

TRANSIT

Background

BCAG has been the owner/operator for Butte Regional Transit (B-Line), a fully consolidated transit system, since 2005. This was the result of a coordinated study which evaluated the feasibility of establishing countywide consolidated transit services and determined it was more cost efficient to administer and operate public transit services within the cities and county under one consolidated system, while at the same time providing the opportunity to improve the overall quality of the service.

B-Line provides fixed route and paratransit services to the cities of Chico, Oroville, Gridley, Biggs, the Town of Paradise, and the unincorporated communities of Butte County. Butte County is a rural and urban county that has recently experienced unprecedented natural disasters including the Camp Fire (November 2018), which was the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in the nation in the last 100 years, and the Oroville Dam main and emergency spillway crisis (February 2017). The county is in process of rebuilding, and the proposed project will serve many displaced residents from the Town of Paradise that are now living in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) trailers.

Following the Camp Fire, the estimates of current population, housing, land use, and travel are unknown. In addition, the existing long-term forecasts of these planning elements are likely no longer applicable to the region. The Post-Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study will analyze regional population, housing, employment, and traffic data for pre, post, and future time periods. The study will develop several scenarios for population and travel for the 2025, 2035, and 2045 time period(s) based on existing research, empirical data, and existing policies available at the time of study development. In addition, an update of the 2015 Transit & Non-Motorized Plan will be completed with the collected data. The Study will inform the 2024 RTP/SCS and various land use, transportation, and housing plans and projects beyond the “best available” data used in development of this 2020 RTP/SCS.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the transit service in Butte County is to provide transportation services to the citizens of Butte County and comply with the statutes of the Transportation Development Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The transit system in Butte County is a critical component to the region’s overall transportation network. The system serves commuters, low income families, disabled individuals, students, as well as the elderly.

The transit system improves air quality by providing an alternative to the single occupant vehicle, improves congestion on local roads and highways, and provides for an alternative mode of travel. The B-Line fleet is a combination of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and diesel vehicles. BCAG is in the process of converting its fleet to 100 percent electric by 2040 and has secured funds to purchase its first electric buses through Caltrans' Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) and Federal Transit Administration's Buses and Bus Facilities Program. This effort is aligned with Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-19-19 to continue California's climate change mitigation efforts.

In April 2015, BCAG completed an extensive planning effort to develop a new Transit and Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (TNMTP) for the region. The purpose of the project was to enhance transit, bike and pedestrian modes included in the 2016 RTP/SCS. The Plan also identified short-term changes and enhancements, as well as long-term improvements needed based on projected growth in Butte County. The complete TNMTP plan is posted at: <http://www.bcag.org/Planning/Transit--Non-Motorized-Transportation-Plan/index.html>.

The data contained in this chapter is largely derived from the 2015 TNMP for information purposes only. The TNMP update will be completed in 2021.

TRANSIT PERFORMANCE

Prior to the Camp Fire, B-Line's annual revenue hours and ridership were relatively stable, particularly in Chico, Paradise, and Oroville. The Camp Fire had a major impact on the system with reduction of service to the Paradise area due to the migration of nearly 30,000 residents from the Ridge.

Another major disruption to transit ridership nationwide occurred in March 2020 due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). This resulted in overall depressed passenger ridership, fares, and service hours. Fixed route service remained the same for the most part, except for Student Shuttle routes (8 & 9) that were reduced due to Chico State's cancellation of on-campus classes. Also, because of reduced driver availability due to COVID quarantines, service on other routes was temporarily reduced.

Unlike fixed route hours that only saw a relatively small reduction in revenue hours, Paratransit service hours were basically cut in half. That's because while the fixed routes operate on a set schedule regardless of passenger numbers, Paratransit hours are strictly based on ridership reservations. Overall Paratransit ridership during the 4th quarter was down over 72%. This is in line with the nationwide transit usage dropping by 75% in 2020.

In response to the significant changes to B-Line ridership and service from the Camp Fire and COVID-19, BCAG will prepare the B-Line Routing Study to develop short, mid- and long-term recommendations for providing a more

sustainable and innovative regional transit system. The Study will address the shift in population, ridership, and identify routes that are needed to serve displaced residents. This Study will use the TNMP update as a base for developing recommendations.

Maintaining consistent on-time performance continues to be a challenge for several B-Line routes. Over the past few years revisions to the schedule have been in Chico to allow more layover time at the Transit Center and in effect helped the system to run closer to the schedule times. On-time performance is still an issue on the local Oroville service. With a smaller population spread over a large area, trying to cover as much area as possible to serve this population has been problematic. In 2019, a project was completed to sync the farebox with the onboard GPS, which allows for tracking passenger boardings. This data will be used to reconfigure routes to make them more efficient.

B-Line recently released its mobile ticketing application (app) to purchase tickets and passes using a smartphone, on the B-Line bus system. The app has the potential to improve system reliability as it is expected to take passengers less than four seconds to board the bus as opposed to the existing 10-15 seconds with current boarding methods.

B-LINE FIXED ROUTE SERVICES

The following section focuses on fixed-route service; paratransit services are discussed later in this chapter. BCAG maintains a specific “B-Line” webpage at <http://www.blinetransit.com/> where comprehensive public transit information is current including detailed bus route information.

Figure 7-1 Butte Regional Transit (B-Line) website

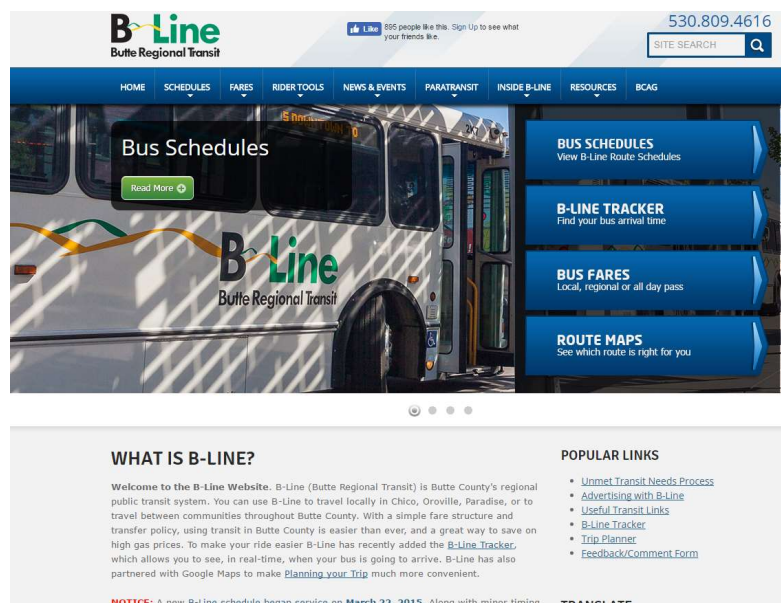
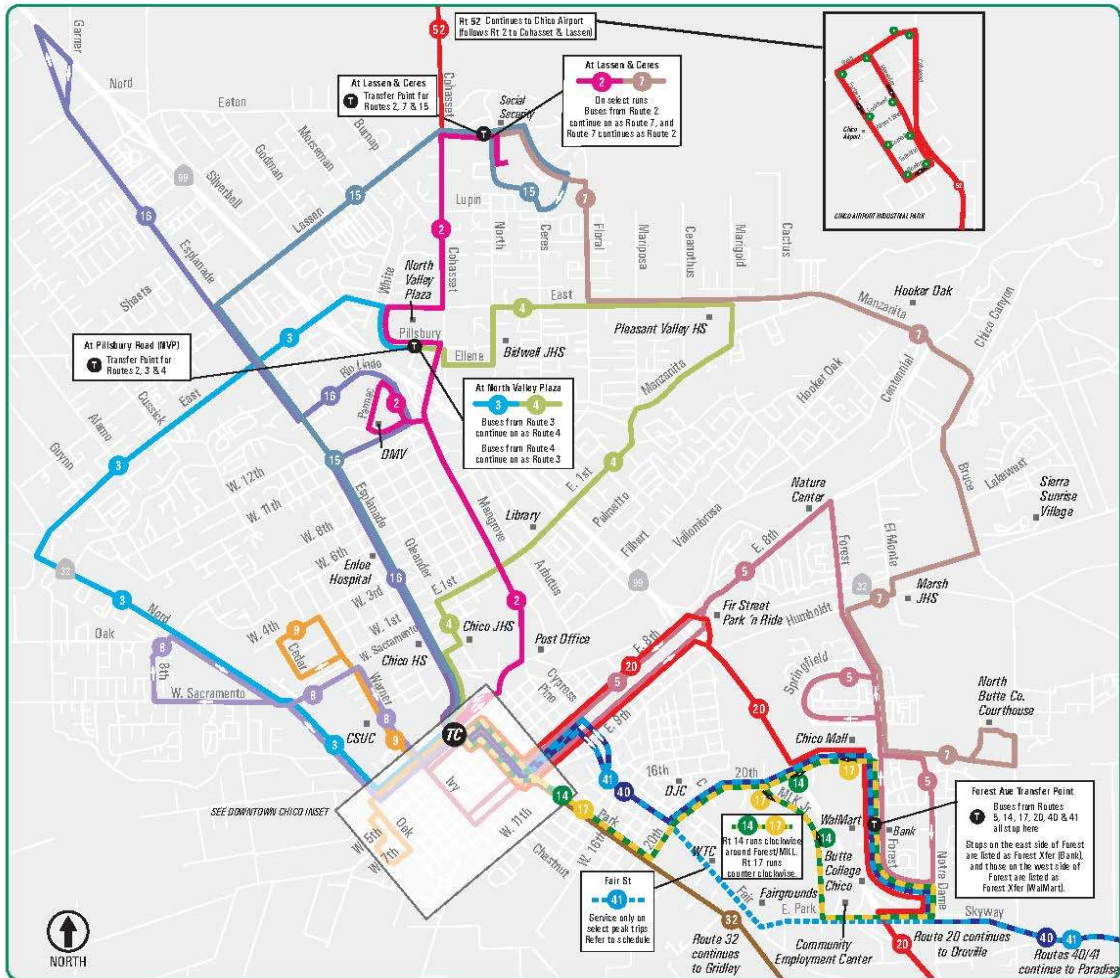
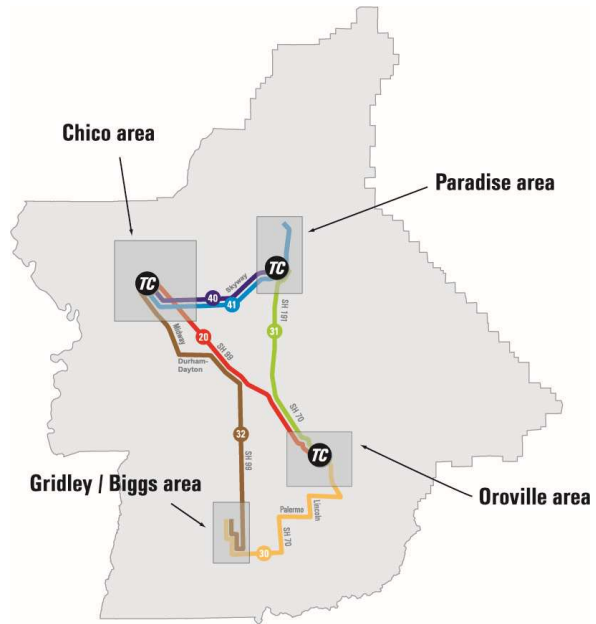
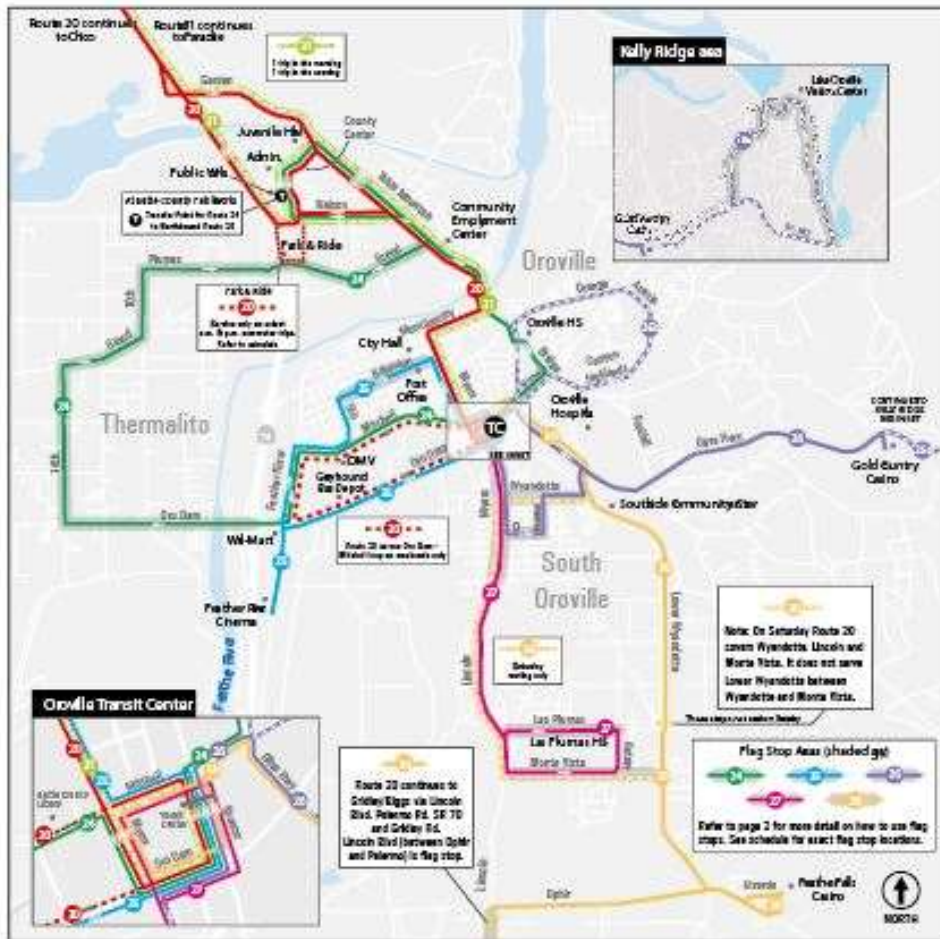


Figure 7-2 B-Line Routes





Oroville



Gridley/Biggs

Paradise



Route Descriptions

B-Line operates primarily two types of services: urban (Chico area) and rural (within other Butte County cities or intercity, between other major cities and population centers of Butte County). Some routes operate Monday through Friday only, and others operate all seven days. Routes 8 and 9 (aka the Student Shuttle) operate on different schedules depending on whether California State University, Chico, is in session.

