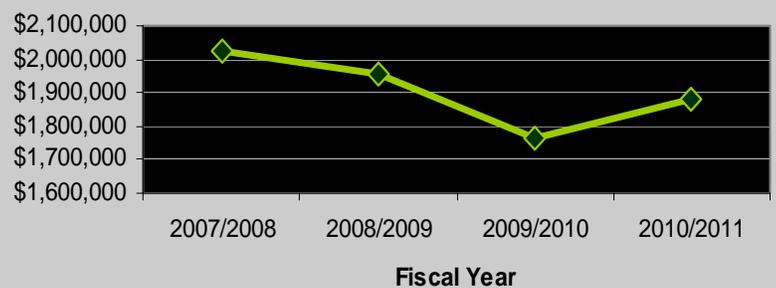
TOT is a reflection of many factors, and the current recession has likely had a greater impact on its recent downturn than anything else. Last year's slight increase in TOT is promising. The growing popularity of Chico's numerous annual events, and the addition of new ones, bodes well for the community's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

**Rating**  
Moderate  
Performance

**Recent City & Community Actions**

- Council adopted a revised Art in Public Places Policy to ensure transparency in the public art processes and provide a user-friendly document for artists, the public, and City officials and staff.
- Artists were included on the SR 99 Bikeway Project design team. Aesthetic treatments stimulate public interest and awareness of the bikeway.
- The Chico Arts Foundation, a non-profit funding arm of the Arts Commission, was established to generate funds and other resources for City projects and programs. To sustain Chico's reputation as at top ten art town in America, more robust, dependable funding streams are necessary.
- Marketing Chico as an arts and culture destination was supported with the City-funded Artoberfest marketing campaign, which contributes to increased sales and transient occupancy taxes. Other marketing efforts included partnering with the Chico Arts Center to promote the Open Studio Tour of over 80 artist work spaces, and with the Chico Visual Arts Alliance to produce a map/brochure/website listing galleries and studios open to the public.
- Last year, the City partnered with University Public Events to provide a field trip series for school age children offering free or low cost admission to performances of world class music, dance, and theatre. The City also supported the Children's Choir of Chico, Children's Theatre Company, a free Puppet Theatre, World Musical Festival, and North State Symphony's Youth Concert.

**Annual Transient Occupancy Tax**



**Web Links & Other Resources**

- City Arts Program - [www.ci.chico.ca.us/arts\\_commission/home\\_page.asp](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/arts_commission/home_page.asp)
- Artoberfest - [www.artoberfest.org/](http://www.artoberfest.org/)
- Chico Art Center - [www.chicoartcenter.com/](http://www.chicoartcenter.com/)
- Mechoopda Indian Tribe - [www.mechoopda-nsn.gov/](http://www.mechoopda-nsn.gov/)
- Downtown Chico Business Association - [www.downtownchico.net/](http://www.downtownchico.net/)
- Chico Museum - [www.chicomuseum.org/](http://www.chicomuseum.org/)

# Community Participation

## 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.

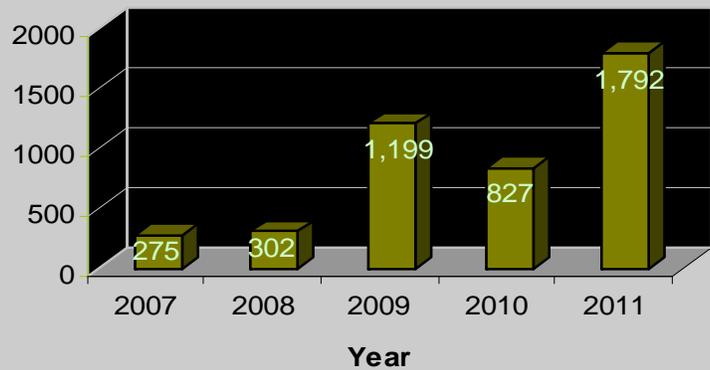
## Trend

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 in 2006 helped further connect residents, organizations, and businesses to opportunities to make a difference. The steady increase in volunteer participation in the two City-sponsored volunteer events over the past 5 years is a direct reflection of this community's commitment to be actively involved in improving Chico.

**Rating**  
Clear Progress



Participation in Chico's Make a Difference Day Events



## Recent City & Community Actions

- In 2011, through the City's Park Volunteer Program, volunteers contributed 17,375 hours of work to Bidwell Park and other Chico Greenways.
- The City's Volunteer Coordinator initiated the Team Leader Program with the goal of increasing leaders who can work independently with general volunteers in Bidwell Park with staff support and guidance.
- The City developed a Diversity Action Plan to serve as a strategy to actively remove barriers and promote diversity within city government and the larger community. The plan seeks to establish a climate for all individuals and groups to develop the trust and understanding to engage in city governance processes, influence decision making and access municipal services.



## Web Links & Other Resources

- City of Chico Volunteer Program - [www.ci.chico.ca.us/general\\_services\\_department/park\\_division/volunteering.asp](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/volunteering.asp)
- Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE) - [www.aschico.com/cave](http://www.aschico.com/cave)
- Friends of Bidwell Park - [www.friendsofbidwellpark.org/](http://www.friendsofbidwellpark.org/)