B-Line does not operate on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The following figures provide an overview of B-Line services, with each figure showing a specific type of route. Note that in some cases, service start and/or end times have been rounded slightly to make the service span easier to read at a glance.

Figure 7-3 Summary of B-Line Routes within Chico

Name	Major Stops/Timepoints	Service Span (Rounded)	Headway (Frequency)
2 Mangrove	Chico Transit Center, 5th & Mangrove, Parmac & Rio Lindo, North Valley Plaza and Ceres & Lassen	Mon-Fri 6:15am - 8:30pm Sat 8:15am - 7pm	Peak 30 min Midday 60 min Saturday 60 min
3 Nord/East	Chico Transit Center, West 8th Avenue & Nord, East & Nord, East & Esplanade and North Valley Plaza	Mon-Fri 6:20am - 9pm Sat 8:50am - 7pm	Peak 30 min Midday 60 min Saturday 60 min
4 First/East	Chico Transit Center, Chico Junior HS, First & Longfellow, Pleasant Valley HS and North Valley Plaza	Mon-Fri 6:15am - 9pm Sat 8:50am - 7pm	Peak 30 min Midday 60 min Saturday 60 min
5 East 8th Street	Chico Transit Center, 9th Street & Pine, 8th Street and Highway 32, 8th Street and Olive, Forest Avenue Xfer (Bank)	Mon-Fri 6:15am - 8:30pm Sat 8:15am - 7pm	60 min
7 Bruce/Manzanita	Forest Avenue Xfer (Bank), Marsh Junior HS, North Co. Courthouse, Pleasant Valley HS, Ceres & Lassen. Note: Route 7 does NOT serve the Chico Transit Center	Mon-Fri 6:45am - 5:30pm	60 min

Name	Major Stops/Timepoints	Service Span (Rounded)	Headway (Frequency)
8 Nord	Student Shuttle through-routed with Route 9: connects CSU-Chico with student neighborhoods northwest of campus and the Chico Transit Center. Operates only when CSU-Chico is in session	Mon-Thu 7:30am - 9:30pm Fri 7:30am - 4pm	60 min ¹
9 Warner/Oak	Student Shuttle through-routed with Route 8: connects CSU-Chico with student neighborhoods north and south of the campus and the Chico Transit Center. Operates only when CSU-Chico is in session	Mon-Thu 7:30am - 10pm Fri 7:30am - 4pm	60 min
9C Cedar Loop	Limited service; only operates when Route 9 is not running	Fri (while school is in session) 5:10pm - 8:30pm Mon-Fri (CSU breaks) 7:50am - 8:30pm Sat (year-round) 8:30am - 6:30pm	Friday PM 60-120 min Mon-Fri (CSU breaks) 80 min Saturday 120 min
14 Park/Forest/MLK	Chico Transit Center, 20 th and Park, Forest Xfer (WM), E. Park & MLK	Mon-Fri 6:24am – 9:45pm Sat 7:50am – 6:45pm	Peak 20 min Midday 60 min Evening 60 min Saturday 60 min
15 Esplanade/Lassen	Chico Transit Center, Esplanade & 5 th Ave, Esplanade & East, Lassen & Cohasset, Ceres & Lassen	Mon-Fri 6:15am – 9:34 pm Sat 7:50am – 6:34pm	Peak 20 min Midday 30 min Evening 60 min Saturday 60 min
16 Esplanade/SR 99	Chico Transit Center, Esplanade & 5 th , Rio Lindo & Parmac, East & Esplanade and Esplanade & SR 99	Mon-Fri 7am - 7pm Sat 8am - 6pm	60 min
17 Park/MLK/Forest	Chico Transit Center, 20 th and Park, E. Park & MLK, Forest Xfer (Bank)	Mon-Fri 7:30am – 6:05 pm Sat 8:30am – 6:05pm	60 min

¹ Due to COVID-19 and Chico State in-person classes being suspended, until further notice the Student Shuttle Routes (8 and 9) will move from half hour headways to hourly service. The revised schedules can be found on the B-Line website here: <http://www.blinetransit.com/documents/Student%20Shuttle%20COVID-19%20Fall%202020.pdf>

Name	Major Stops/Timepoints	Service Span (Rounded)	Headway (Frequency)
52 Chico Airport Express	Chico Transit Center, Mangrove & 5 th , North Valley Plaza, Airport (5 th Sun)	Mon-Fri 6:30am – 5:40 pm	Peak 60 min

Figure 7-4 Summary of B-Line Routes within Oroville

Name	Major Stops/Timepoints	Service Span (Rounded)	Headway (Frequency)
Oroville			
24 Thermalito	Oroville Transit Center (Mitchell & Spencer), 14th & Grand and Public Works/Administration. Through-routed with Route 27	Mon-Fri 6:30am - 7:30pm	60 min
25 Oro Dam	Oroville Transit Center (Mitchell & Spencer) and Feather River Cinemas. Through-routed with Route 26	Mon-Fri 6:10am - 6:50pm	60 min
26 Olive Hwy/Kelly Ridge	Oroville Transit Center (Mitchell & Spencer), D Street & Meyers, Gold Country Casino, Kelly Ridge & Royal Oaks, Oroville Hospital and Orange & Acacia. Through-routed with Route 25	Mon-Fri 6:30am - 6:20pm	60 min
27 South Oroville	Oroville Transit Center (Mitchell & Spencer), Las Plumas High School and Meyers & D Street. Through-routed with Route 24	Mon-Fri 7:10am - 6:50pm	60 min

Figure 7-5 Summary of Intercity B-Line Routes

Name	Major Stops/Timepoints	Service Span (Rounded)	Headway (Frequency)
20 Chico - Oroville	Chico Transit Center, Fir Street Park and Ride, Forest Avenue Transfer (WalMart & Bank), Butte County Administration and Oroville Transit Center (Mitchell & Spencer)	Mon-Fri 5:50am - 8pm Sat-Sun 7:50am - 6pm	Peak 60 min Midday 120 min Weekend 120 min
30 Oroville - Biggs	Oroville Transit Center (Mitchell & Spencer), Lincoln & Palermo (Palermo), Heritage Oaks Mall (Gridley) and 6th and B Streets in Biggs	Mon-Fri 7:45am - 5pm Sat 8:45am - 5pm	Weekday 240 min Saturday 120 min

Name	Major Stops/Timepoints	Service Span (Rounded)	Headway (Frequency)
31 Paradise - Oroville	Almond & Birch (Paradise), Clark & Wagstaff (Paradise), Clark & Pearson (Paradise), County Public Works (Oroville) and the Oroville Transit Center (Mitchell & Spencer)	Mon-Fri 6:45am - 7:30am (Paradise-Oroville); 5pm - 6pm (Oroville-Paradise)	1 morning/ 1 evening trip (Note: this route has been suspended due to Camp Fire)
32 Gridley - Chico	City Hall - 6th & C Street (Biggs), Spruce & SR 99 (Gridley), Midway & Durham Dayton Hwy (Durham), and the Chico Transit Center.	Mon-Fri 6:40am - 7:40am (Gridley-Chico); 5:20pm - 6:20pm (Chico-Gridley)	1 morning/ 1 evening trip
40 Paradise - Chico	Chico Transit Center, Forest Avenue Transfer @ WalMart (Chico), Almond & Birch (Paradise) and Skyway & Wagstaff (Paradise)	Mon-Fri 6:50am - 7:20pm Sat 9:50am - 6pm	M-F 2 morning / 2 afternoon round trips Sat 3 trips
41 Magalia - Chico	Skyway & Colter (Paradise Pines), Lakeridge @ Holiday Market (now a SavMor) (Magalia), Skyway & Wagstaff (Paradise), Almond & Birch (Paradise), Forest Avenue Transfer (WalMart & Bank) (Chico) and the Chico Transit Center	Mon-Fri 5:30am - 6:45pm	M-F approx. 120 min
	Saturday service operates between Skyway & Wagstaff, Skyway & Colter, and back, offering transfers to/from Route 40	Sat 9:45am – 6pm	Three round trip routes in AM, midday, and PM

Fixed Route Fleet & Facilities

Transit Centers & Transfer Points

B-Line operates and serves three transit centers that offer timed transfer points. The Chico Transit Center is located on West 2nd Street between Salem Street and Normal Avenue in downtown Chico, and bus boarding areas are located on all three blocks. The facility, which opened in 2008, features shelters, restrooms, and a staffed ticket office. Chico Transit Center is served by most local and intercity B-Line routes, including Routes 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9/9C, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 32, 40, and 41.

An additional timed transfer point in Chico, referred to as the Forest Avenue Transfer Point or “Forest Avenue Xfer,” is located on both sides of Forest Avenue at Baney and Parkway Village. Buses on Routes 5, 7, 14, 17, 20, 40, and 41 all serve the Forest Avenue Transfer Point.

In 2011, the Oroville Transit Center opened for service, and includes sawtooth bus turn-outs, a permanent shelter with restrooms, several benches, and wide sidewalks. Located on Spencer Avenue just north of Oro Dam Boulevard, the Oroville Transit Center is served by Routes 20, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, and 31.

The Paradise Transit Center is located at Almond and Cedar Streets in Paradise, and is served by Routes 31, 40, and 41. The Paradise transit center is a bus shelter only.

Fleet & Facilities

B-Line’s fleet consists of 33 standard buses, with two of these vehicles powered by Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). All B-Line vehicles are fully equipped with low-floor ramps and include a wheelchair securement area with space for two wheelchairs. Additionally, all fixed-route buses are equipped with front-mounted bicycle racks. See Figure 7-6.

Figure 7-6 B-Line Fixed Route Fleet (as of October 2020)

Make	Model	Vehicle Year	Fuel Type	Capacity	Age (Years)	Count
Orion	Orion VII N.G.	2008	CNG	43	12	2
Gillig	Low Floor	2011	Diesel	44	9	6
Gillig	BRT	2014	Diesel	44	6	6
Gillig	BRT	2017	Diesel	44	3	13
Gillig	BRT	2020	Diesel	44	0	6
Total						33

Per the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) regulation, BCAG is developing its Zero-Emission Battery Electric Bus Rollout Plan to update its fleet replacement schedule to phase in electric buses. The ICT regulation requires all public transit agencies to gradually transition their bus fleet to zero-emission technologies. As of October 2020, BCAG has funding for three electric buses, charging equipment, and underground upgrades to its facility.

BCAG constructed the Butte Regional Transit Operations & Maintenance Facility in April 2016 to support the expanding fleet and conversion to 100 percent electric buses. The \$35 million facility includes over 51,000 square feet of new buildings and office space that serve for daily maintenance, operations, fueling, bus wash and administration. The building that was used prior for these functions was remodeled and now provides a board room, conference rooms and

additional office space. The project was funded through federal, state, and local sources.

While the facility is new, additional power is needed to support electric buses and charging equipment. BCAG will work with a consultant to design and construct facility upgrades to support on-site charging equipment for the roll-out of electric buses.

Dispatching duties are performed and vehicles are stored and maintained at BROOC. BCAG contracts with Transdev for management, operation and maintenance of the B-Line system.

Fares

B-Line has different fixed route fares based on the type of service; with local routes priced slightly less than regional routes. The current fares were last changed in September 2019. The current fare structure is available on the B-Line web site: <http://www.blinetransit.com/Rider-Tools/Fares/>

B-Line currently has a transfer policy which ensures that riders who need more than one bus to reach their destination may complete a continuous one-way trip without paying an additional fare. Local transfers are valid for one hour from the time issued, and regional transfers are valid for two hours.

B-Line has special fare agreements with Chico State University, Butte College, and the City of Chico for City employees. Chico State students, faculty, and staff ride B-Line for free as part of a program funded by the Associated Students and the University. Additionally, Butte College students are allowed to purchase 30-Day Passes at the youth pass price (usually reserved for those who are between the ages of 6 and 18 years old). Finally, City of Chico and downtown business employees are eligible for an employee transit pass, which allows for free bus trips to and from the downtown Chico area through a program funded by the City of Chico.

Standard tickets and passes may be purchased at a few locations in Butte County, including the Chico Transit Center, the BCAG Administrative Office, the Butte County Public Works Department in Oroville, Oroville City Hall, and the Town of Paradise Finance Office. Bulk ticket sales may be made at the BCAG Office or by mail. In addition, in 2020 B-Line introduced a new purchase option, the B-Line Mobile Pass, which allows for purchase of tickets/pass right on your smartphone.

The following sections are presented for information purposes only from the 2015 TNMP. This information is currently being updated and will be complete by 2021.

Figure 7-7 B-Line Fixed Route Fare Structure (as of Sept. 1, 2019)

Fare Type	Local Service	Regional Service
CASH		
Regular	\$1.75	\$2.40
Discount*	\$0.85	\$1.20
Youth (6-18)	\$1.25	\$1.75
Child (under 6)	2 free	2 free
2-RIDE PASS		
Regular	\$3.50	\$4.80
Discount*	\$1.70	\$2.40
Youth (6-18)	\$2.50	\$3.50
10-RIDE PASS		
Regular	\$15.75	\$21.60
Discount*	\$7.85	\$10.80
Youth (6-18)	\$11.25	\$15.75
30-DAY PASS		
Regular	\$43.50	\$57.50
Discount*	\$21.50	\$30.00
Youth (6-18)	\$31.25	\$40.00
All-Day Pass		
For \$5.00 an All-Day Pass allows unlimited access to the entire system for one day		

Special School Holiday Service

Like many other transit agencies that provide service to areas with a large university or college, B-Line adjusts its fixed route operating schedule when CSU is not in service. In particular, Routes 8 (Nord) and 9 (Oak/Warner/Cedar) operate only during the CSU school year when Spring and Fall semester classes are in session; these routes do not run when there are no classes, such as during Spring Break, Thanksgiving Week, and other campus holidays like Labor Day, Veterans Day, and Cesar Chavez Day. To provide service in the general vicinity of CSU when school is not in session, however, Route 9C (Cedar Loop) – which normally provides limited service on Saturdays and Friday evenings – operates throughout the day. Nevertheless, there is an opportunity to explore expanding flexible scheduling in the vicinity of CSU and other local schools.

There are numerous precedents for flexible scheduling due to school schedules and numerous transit systems across the county that serve major college

campuses also alter their services to account for the rise and fall of ridership depending on the school calendar. In a major metropolitan area like Seattle, King County Metro has a separate “When No University of Washington (UW)” schedule. When UW is not in session, designated trips on 13 bus routes that serve the vicinity of the campus are not run (canceled). More akin to B-Line, in Eugene, Oregon, several Lane Transit District (LTD) bus routes experience schedule or routing changes when area schools are out on holiday or on seasonal breaks. In contrast to B-Line, LTD service accounts for breaks not only at the University of Oregon and Lane Community College, but also at local high schools. Other universities, including the University of California Santa Cruz, University of North Texas, and Purdue also significantly modify their schedules when school is not in session.

B-LINE PARATRANSIT

B-Line Paratransit is a door-to-door service for qualified individuals traveling within the greater Butte County B-Line service area in Chico, Oroville, and Paradise. Paratransit service in Gridley is provided by the Gridley Golden Feather Flyer service. B-Line Paratransit provides two types of services:

1. ADA service for individuals who cannot use the fixed route system and hold Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) certification.
2. Dial-a-Ride service for use by seniors 70 years of age or older.

Service is offered from 5:50am to 10pm on weekdays, 7am to 10pm on Saturdays, and from 7:50am to 6pm on Sundays. While B-Line Paratransit service is available to all destinations within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile buffer of any B-Line fixed route, supplemental service to areas of up to three miles outside the ADA boundaries is available at an additional cost; however, in order for service to be provided to supplemental areas there must be a direct, easily accessible route from the core service area to the proposed destination. Trips provided outside the core service area are non-ADA and are provided when there is sufficient time and space available.

Reservations may be made from one to seven days in advance, and are taken from 7AM to 5PM seven days a week, excluding holidays. Nevertheless, B-Line Paratransit accommodates a limited number of same-day requests based on available capacity.

Eligibility

New Paratransit riders need to be registered and certified as eligible by B-Line before using the service. Applications may be downloaded online or prospective riders may ask for applications to be sent to them directly.

The ADA Paratransit application requires healthcare verification. The ADA Paratransit application asks very detailed questions about a rider’s disability

and/or health status, including the nature of their disability, what needs they may have in terms of mobility equipment, and how close they are to fixed route transit.

All eligible riders are only certified to use B-Line Paratransit or Dial-A-Ride for a certain period of time, at which point riders must renew their eligibility status.

Fleet & Facilities

The current B-Line Paratransit fleet consists of 24 vehicles. Full fleet information is shown in Figure 7-15 below.

Figure 7-15 B-Line Paratransit Fleet (as of October 2020)

Make	Model	Vehicle Year	Fuel Type	Capacity	Age in Years	Count
Ford	E450	2010	Unleaded	18	10	4
Ford	E450	2013	Unleaded	18	7	14
Ford	E450	2018	Unleaded	18	2	6
Total						24

As with the fixed route fleet, B-Line Paratransit vehicles are stored and maintained at the Butte Regional Operations Center in Chico.

Fares

The current fare structure is available on the B-Line web site:

<http://www.blinetransit.com/Rider-Tools/Fares/>

Paratransit Fares (as of Sept 1, 2019)	One Way
ADA Eligible	\$3.50
Dial-a-Ride	\$3.50
Companions	\$3.50
Same Day Requests, <i>if available</i>	\$5.25
Personal Care Attendant	Free
Children under age 6	Free
Supplemental Zone 1	\$8.75
Supplemental Zone 2	\$10.75
Supplemental Zone 3	\$12.75

SYSTEMWIDE PERFORMANCE

This section explains performance trends for B-Line’s fixed route services between FY 2015/16 and FY 2019/20. New performance trends will be presented in the updated Transit and Non-Motorized Plan.

Fixed Route Five-Year Performance Data/Indicators

Below is a summary of key findings related to B-Line fixed route service ridership, productivity, and performance over the past five fiscal years using various service and cost performance indicators. Figure 7- displays five performance metrics for all, urban, and rural B-Line services from FY 2015/16 through FY 2019/20. Note that, in practice, the “rural” designation is applied to all routes that operate outside of Chico, but some of these routes also operate within Chico (e.g., Route 20).

Figure 7-17 B-Line Performance Metrics, FY 2015/16 – FY 2019/20

	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	% Chg FY 16 -FY 20
OPERATING COST						
Total	\$6,197,313	\$6,257,199	\$6,324,145	\$6,208,248	\$7,011,481	13.14%
Urban	\$3,749,113	\$3,578,991	\$3,579,351	\$3,583,907	\$4,214,656	12.42%
Rural	\$2,448,200	\$2,678,208	\$2,744,794	\$2,624,341	\$2,796,825	14.24%
FARE REVENUE						
Total	\$1,380,440	\$1,265,451	\$1,241,356	\$1,211,744	\$1,067,423	-22.68%
Urban	\$837,408	\$760,310	\$753,764	\$750,702	\$663,549	-20.76%
Rural	\$543,032	\$505,141	\$487,592	\$461,042	\$403,874	-25.63%
VEHICLE SERVICE HOURS						
Total	69,867	70,684	71,367	67,780	65,594	-6.12%
Urban	44,611	44,918	44,570	44,347	43,491	-2.51%
Rural	25,256	25,766	26,797	23,433	22,103	-12.48%
VEHICLE SERVICE MILES						
Total	1,019,387	1,030,670	1,047,634	971,728	943,763	-7.42%
Urban	431,566	433,038	430,392	428,824	425,369	-1.44%
Rural	587,821	597,632	617,242	542,904	518,394	-11.81%
PASSENGERS						
Total	1,251,147	1,142,563	1,079,218	949,871	732,102	-41.49%
Urban	901,774	820,729	765,210	700,179	555,442	-38.41%
Rural	349,373	321,834	314,008	249,692	176,660	-49.44%

Sources/Notes:

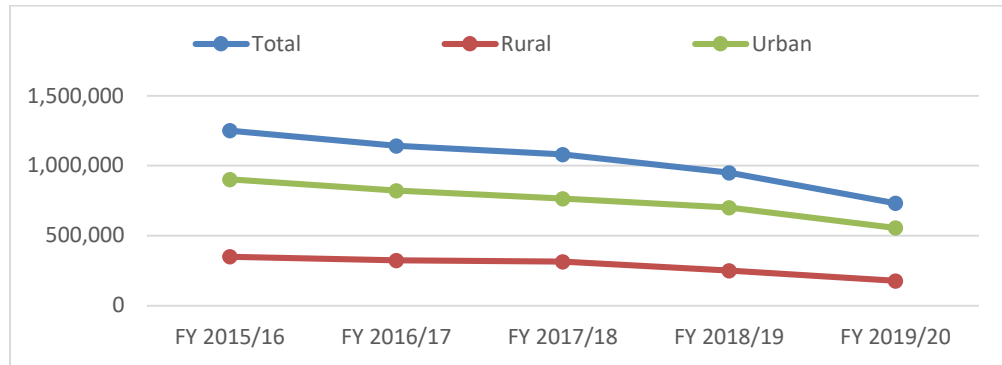
Operating Cost and Fare Revenue from BCAG Financial Statements per fiscal year.

Hours, Miles, and Passengers are from the Transdev Management Reports.

Ridership

B-Line Ridership has been in steady decline over the past five years, with a marked difference made by the Camp Fire and as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic halfway through the 2019/20 Fiscal Year.

Figure 7-18 B-Line Ridership, FY 2015/16 – FY 2019/20



Total ridership in the five-year review period fell by just over 41%. This follows the nationwide trend of declining transit ridership, and is heavily impacted by the Camp Fire and COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, there is a decline in urban ridership through FY 2018/19 that is in line with what was seen previously, while the rural ridership starts to see a sharp decline in FY 2018/19 with the loss of about 75,000 riders, and that number is again lost in FY 2019/20.

B-Line Performance Indicators

Several indicators are used to evaluate a transit system’s productivity and efficiency. A summary of seven indicators over the five-year review period are presented in Figure 7-19.

Figure 7-19 B-Line Performance Indicators, FY 2015/16 – FY 2019/20

	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	% Chg FY 16 -FY 20
OPERATING COST PER HOUR						
Total	\$88.70	\$88.52	\$88.61	\$91.59	\$106.89	20.51%
Urban	\$84.04	\$79.68	\$80.31	\$80.82	\$96.91	15.31%
Rural	\$96.94	\$103.94	\$102.43	\$111.99	\$126.54	30.54%
OPERATING COST PER PASSENGER						
Total	\$4.95	\$5.48	\$5.86	\$6.54	\$9.58	93.35%
Urban	\$4.16	\$4.36	\$4.68	\$5.12	\$7.59	82.51%
Rural	\$7.01	\$8.32	\$8.74	\$10.51	\$15.83	125.93%
OPERATING COST PER MILE						
Total	\$6.08	\$6.07	\$6.04	\$6.39	\$7.43	22.20%
Urban	\$8.69	\$8.26	\$8.32	\$8.36	\$9.91	14.06%

	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	% Chg FY 16 -FY 20
Rural	\$4.16	\$4.48	\$4.45	\$4.83	\$5.40	29.54%
PASSENGERS PER HOUR						
Total	17.9	16.2	15.1	14.0	11.2	-37.67%
Urban	20.2	18.3	17.2	15.8	12.8	-36.82%
Rural	13.8	12.5	11.7	10.7	8.0	-42.22%
PASSENGERS PER MILE						
Total	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.8	-36.80%
Urban	2.1	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.3	-37.51%
Rural	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	-42.66%
AVERAGE FARE PER PASSENGER						
Total	\$1.10	\$1.11	\$1.15	\$1.28	\$1.46	32.15%
Urban	\$0.93	\$0.93	\$0.99	\$1.07	\$1.19	28.65%
Rural	\$1.55	\$1.57	\$1.55	\$1.85	\$2.29	47.09%
FAREBOX RECOVERY RATIO						
Total	22.27%	20.22%	19.63%	19.52%	15.22%	-31.65%
Urban	22.34%	21.24%	21.06%	20.95%	15.74%	-29.51%
Rural	22.18%	18.86%	17.76%	17.57%	14.44%	-34.90%

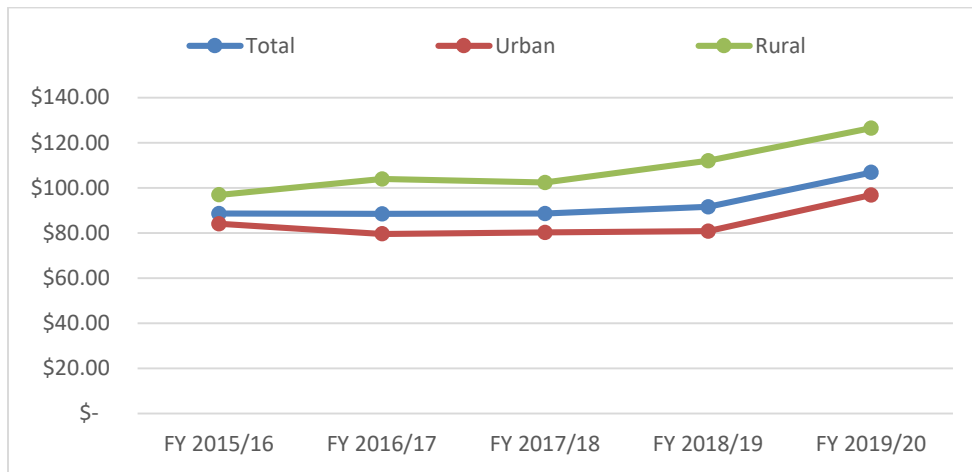
Sources/Notes:

FY

Operating Cost per Hour

Overall, hourly costs for all fixed route services increased 20.51% over the five-year period (from \$88.70 in FY 2015/16 to \$106.89 in FY 2019/20). Over the first three years of the review period, hourly costs remained relatively steady, with marginal fluctuations. However, in FY 2018/19 there is an increase of just under \$10 in rural service costs, and \$3 in total hourly costs, which reflects a contract change with the service provider and service adjustments as a result of the Camp Fire (see Figure 7-20). We can expect operating costs to continue to rise in a similar fashion until the hourly contractor rate stabilizes in conjunction with rising minimum wage laws in 2022.

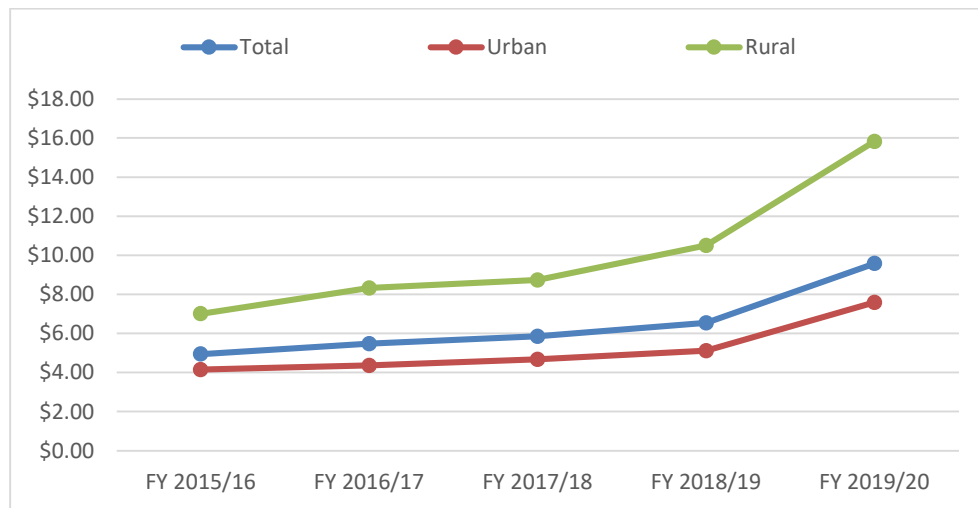
Figure 7-20 Operating Cost per Hour



Operating Cost per Passenger

Because B-Line rural services attract fewer passengers than the urban routes, rural costs per passenger are higher overall. In a pattern that closely mimics the ridership charts, you can see that operating costs per passenger is adversely affected by the sharp decline in ridership that we've seen in the past two fiscal years. Unless ridership numbers improve, there will continue to be a yearly increase in the cost per passenger.

Figure 7-21 Operating Cost per Passenger

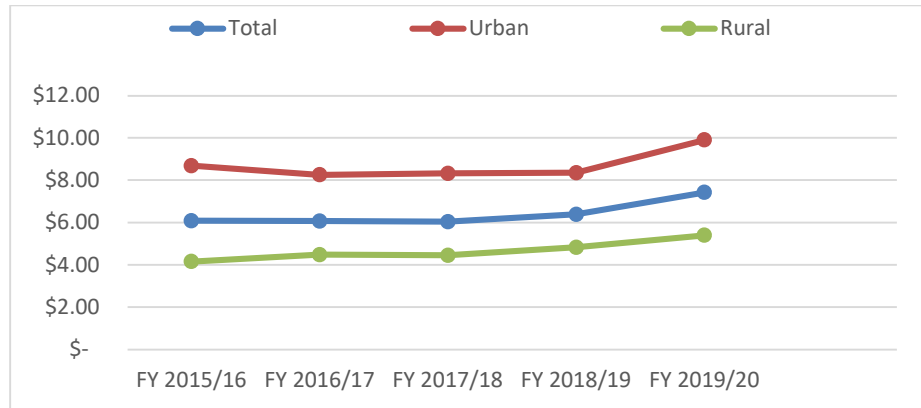


Operating Cost per Mile

Operating cost per mile remained relatively stable for the first three years of the review period, with the uptick in costs coming after a contract renewal in the

2018/19 Fiscal Year. With the rising costs of fuel and labor, a gradual increase like this is only to be expected (see Figure 7-22).

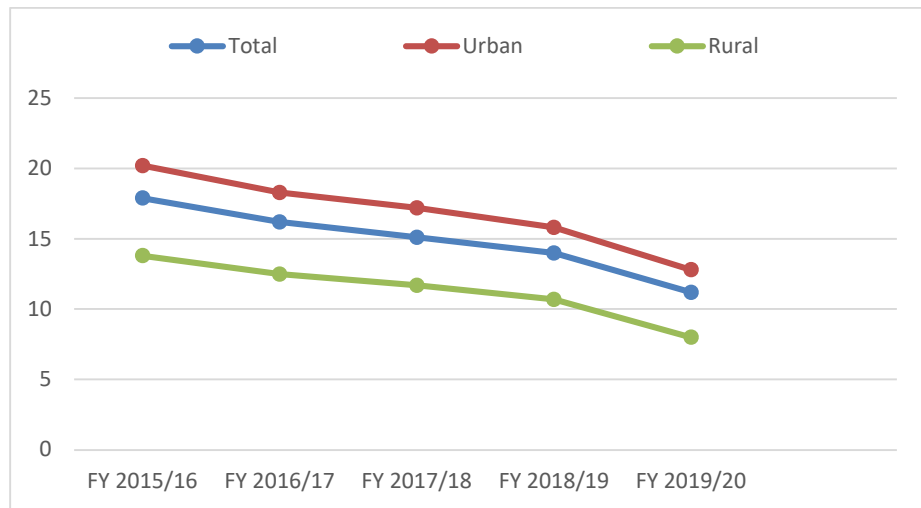
Figure 7-22 Operating Cost per Mile



Passengers per Hour

Ridership has seen a total decrease of 37.67% over the past five years. Rural ridership has fallen slightly faster than urban, but both numbers continue to decline as more people move out of the area or choose other transit options (see Figure 7-23). These numbers closely reflect the farebox recovery ratio for the past five-year period, as well.

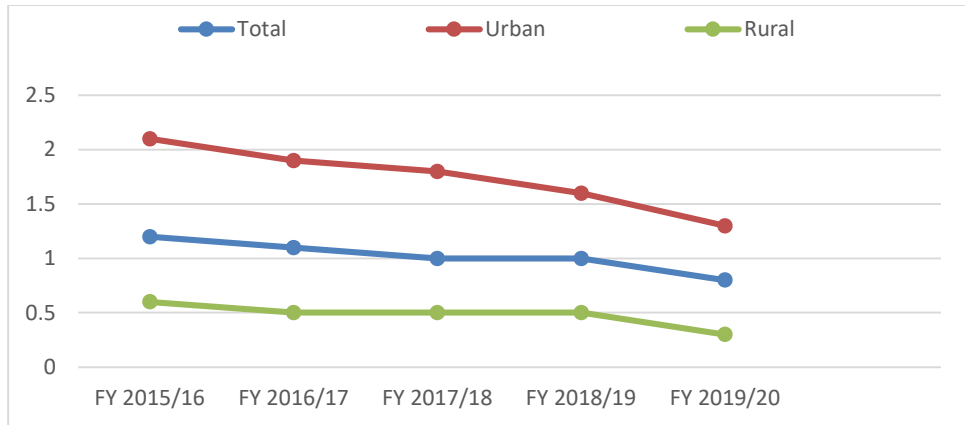
Figure 7-23 Passengers per Hour



Passengers per Mile

Over the course of the five-year review period, the number of passengers per revenue mile started off with a steady slight decline for the first three years, followed by a steeper decline in urban ridership starting in FY 2018/19. Overall, total ridership went down from 1.2 passengers per revenue mile in FY 2015/16 to 0.8 passengers per revenue mile in FY 2019/20. This follows the same downward decline evidenced in the rest of this report.

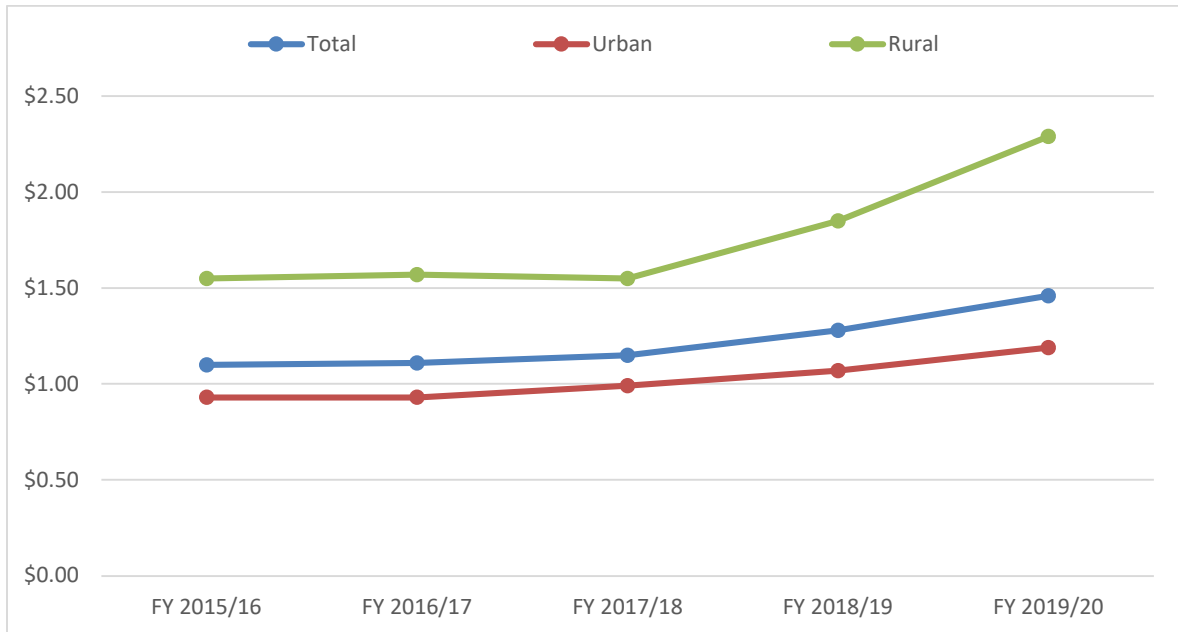
Figure 7-24 Passengers per Mile



Average Fare per Passenger

Average fare revenue per passenger for B-Line fixed route services has been on a steady rise for the past five years, in an attempt to compensate for the decline in ridership. There was a fare increase planned in FY 2018/19 that took effect at the start of FY 2019/20, which was the first increase since FY 2013/14. Because of this, and an increased effort by staff to make sure that proper fare was being paid by each passenger, average fare per passenger did increase significantly in this review period (see Figure 7-25).

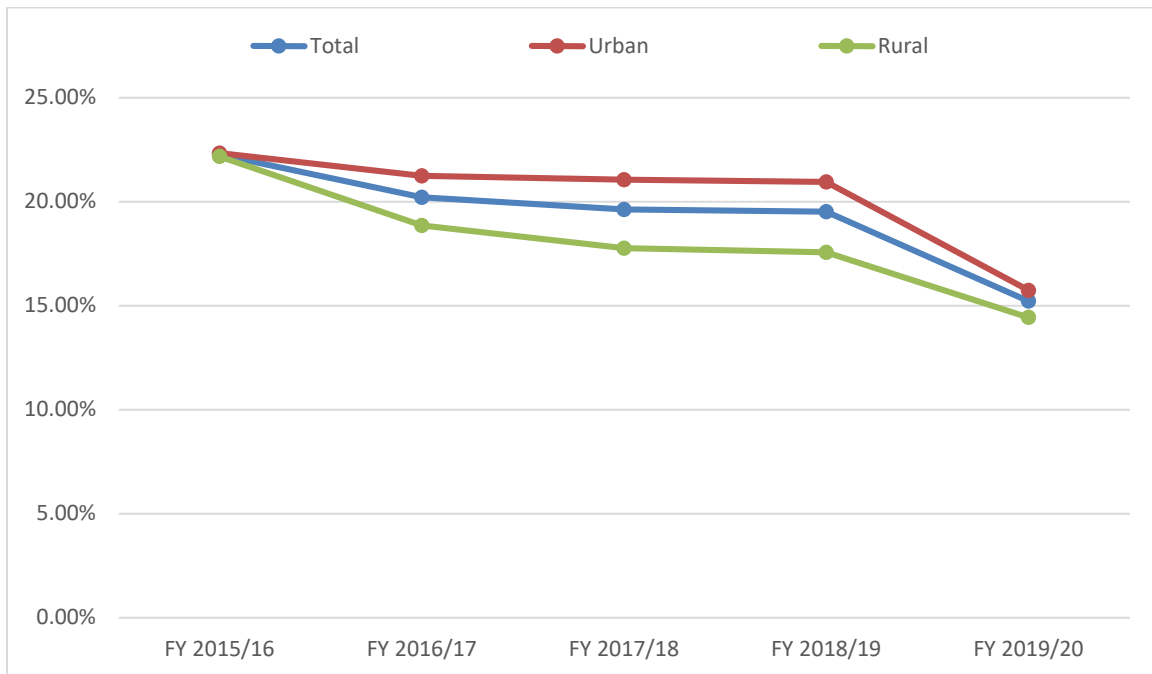
Figure 7-25 Average Fare per Passenger



Farebox Recovery Ratio

B-Line's farebox recovery ratio exceeded the 20% urban and 10% rural TDA requirements for the first four years of the five-year review period. This ratio, however, is showing a decrease along the same lines as ridership. The sudden drop in the farebox recovery ratio for FY 2019/20 can be attributed to the sharp decline in ridership due to the COVID-19 pandemic and statewide shelter in place order that went into effect in March 2020. Also effecting the drop in FY 2019/20 is the seven-week free fare period that B-Line was able to enact during April and May 2020 because of the passing of the CARES Act, which provided additional funding for transit related to farebox losses.

Figure 7-26 Farebox Recovery Ratio



MID-TERM PLAN (2017 – 2027)

As previously mentioned, BCAG is in the process of updating the Transit and Non-Motorized Plan to develop new short, mid, and long-term recommendations to improving B-Line service. The information presented below is from the 2015 TNMP.

In the mid-term, B-Line would largely build on the short-term investments in transit service and amenities. In Chico, this would consist of combining Routes 15N and 15S to form the “Route 1” “BRT-lite” transit corridor, and regionally, service changes would largely work to ensure that BCAG is running the right type of services and making key infrastructure investments to support longer distance travel.

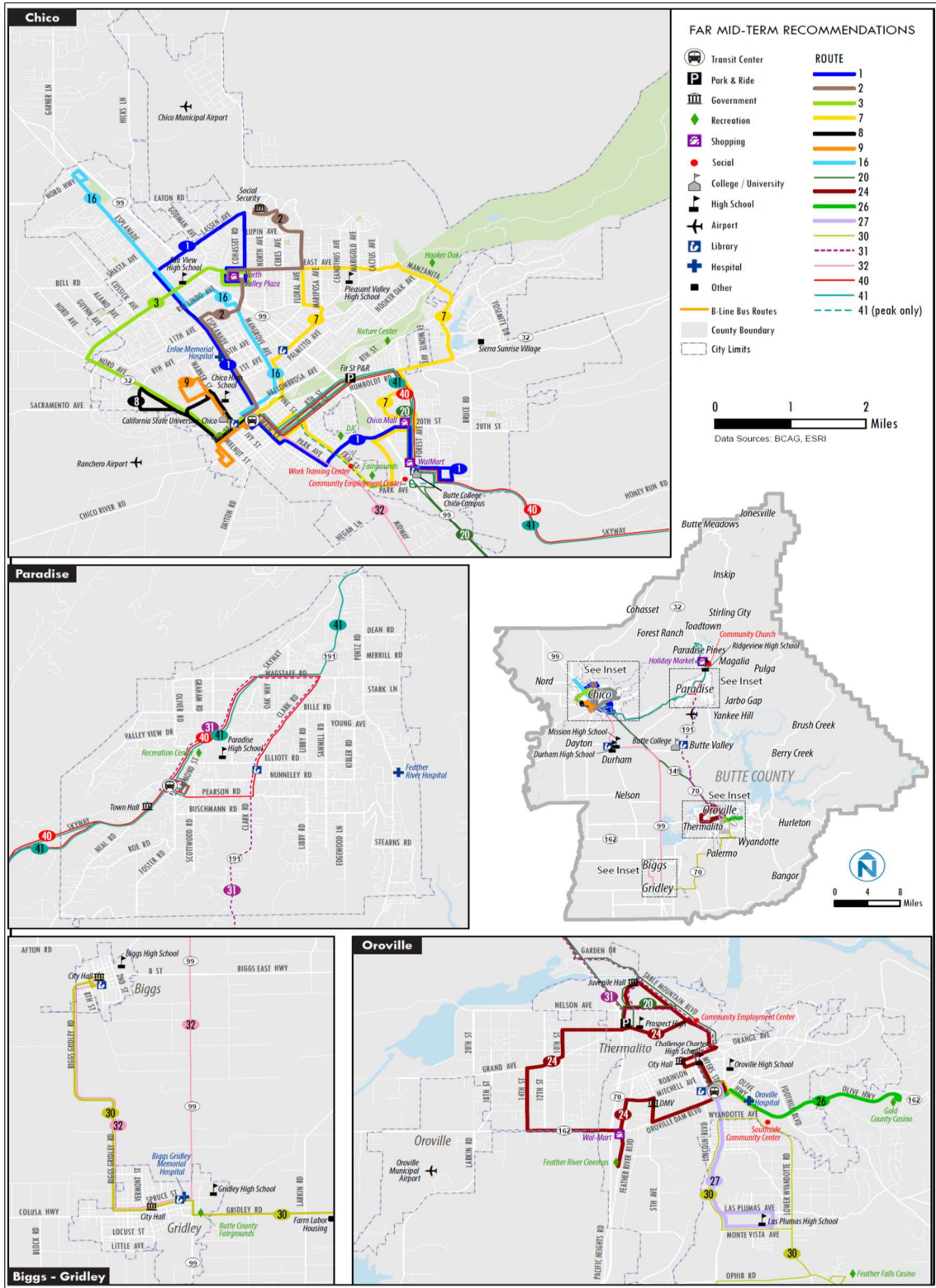
Service Changes in the Mid-Term

B-Line service changes in the mid-term are largely driven by major initiatives, described below. As seen in Figure 7-27, B-Line service in the mid-term is very similar to the short-term plan, having used the short-term changes as a foundation for enhanced service in key locations. The most significant change is the consolidation of Routes 15N and 15S into a through-routed Route 1, bringing the idea of a true transit corridor to fruition.

The mid-term recommendations for Oroville and Paradise service are much more general, and include:

- Consider additional hours and services on weekends.
- Consider additional cost sharing and/or service partnerships with regional casinos, if not implemented in the short-term timeframe.

Figure 7-27 Mid-Term Service Plan Recommendations



Resource Allocation in the Mid-Term

In the mid-term, during peak service (i.e., when CSUC is in session) B-Line will still require a total of **25 peak buses** (one fewer than today and the same as in the short-term) and approximately **254 revenue hours** on a school service weekday. This total is slightly less than current revenue hours, which are approximately 257 revenue hours, and also slightly less than short-term levels (see Figure 7-28) due primarily to speed efficiencies and reduced stops in the new Route 1 corridor.

Figure 7-28 Mid-Term Annual Resource Allocation

Route Number	Route Name	Annual Revenue Hours*			Difference 2016 - 2027	% Difference
		2013 (Scheduled)	2016 (Proposed)	2027 (Proposed)		
Chico Local						
1 "Short"	DTC to Mall	0	0	4,590	4,590	100%
1 "Long"	NVP to Mall via DTC	0	0	13,956	13,956	100%
2	Esplanade/Ceres	4,400	5,927	5,927	0	0%
3	Nord/East	4,419	4,525	4,525	0	0%
4	First/East	5,094	0	0	0	0%
5	East 8th Street	5,224	0	0	0	0%
7	Manzanita Loop CW	0	4,142	4,142	0	0%
7	Manzanita Loop CCW	1,849	4,142	4,142	0	0%
8	Nord	1,359	1359	1359	0	0%
9 / 9c	Oak/Warner/Cedar	2,460	2,460	2,460	0	0%
15N	NVP/Lassen Express	8,160	8,477	0	(8,477)	-100%
15S	Park & Mall Loop	8,160	11,344	0	(11,344)	-100%
16	Esplanade/Mangrove	3,402	3,453	3,453	0	0%
Subtotal		44,527	45,829	44,544	(1,275)	-3%
Oroville Local						
24	Thermalito Loop CW	1,836	2,805	2,805	0	0%
25	Oro Dam	1,046	0	0	0	0%
26-27	Hospital/Casino & S Oroville	2,945	3,060	3,060	0	0%
Subtotal		5,825	5,865	5,865	0	0%
Intercity						
20	Chico - Oroville	7,360	7,360	7,360	0	0%
30	Oroville - Biggs	1,642	1,642	1,642	0	0%
31	Oroville - Paradise	472	472	472	0	0%
32	Chico - Gridley	510	510	510	0	0%

Route Number	Route Name	Annual Revenue Hours*			Difference 2016 - 2027	% Difference
		2013 (Scheduled)	2016 (Proposed)	2027 (Proposed)		
40 / 40x	Chico - Paradise	5,233	5,233	5,233	0	0%
41	Chico - Magalia	4,012	4,012	4,012	0	0%
46	Feather River Hospital	389	0	0	0	0%
Subtotal		19,573	19,092	19,092	0	0%
Grand Total		69,927	70,785	69,510	(1,275)	-2%

* Includes 13% assumed layover rate for 2016 and 2027 data. Totals do not include Route 90 (Jesus Center) services.

Major Transit Initiatives

Route 1 “Transit-Emphasis Corridor”

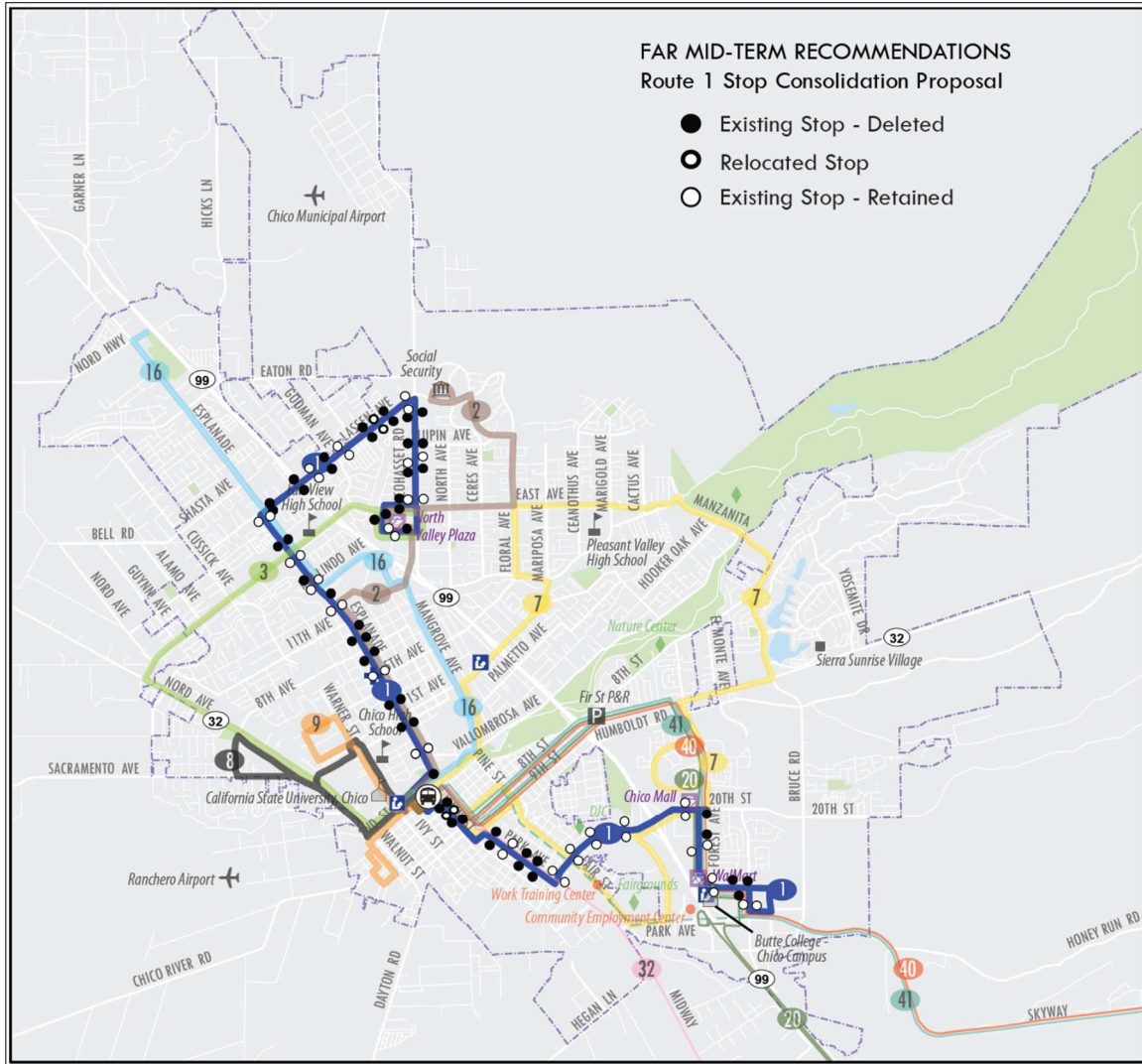
Successful “transit-emphasis corridors” or “transit-priority corridors” are arterials that are served by fast, frequent, and very “identifiable” transit service(s).

- In the short-term, Route 15S will become known as a “transit-emphasis corridor” due to its 15-minute frequency during the peak period and convenient service to and between major popular destinations.
- In the near mid-term, Routes 15N and 15S would be through-routed and rebranded as “Route 1.” Proposed mid-term frequencies would remain as they are in the short-term plan; on weekdays, service on the south end of the route (i.e., between the downtown transit center and the Mall area) would consist of two alternating runs – 1 ‘short’ and 1 ‘long.’ 1 ‘short’ would operate between the Mall area and the downtown transit center every 15 minutes in the peak, and 1 ‘long’ (between the Mall and North Valley Plaza via downtown) would operate every 30 minutes all day.
- In the far mid-term, the next major transit improvement(s) to be funded would be those that increase average operating speeds and improve service reliability. The ultimate goal is to determine how much the average speed needs to be increased to reduce the peak pullout requirement for Route 1 by one (1) bus. Reducing the bus requirement on this route could save as much as \$300,000/year in operating costs. It is possible to determine the Net Present Value of a 10-year cost savings in operating funds and use that to determine how much might be invested in capital projects to achieve the increased speeds. Potential capital program speed improvement projects could include:
 - Transit signal priority
 - Wider/targeted stop spacing
 - Off-board fare payment

Any of these improvements would reinforce the strength of the transit corridor, helping to solidify it in riders’ minds as the “backbone” of B-Line’s Chico

operations. Figure 7-29 below shows a recommended approach to reduce bus stops along Route 1 in the far mid-term.

Figure 7-29 Potential B-Line Route 1 Stop Spacing



Finally, another strategy to cement the importance of this corridor would be to implement special bus stop and vehicle branding. For illustration only, a sample mockup of a Route 1 “BRT lite” bus is provided as a concept to show how it could be distinguished from the other routes (see Figure 7-30 below).

Figure 7-30 B-Line Route 1 Bus: Sample Branding Concept



Expanded Park & Ride Strategy

B-Line currently serves two Caltrans park & rides in Butte County – Fir Street Park & Ride in Chico, and Oroville Park & Ride, located at Highway 70 and Grand Avenue. Park & rides are a convenient and very visible access point to transit service for commuters who have access to an automobile but do not wish to commute via car. In the mid-term, there are several opportunities to increase the role of park & rides as multimodal hubs within Butte County. This will be explored in more detail as part of the Chico to Sacramento Inter-City Transit Strategic Plan.

Chico: Fir Street “Park & Bike or Ride”

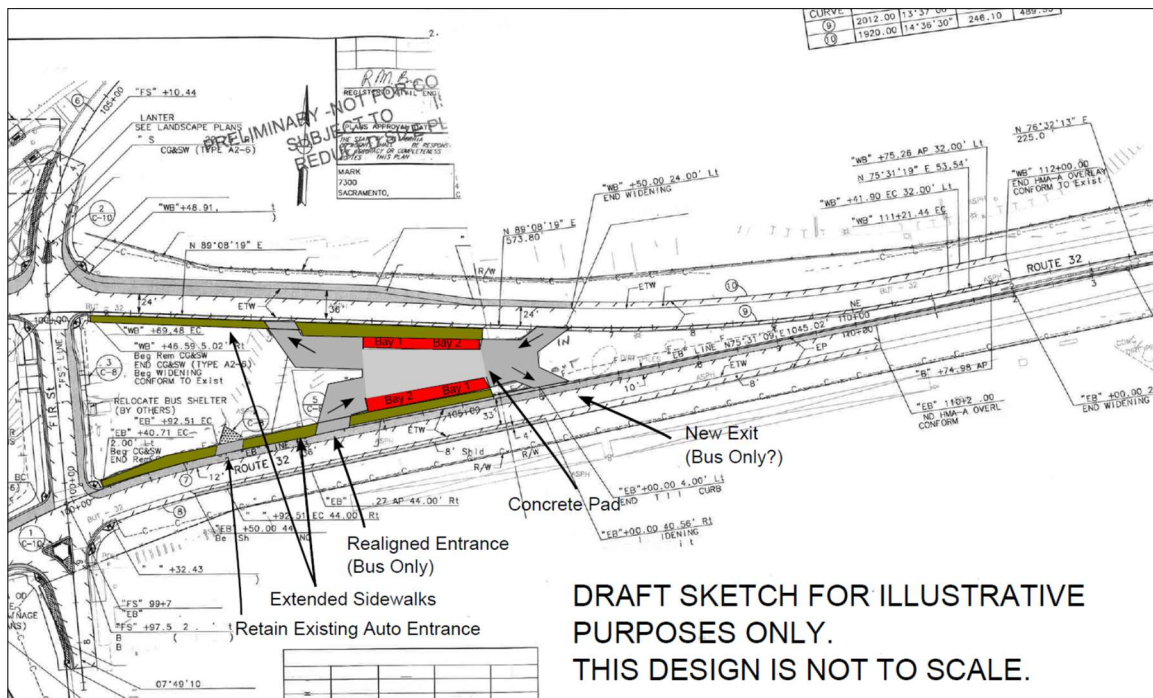
Currently, only Routes 5 and 20 serve the Fir Street Park & Ride, which is owned and maintained by Caltrans. The current location of the Fir Street Park & Ride bus stop makes expanding services at the park & ride difficult. However, with a few targeted changes to the design of the east parking lot, the Fir Street Park & Ride could be converted to a key resource for both the city of Chico and B-Line; perhaps it could even morph into an “eastside” multimodal station with a transit facility, park & ride lot, bike facilities and better pedestrian crossings on SR 32. BCAG is working with Caltrans to secure funding to expand this location to accommodate expanded service and additional vehicles.

In 2017, the City of Chico constructed the SR 32 Multi-Modal project. While improvements to transit, bike and ped were made, the City ensured they did not construct any obstacles inconsistent with the potential mid-term improvements identified.

In the far mid-term, the east lot at the park & ride could be rebuilt following the “sketch” proposal below (Figure 7-8). Streamlining the stops to allow for easy entry from the inner lanes of SR 32 permits the following:

- Rerouting Route 20 off of Highway 99 to follow Routes 40/41 up Forest Ave and down SR 32 into downtown Chico at all times
- Allowing Routes 40/41 to also serve the park & ride at all times
- Additionally, due to its proximity to Lower Bidwell Park (particularly the multi-use path entrance off of 8th Street adjacent to the park & ride), the Fir Street Park & Ride could be marketed as a regional entry point for the park for hikers and bicyclists, underscoring the benefits of enabling Routes 20, 40, and 41 to serve the park & ride.
- Given the very wide right of way, an opportunity exists to provide a multiuse path connecting Fir St. and Forest Ave. or Bruce St. along the north side of SR 32.

Figure 7-31 Fir Street Park & Ride Relocation/Expansion



Regional Park & Rides

Park & rides can also serve as hubs for different types of service; in addition to being served by fixed routes, they can also function as vanpool start points. In the mid- to long-term, there are several opportunities for additional park & rides throughout Butte County that will be explored in more detail in the Chico to

Sacramento Inter-City Transit Strategic Plan, which is expected to be completed by FY 2022/23.

- **Oroville.** The current park & ride lot adjacent to Highway 70 has a total of 30 parking spaces. If there were demand for additional parking spaces in this area, BCAG could explore a shared parking agreement with Home Depot at Nelson Avenue & 3rd Street to provide additional capacity. If this option were pursued, Route 20 would need to be slightly modified to serve this lot.
- **Paradise.** There is an opportunity to pair a park & ride lot with a new transit center in Paradise, which will help simplify transit routing in the area, in addition to attracting potential new riders. The new facility could be located on Black Olive Drive, north of Birth Street and adjacent to Paradise Community Park. The small gravel parking lot just north of the park could be repurposed to serve BCAG customers.
- **Gridley.** Route 32 will remain in service (albeit with a small bus/paratransit vehicle) in the short-term timeframe, serving Gridley and Biggs via Durham. In the mid-term timeframe and if applicable given employment demographics, it may make more sense to implement vanpools between these locations (see below). Regardless of the service type, BCAG could work with Gridley to install a park & ride using shared parking spaces at the Butte County Fairgrounds. This park & ride lot could support either fixed route or vanpool services, or a combination of both.

Downtown Chico Transit Center

In the mid-term, and possibly in conjunction with the City's upcoming Downtown Access Plan planning processes, BCAG should work with the City to establish a new transfer location in downtown designed to expedite transit services (by reducing the amount of circling to reach the location) and to make connections between routes more intuitive.

Ultimately, the objective of a new downtown transit center in Chico would be to elevate the visibility of transit, and improve the experience of being a transit user in Chico. It would allow for better-timed connections among routes, offer a comfortable passenger facility, allow B-Line service to be streamlined, and promote development and activity in downtown Chico. When transit centers have been developed in central urban locations adjacent to key activity centers and shopping areas, they have provided a steady stream of patrons to local businesses while people wait for buses and transfer between buses. In theory, a new transit center should:

- Have space to accommodate the next 20 years of growth.
- Have adequate boarding/alighting space, layover space and circulation space to ensure smooth operations.
- Provide safe and convenient access for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Provide a pleasant atmosphere for passengers.
- Meet the needs of bus drivers (including driver amenities such as a restrooms and break room).
- Provide an operations outpost for the transit agency, allowing B-Line riders to collect information about the service and talk with a customer service representative.

Implementing Vanpool Service

Vanpool programs are cost effective means for providing commute transportation to employment sites. In Butte County, the most practical implementation of a vanpool service would be as a replacement for Route 31 (Paradise – Oroville) in the short- to mid-term timeframe. BCAG may also consider implementing vanpool service along Route 32 (Biggs – Gridley – Chico) in the mid-term timeframe. In the late mid-term timeframe, BCAG may also consider introducing vanpool services in Magalia and other flag-stop service areas.

Typically, vanpool programs may be managed by local or regional transit agencies, which provide vehicles, fuel, maintenance and full insurance coverage but charge a fare that is divided among the passengers. However, private options are available as well, with national operators such as VRide and Enterprise able to facilitate small (i.e., one vehicle) vanpool operations if appropriate. Additionally, some employers subsidize vanpool fares as an employee benefit or when addressing congestion or parking problems. For both public and private operations, the vanpool must identify a driver, who typically does not pay part of the fare. Ridematching services can also help facilitate and promote vanpooling; these services can be operated by public, private, or nonprofit organizations. Regardless of whether a vanpool program is operated in-house or by a contractor, a small administrative staff is needed to manage vanpool records, service issues, etc.

In practice, vanpools offer a higher degree of flexibility than fixed route services. For example, the precise route and schedule of the service are developed by participants themselves, with the service able to pick up vanpool participants at their residences and drop them off at their workplaces. Additionally, vanpools may be organized in such a way as to originate at and/or serve other park & ride lots.

LONG-TERM SERVICE PLAN (TO 2040)

In the long-term service plan, BCAG would continue to build on the foundations of the short- and mid-term service plans. Service changes would largely be dependent on urbanization and development throughout Chico and the region; in particular, service expansion, such as new coverage routes, would be reliant on new pockets of development on Chico and Oroville’s outskirts as well as new roadway connections. New transit-priority corridors could also be added within

Chico (and potentially Oroville) pending increased development (or redevelopment) within existing built-up areas.

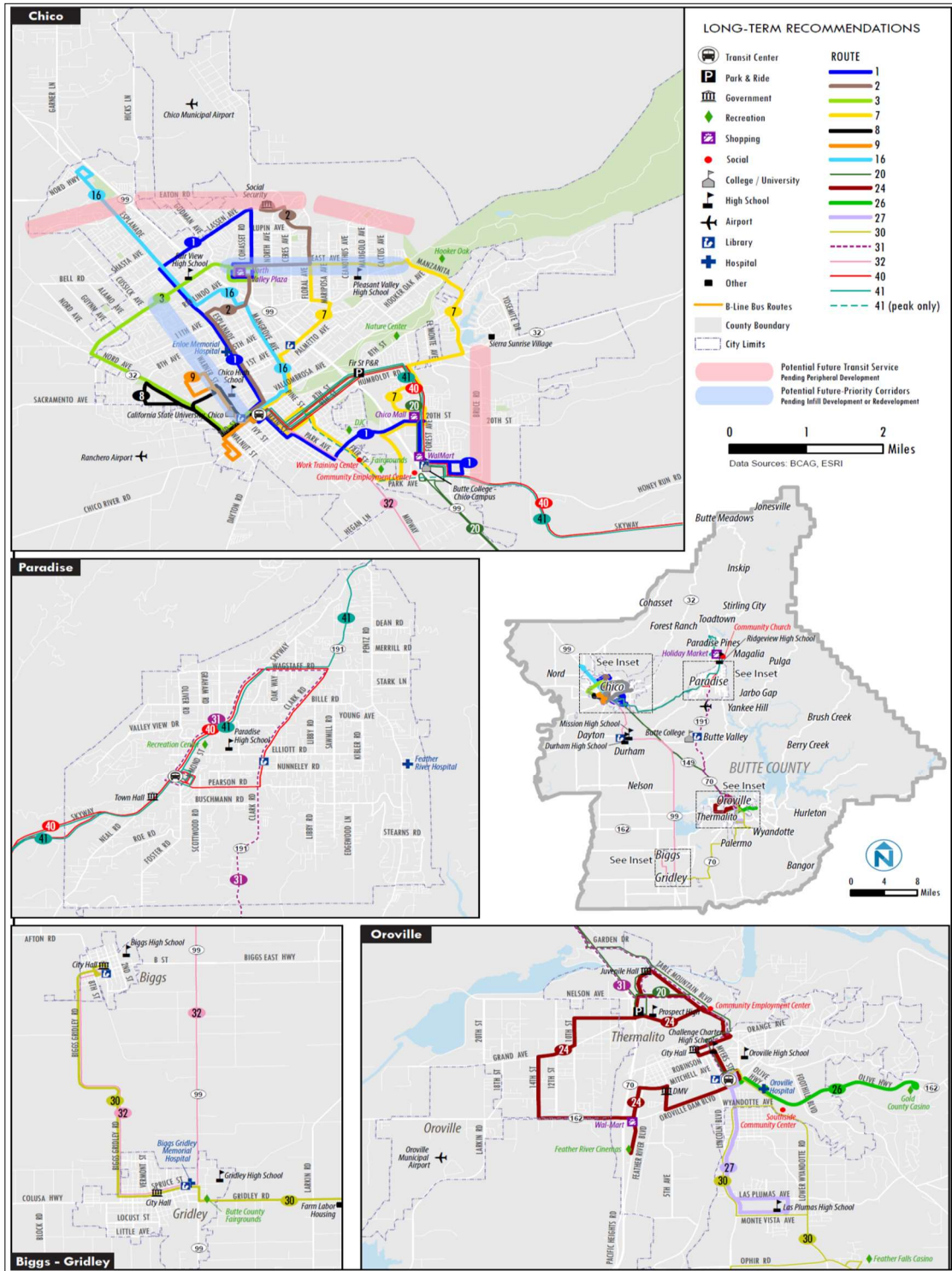
Major Transit Initiatives

Much of the long-term service plan is speculative as it is highly dependent on future development throughout Butte County.

Major long-term transit initiatives include the following elements:

- **Additional coverage routes.** Pending development on the edges of Chico, particularly along the Eaton Corridor and Bruce Road near Chico Mall, BCAG could expand transit services to include additional coverage routes serving these areas. Ideally, any coverage routes would take advantage of new roadways connecting development areas with each other as well as older areas of Chico.
- **Additional transit-priority corridors.** Again, subject to increased infill development and/or redevelopment in existing built-up areas, BCAG could expand the “transit-priority corridor” concept in Chico, designating such arterials such as East Avenue and Warner Street as high-quality transit corridors. (Note: a Warner Street transit corridor is dependent on the completion of the street extension between West 7th Avenue and West 11th Avenue.)
- **Transit Village development at North Valley Plaza.** In the long-term, BCAG could work with the City of Chico and other major stakeholders to spearhead higher-density, transit-oriented development at North Valley Plaza. (Refer to the “Community Design Standards in Support of Service Design Standards” on page 6-14 for additional guidance.)
- **Potential regional transit consolidation.** In the long-term timeframe, BCAG may wish to further increase coordination, or pursue service consolidation, with other intra- and inter-regional transit providers, including Butte College, Glenn Ride, and Yuba-Sutter Transit. One option could be to form a regional Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) to oversee all regional transit operations.

Figure 7-33 Long-Term Service Plan: Potential New Coverage Routes and Transit-Priority Corridors



CONCLUSION

Proposed changes to B-Line services in the short-term time horizon are focused on streamlining services and providing greater efficiencies. The recommendations for mid- (2020 through 2027), and long-term (to 2040) time horizons include investments to speed transit and to serve portions of Butte County, primarily in Chico, where transit investments will be appropriate given anticipated development.

Due to major disruptions to service and ridership, including the Camp Fire and COVID-19, BCAG is working on multiple studies to develop sustainable transit solutions in Butte County, including the Post Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study, the Chico to Sacramento Inter-City Transit Strategic Plan, and the B-Line Routing Study. These Plans will provide recommendations on making B-Line more resilient, innovative, and provide a more efficient transit service.

As explained in the 2015 Transit & Non-Motorized Plan that is currently being updated, several of B-Line's existing routes perform well and were not modified in the service recommendations. Others can better meet performance standards and address demand. The BCAG Travel Demand Model forecasts an increase in daily ridership, using a FY 2012 base year, with ridership growth at 2% by FY 2015, assuming short-term improvements (does not assume anything other than route changes). By FY 2020, ridership growth within the near mid-term timeframe is calculated to be 7%, with growth doubling to 14% by FY 2027. Assuming the changes made in the mid-term scenario are carried forward to the longer term, even without some potential expansion routes, ridership is calculated to be 24% greater in 2035 than it is today.

Even with modest changes to the system and essentially status quo operating levels, Butte County's jurisdictions will enjoy some reductions in VMT, along with related reductions in GHG emissions, although the impacts to GHG are small: reductions in emissions overall are estimated to range from about 0.25% to 0.27% of existing emissions.

When major investments are made in transit capital projects or service operations, transit has the potential to displace the additional emissions caused by traffic congestion. In other words, as more passengers choose transit and private auto travel declines, cars and trucks will consume less fuel from idling in traffic. Under certain VMT growth scenarios, especially in urban areas already facing substantial congestion, these reductions may be significant. To the extent that B-Line service enhancements may get drivers off the road, traffic volumes may decrease, and congestion would in turn be reduced; however, given recommended investments in transit which are limited due to available funding, no major levels of displacement are projected in Butte County over the 20-year horizon of this planning effort.

Implementation of the transit service plan will require investment in several new capital projects, some of which are optional. These include improvements to the

North Valley Plaza transfer center and the implementation of Route 1 “BRT lite” improvements. A recommended capital investment for Caltrans includes improvements to the Fir Street “Park & Bike or Ride” in Chico as well as the development of additional park & rides throughout Butte County in Oroville, Paradise, and Gridley. Finally, a new Downtown Chico Transit Center is recommended.

SOCIAL SERVICE TRANSPORTATION

Butte County boasts a network of social service agencies providing specialized transportation to their clients. Most agencies assisting with client transportation needs provide transit tickets, mileage reimbursement, or a combination of mechanisms. Several agencies, however, have their own vehicles and staff providing curb-to-curb or door-to-door Paratransit service. Ridership is limited to program clients based on the individual agency’s criteria. The largest in-house social service transportation system in Butte County is the Work Training Center (WTC) which operates 24 vehicles transporting clients throughout Butte County. Vehicle capacities vary from 8 to 18 passengers. Service for WTC is funded by the Far Northern Regional Center.

COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

During the 2007/08 fiscal year, BCAG developed a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan in response to the coordinated planning requirements of SAFETEA-LU. The Coordinated Plan developed recommendations for use of new and continuing funding in Butte County under FTA:

- New Freedom Program (Section 5317)
- Job Access & Reverse Commute [JARC] (Section 5310 formally 5316)
- Seniors and Persons with Disabilities capital funds (Section 5310)
- Intercity Bus Program (Section 5311(f))

SAFETEA-LU required this locally developed plan to establish a “unified comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery” through a coordinated planning process to address unmet needs of target populations. Funds available under the new FAST Act programs are matched by local human service resources and other funding to leverage more transportation for targeted persons.

The Coordinated Plan identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation. Projects selected for funding must be derived from the locally developed coordinated public transit – human services transportation plan that minimally includes the following elements at a level consistent with available resources and the complexity of the local institutional environment:

- ❑ Assessment of available services identifying current providers (public, private, non-profit);
- ❑ Assessment of needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults and people with low incomes;
- ❑ Strategies and/or activities to address the identified gaps and achieve efficiencies in service delivery;
- ❑ Relative priorities for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies / activities identified.

**Figure 7-34 Butte County Coordination Plan
Target Population Transportation Needs, Resources & Possible Responses**

Target Population	Special Transportation Needs and Concerns	Transportation Modes	Potential Transit or Transportation Projects/ Solutions
Seniors, Able-Bodied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of knowledge about resources - Concern about safety and security - Awareness that time when driving might be limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fixed-route transit - Point deviation and deviated FR - Senior DAR - Special purpose shuttles: recreation, nutrition, shopping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single point of information - Educational initiatives, including experience with bus riding <u>before</u> it is needed - Buddy programs; assistance in “trying” transit - Transit fairs, transit seniors-ride-free days or common pass
Seniors, Frail and Persons Chronically Ill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assistance to and through the door - Assistance with making trip arrangements - On-time performance and reliability critical to frail users - Assistance in trip planning needed - Need for shelters - Need for “hand-off” for very frail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ADA Paratransit - Emergency and non-emergency medical transportation - Escort/Companion - Volunteer drivers - Special purpose shuttles - Mileage reimbursement service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Escorted transportation options - Door-through-door assistance; outside-the-vehicle assistance - Increased role for volunteers - Technology that provides feedback both to consumer and to dispatch; procedures to identify frailest users when traveling - Individualized trip planning and trip scheduling assistance - Expanded mileage reimbursement program - Driver sensitivity training - Appropriately placed bus shelters

<p>Persons with Disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service quality and reliability - Driver sensitivity and appropriate passenger handling procedure - Concerns about wheelchair capacity on vehicles/ pass-bys - Need for shelters - Sometimes door-through-door or issues of "hand-off" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fixed-route transit - ADA Paratransit - Emergency and non-emergency medical transportation - Special purpose shuttles - Escort/Companion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single point of information; information as universal design solution - Continuing attention to service performance; importance of time-sensitive service applications - Driver education and attention to procedures about stranded or pass-by passengers with disabilities - Aggressive program of bus shelters - Vehicles, capital replacement
<p>Persons of Low-income and Homeless Persons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easy access to trip planning information - Fare subsidies (bus tokens or passes) that can be provided in a medium that is not cash - Breaking down the culture of poverty that uses transportation as the difficulty for not moving about the community - Difficulties of mothers with multiple children - Need to bring along shopping carts - Difficulties with transfers within and between systems; long trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fixed-route transit - Point deviation and deviated FR - Special purpose shuttles (work, training, special education, Headstart, recreation) - Van pools, ride sharing, car sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative fare options available to human services agencies - Increased quantity of bus passes available - Universal pass for services across county - Bus passes available to those searching for jobs or in job training programs; cost-effective - Special shuttles oriented to this population's predictable travel patterns - Education about transit to case managers, workers with this population - Feedback to transit planners on demand; continued work to improve transit service levels (coverage, frequency, span of hours) - Training of staff to train consumers - Vanpool assistance, ride-sharing connections

Figure 7-34 Target Population Transportation Needs, Resources & Possible Responses - Continued

<p>Persons with Sensory Impairments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty in accessing visual or auditory information - Possible door-to-door for visually impaired - Driver sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fixed route transit - ADA Paratransit - Demand response - Volunteers/ mileage reimbursement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single point of information; information in accessible formats - Guides (personal assistance) through information - Driver training critical to respond to needs
<p>Persons with Behavioral Disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medications make individuals sun-sensitive and waiting in the sun is not an option. - Medications cause thirstiness; long hour waits can lead to dehydration. - Mental illnesses can make it frightening to be in public spaces. - Impaired judgment and memory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fixed route transit - ADA Paratransit - Special purpose shuttles - Escort/Companion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibly special shuttles oriented to these known predictable travel needs - Driver training projects to provide skills at managing/ recognizing behaviors of clients - Aggressive program of bus shelters - "Hand-off" can be critical for confused riders, passing them off to a responsible party - Important that driver understand rider conditions

Figure 7-35 Butte County Coordination Plan Recommended Goals, Objectives and Suggested Strategies

VISION: TO IMPROVE MOBILITY FOR BUTTE COUNTY SENIORS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND PERSONS OF LOW INCOME THROUGH COORDINATED PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

<p>GOAL 1.0: FACILITATING LEADERSHIP AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p>	
<p>1.1 Establish a regional Mobility Manager/CTSA capability to provide leadership on coordination around specialized transportation needs in Butte County.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Identify lead agency for regional Mobility Manager/CTSA.</p> <p>1.1.2 Define roles and responsibilities of the Regional Mobility Manager/CTSA for the near-term and the longer term.</p> <p>1.1.3 Establish a strategic oversight committee inviting highest level agency representation with BCAG with large human service agencies funding transportation services that could include: County Depts. of Public Social Services, Behavioral Health and Public Health as well as non-profits First Five, Far Northern Regional Center, North Valley Catholic Social Services.</p> <p>1.1.4 Establish mechanisms to promote coordination including elements such as updating annually the resource inventory, establishing coordination working groups and periodic newsletters.</p> <p>1.1.5 Continue to expand the planning partners base and grow membership in the Regional Mobility Manager/CTSA structure; establish ongoing mechanisms for communication via email, surface mail and other strategies, using this feedback as one tool for updating the annual inventory.</p>

Figure 7-35 Butte County Coordination Plan Recommended Goals, Objectives and Suggested Strategies - Continued

<p>1.1 Establish a regional Mobility Manager/ CTSA capability to provide leadership on coordination around specialized transportation needs in Butte County.</p>	<p>1.1.6 Promote the visibility of the Regional Mobility Manager/CTSA and its function as a resource to its planning partners, utilizing all possible methods of communication.</p>
<p>1.2 Establish the Regional Mobility Manager’s role in “growing” and strengthening projects responsive to the coordination vision, its goals and objectives.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Work at the agency and project levels to promote and identify potential coordination projects, assisting planning partners in designing effective projects and pursuing funding.</p>
	<p>1.2.2 Establish a technical assistance capability for the Regional Mobility Manager/CTSA to provide support to human services transportation agencies related to service efficiency, effectiveness and safety.</p>
<p>1.3 Promote agency-level mobility managers within agencies and within social service systems through the Call for Projects and through outreach by the Regional Mobility Manager/CTSA.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Identify, promote and develop agency-level mobility managers as internal transportation advocates and information resources.</p>
	<p>1.3.2 Establish formalized relationships between the Regional Mobility Manager/CTSA and the agency-level mobility managers to ensure collaboration.</p>
	<p>1.3.3 Identify specific action areas and activities by which the Regional Mobility Manager/CTSA and the agency level mobility managers can work together to promote the coordination of Visions and Goals.</p>
<p>1.4 Develop visibility around specialized transportation issues and needs, encouraging high-level political and agency leadership.</p>	<p>1.4.1 Conduct a biennial summit to include highest leadership levels within the county, and all stakeholder partners to promote coordination successes, collaborative activities, and to address outstanding policy issues in specialized transportation.</p>
	<p>1.4.2 Promote the inventory database as a coordination tool, possibly in concert with 211/ 511 processes, encouraging participation and use at all levels and utilizing both web-based and paper products.</p>
<p>1.5 Address physical infrastructure needs that assist pedestrians and thereby aid transit.</p>	<p>1.5.1 Work with local jurisdictions to improve pedestrian access to bus stops, including sidewalks and curb cuts.</p>
	<p>1.5.2 Continue and expand as feasible, existing programs of placement of bus stop amenities, including bus benches and bus shelters, focusing on highest use areas, transfer locations and terminus or other areas with long waits between vehicle runs.</p>

Figure 7-35 Butte County Coordination Plan Recommended Goals, Objectives and Suggested Strategies - Continued

GOAL 2.0 BUILDING SERVICES	
2.1 Promote the <u>QUANTITY</u> of public transit, paratransit and specialized transportation services provided.	2.1.1 Review policies for pass and bus ticket purchase and pass distribution and develop voucher program strategies to increase the availability of fares subsidized for the lowest income individuals.
	2.1.2 Expand availability of public transit services into later evening and earlier morning timeframes; increase Saturday and Sunday services; increase service frequencies on highest use routes with attention to inter-community routes.
	2.1.3 Pursue pilots for “same-day, immediate needs” for those specialized transit users who required some limited same-day service capability.
	2.1.4 Continue dialog with secondary and post-secondary education systems to identify potential coordinated transportation projects, potentially for support services and possibly for direct service delivery.
2.2 Promote the <u>QUALITY</u> of public transit, paratransit and specialized transportation services provided.	2.2.1 Strengthen service provision capabilities of human services transportation providers through projects that promote coordinated driver training opportunities, technology solutions, communication improvements, coordinated maintenance and vehicle back-up capabilities, pooled insurance opportunities and other such strategies.
	2.2.2 Pilot trip brokering and vehicle resource sharing capabilities, through CTSA leadership, to increase the ability of existing transportation resources to provide more trips.
	2.2.3 Develop volunteer-based, coordinated projects that can address some special needs.
	2.2.4 Promote coordinated systems solutions to special needs groups such as, dialysis patients, youth from outlying communities, low-income workers traveling to/from third-shift jobs, incarcerated homeless, among others.
	2.2.5 Support fleet improvements including replacement of capital with lift-equipped and newer equipment.

Figure 7-35 Butte County Coordination Plan Recommended Goals, Objectives and Suggested Strategies - Continued

GOAL 2.0 BUILDING SERVICES, continued	
2.3 Develop strategies for improving transportation solutions to outlying, low-density areas of the county.	<p>2.3.1 Promote pilot solutions to address the following corridors or areas of travel and others that may be identified through collective data gathering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gold Country Casino in Kelly Ridge ○ Oroville to Palermo ○ Between Oroville and Yuba/ Sutter ○ Thermalito to Gridley, Thermalito to Oroville <p>And:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Berry Creek and Buckeye ○ Concow, Deadwood, Yankee Hill ○ Areas around Lake Oroville, including Feather Falls ○ Palermo ○ Kelly Ridge
	<p>2.3.2 Collect data to document such isolated trip needs, at the case manager level, to better report the type, quantity and timing of trip needs from specific geographic areas.</p>
	<p>2.3.3 Collect data to document and therefore possibly address the mobility needs of “hidden populations” including agricultural workers and others.</p>
2.4 Promote coordinated responses for those support services that will strengthen and enhance community transportation services.	<p>2.4.1 Explore support service opportunities such as for shared vehicle maintenance, joint procurement of parts and fuel, and vehicle back-up, among other options.</p>
	<p>2.4.2 Explore coordinated insurance options, including insurance pools and volunteer driver insurance to assist small agencies.</p>
	<p>2.4.3 Develop procedures to improve the accuracy of reporting of human services transportation trips to ensure full “credit” for trips provided by this sector.</p>

Figure 7-35 Butte County Coordination Plan Recommended Goals, Objectives and Suggested Strategies - Continued

GOAL 3.0 ENHANCING INFORMATION PORTALS	
3.1 Develop information portal tools for wide distribution of information.	3.1.1 Invite through the Calls for Projects strategies that establish, promote, enhance and extend transit and specialized transit information portals .
	3.1.2. Build upon existing B-Line information pieces and create additional information tools oriented to direct human service agency staff, aiding them in accessing specialized transportation services on behalf of their consumers.
	3.1.3 Improve methods of information distribution by working through the SSTAC, survey database and other strategies to get transit information into more consumer and agency personnel hands.
	3.1.4 Ensure that the regional Mobility Manager/CTSA's information tools are maintained and kept current with service changes, establishing standardized mechanisms by which public operators and Measure A providers advise the Mobility Manager(s) of anticipated service changes.
	3.1.5 Integrate available and planned transportation information resources with attention to 211/ 511 opportunities in relation to the information needs of the target populations and their caseworkers, working through existing, regionally-oriented information systems.
3.2 Actively promote travel training, mobility training and bus buddy opportunities to a wide range of audiences, including consumers and their agency representatives.	3.2.1 Invite through the Calls for Projects mobility training strategies that establish, promote, encourage and implement any travel training experience that encourages users and prospective users to ride public transit. Programs may be geared toward any subgroup of the target population and focus on building consumers' skills and agency personnel transit knowledge.
	3.2.2 Hold periodic transit workshops , distributed geographically across the county, to keep human services personnel current with available transportation resources and information tools, and apprise them of upcoming changes to the public transit network.
3.3 Evaluate and report on transportation pilots, to identify successes and less-than-successful initiatives and modify plans accordingly.	3.3.1 Identify, promote and train human service organizations in standardized reporting that accurately counts transportation services provided.
	3.3.2 Establish performance goals , as set by participating agencies, against which to measure performance, report on these and adapt service plans where actual performance indicates adjustment is needed.

CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICE AGENCY (CTSA)

Butte County was designated the Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA) for Butte County in 1981. However, since the consolidation of B-Line in 2005, BCAG has assumed the role and responsibilities as the CTSA for practical purposes.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Glenn County operates the *Glenn Ride* service to Chico, thus opening the public transit options between Butte and Glenn County. This service runs everyday except Sunday, with seven round trips weekdays (operating between 6:20 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.) and three trips on Saturday (from 9:20 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.). Plumas County Transit offers one round trip every Wednesday from Quincy, arriving in Chico at 10:20 a.m. and departing at 3:00 p.m. Private firms also provide transportation services within the region. Greyhound Lines provides service along the SR 99/70 corridor, with several stops within Butte County. Other private transportation services operating in Butte County include limousines, airport shuttles, taxi service, pedi-cabs, and non-emergency medical transport.

TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As the administrator of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds for Butte County, BCAG is charged with performing the annual Unmet Transit Needs (UTN) process which includes the development of the Transit Needs Assessment.

In Butte County, the UTN process entails a comprehensive public outreach program and series of open house style meetings throughout the county, culminating with a public hearing before the BCAG Board of Directors to obtain testimony on perceived unmet transit needs that may be reasonable to meet. The purpose of this process is to ensure that all unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet are met before funds are expended for non-transit uses, such as streets and roads.

Once the testimony is obtained, it is analyzed to determine if there are any transit needs that meet the adopted definitions of “Unmet Transit Need” and “Reasonable to Meet”. This analysis report, called the Transit Needs Assessment, is reviewed by the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), which provides a recommendation for Unmet Transit Needs Findings to the BCAG Board of Directors. If the Board determines there are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet, the affected jurisdiction must satisfy those needs before any TDA funds may be expended for non-transit purposes.

Workshops are typically held during the months of October through November in Chico, Oroville, Paradise and Gridley to obtain comments. These meetings, along with a public hearing, are promoted in local newspapers, on the buses, on the internet, and through the social service agencies. If individuals are unable to attend a meeting, they are encouraged to submit their comments by phone, email, or comment card. Comment cards are available on all transit vehicles. All comments received, whether in person or by another method, receive equal consideration when being analyzed.

Staff then holds a meeting of the BCAG Social Services Transportation Advisory Council to review the assessment and formulate a recommendation to the Board.

Based on the testimony and analysis with the adopted definitions of unmet transit needs and reasonable to meet, the BCAG Board of Directors is **required** to make one of three findings:

1. There are no unmet transit needs
2. There are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet
3. There are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet

If there are transit needs that are reasonable to meet, these must be funded before Transportation Development Act funds can be used for non-transit purposes, such as streets and roads.

Unmet Transit Needs

Unmet transit needs are those trips required, but currently not provided and not scheduled to be provided within Butte County, for individuals dependent on public transit to maintain a minimum standard of living.

Reasonable to Meet

Reasonable to Meet shall include all of the following factors:

- 1) Cost Effectiveness: The cost to provide the service will meet the minimum farebox recovery ratio.
- 2) Economy: The project can be implemented at reasonable cost.
- 3) Community Acceptance: Support exists as indicated through the public hearing process.
- 4) Operational Feasibility: The service must be safe to operate.

TRANSIT PLANNING

The Transit and Bicycle & Pedestrian chapters of this 2020 RTP/SCS is the direct work product from a comprehensive Transit and Non-Motorized Transportation Plan completed in 2015. In addition, in 2015, BCAG completed the Chico to Sacramento Commuter Transit Feasibility Study to take a market based approach to see if commuter transit would support itself. While the data looks promising, BCAG is currently researching sustained funding opportunities and grants to implement a demonstration project. Other planning efforts include the completion of a Regional PEV Readiness and Feasibility Plan. In 2017 BCAG began the environmental component to look at the future construction of a new transit center in the Town of Paradise. Due to Paradise Camp Fire, this project has been put on hold. Discussions with the Town of Paradise have recently been held to re-evaluate the proposed location to fit in better alignment with the Town's rebuilding efforts.

In the 2007/08 fiscal year, BCAG developed a comprehensive Bus Stop Improvement Plan. During the 2008/09 fiscal year, BCAG pursued the concept of using an advertising company to install and maintain bus shelters. In the spring of 2010, BCAG entered into contract with Stott Advertising Agency. To date, this public/private partnership has resulted in the construction and installation of 50 new bus shelters and maintenance of all bus shelters for the region. The need for bus shelters was repeatedly one of the highest ranking needs expressed by passengers.

During the 2012/13 fiscal year, BCAG entered into a partnership with HelpCentral.org, a regional Human Services and Transportation clearinghouse website, in order to develop a "One Stop Shop" for information on coordinated Human Services and Transportation services within Butte County. The project is designed to provide all residents and visitors to Butte County simple and easy access to information regarding relevant human services available within the County, transportation options for both fixed route and paratransit and trip planning opportunities.

The project involves utilizing the current HelpCentral.org website, updating all of the Human Services contact information, updating all of the transportation services contact and scheduling information, then integrating this into the B-Line website in order to provide B-Line customers direct access. The transit services section will include schedules and trip planning capabilities, as well as links to paratransit eligibility certification.

A secondary aspect of this project was the installation of a 211 phone/website program in order to provide access to those within the Region that do not have internet access; specifically seniors and the disabled.

Since the 2016 RTP/SCS, BCAG continues to work with the cities, town, county and the public to address issues facing transit service within Butte County. Between the period of the 2016 RTP/SCS and 2020, ridership was at a slight decline consistent with national trends. Compounded with COVID in 2020, with increased declines at approximately 70% has proven to be one of the most challenging times for transit. Moving forward, BCAG as the owner/operator for Butte Regional Transit is taking the necessary proactive steps to plan accordingly given the new landscape in Butte County post Camp Fire with the development of the study.

ADA PARATRANSIT PROGRAM

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which passed in 1990, is federal civil rights legislation requiring persons with disabilities to be provided with equal access to all of the facilities and opportunities available to non-disabled persons. The Act's implications for transit operators are dramatic. Specific sections of the Act deal with everything from lift design and facility accessibility to employment. Perhaps the most far-reaching part of the Act for transit operators is the Comparable Paratransit Service provision. Under this provision, fixed route transit operators are held responsible for providing a level of paratransit service for those who cannot utilize fixed route transit. This paratransit service must be equal in most respects to the fixed route service they provide regardless of the accessibility of the fixed route service. The transit operator need not operate the comparable service directly, but must ensure that such service is fully available and is marketed to the disabled population as defined by the Act. The Act allows transit operators five years to develop and implement paratransit service that complies with the intent and letter of the Act. Specific milestones must be met within the five-year development period. In order to monitor the progress of transit operators in complying with the Act, transit operators are required to produce a Complementary Paratransit Service Plan, which outlines the efforts and progress made. Operators are also required to update this plan annually until full compliance is achieved.

BCAG is in full compliance with the ADA for providing complementary paratransit service.