

## 2 DEMOGRAPHICS, MAJOR EMPLOYERS AND TRANSIT GENERATORS, DEVELOPMENTS AND LONG-RANGE PLANS

### INTRODUCTION

Butte County is located in the northern region of the Central Valley in California, about 60 miles north of the state capitol in Sacramento. Regional planning for the County is managed by the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG), designated as the County's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA). Butte County is bordered on the north by Tehama and Plumas Counties, on the west by Glenn and Colusa Counties, on the east by Yuba County, and on the south by Sutter County.

The foundation of determining the transportation needs of residents and workers in the County begins with examining the demographic information of its citizens. In particular, the distribution and density of population, employment, ages and individual travel behaviors provide a basis for this determination. This chapter is a profile of the regional population, identifying groups that are more likely to use public transit or other alternative modes of transportation.

### BUTTE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

#### Existing Characteristics and Projected Population Growth

From the 1940s to the 1980s, Butte County experienced sustained population growth ranging from increases of 24 to 52 percent each decade. This growth rate has substantially tapered starting in the 1990s, however. In 2010, the most recent census year, the population of Butte County was measured to be 220,000 people, an increase of 8.3 percent from the 2000 population of 203,171. As of 2012, Butte County is estimated to have a population of 221,539. Additional general characteristics of the County's population and age distribution are described in Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2.

Based on recent US Census and 2011 American Community Survey (ACS) data, the county's population is relatively well educated, with an overwhelming majority (86.1%) having received a high school degree and nearly one quarter of the population attaining a Bachelor's degree or higher. Additionally, most people speak English as their first language at home (85.7%). As of October 2013, the unemployment rate for Butte County is 9.1%.<sup>1</sup>

**Figure 2-1 Population Characteristics in Butte County**

	Butte County
Change in Population 2000 to 2010*	8.3%
Language other than English Spoken at Home	14.3%
High School Graduates	86.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	24.0%
Median Family Income	\$54,175
Persons Below Poverty Level	19.8%
Families Below Poverty Level	12.4%
Civilian Veterans	11.7%

Sources: 2007-2011 ACS 5 yr (Butte County, California). \* = 2000 Census & 2010 Decennial Census

With regard to age, a significant proportion of the population falls within the 65+ age group (15.8%), followed closely by youths under the age of 18 and young adults aged 18 to 24 (both 15.2%). These latter findings are reflective of the presence of Butte College and CSU within the county. See Figure 2-2 below.

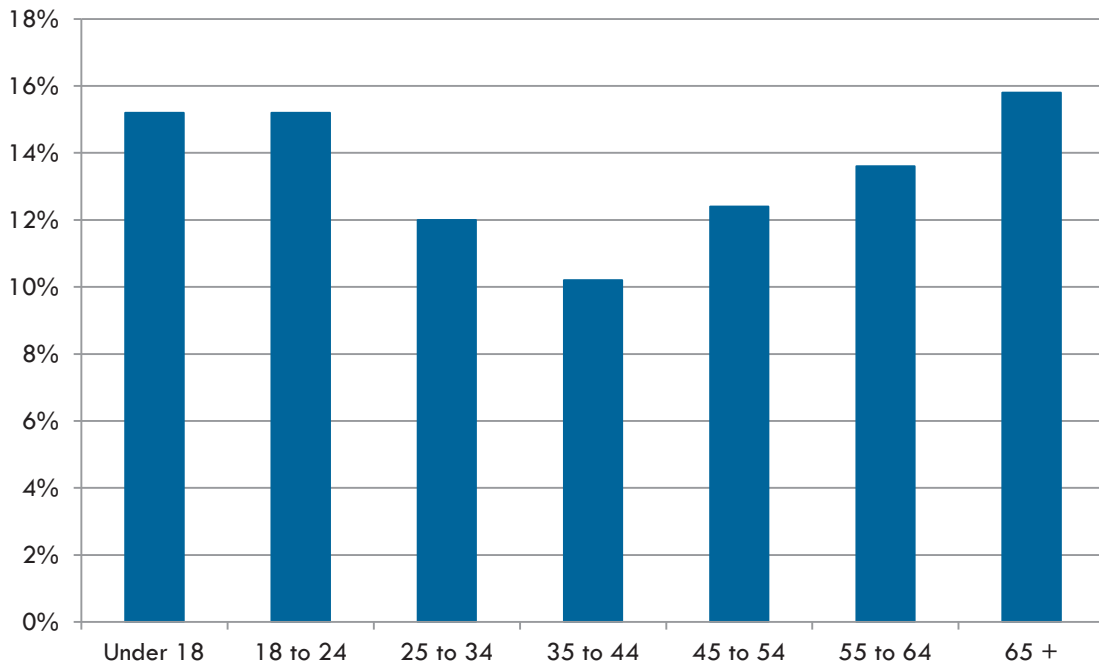
Circa 2010, the median age in Butte County was 37.2 years of age.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: State of California Employment Development Department

<sup>2</sup> US Census, 2010 Demographic Profile

Figure 2-2 Age Distribution in Butte County



Source: 2012 ACS 1 year (Butte County, California)

### Population Density & Growth

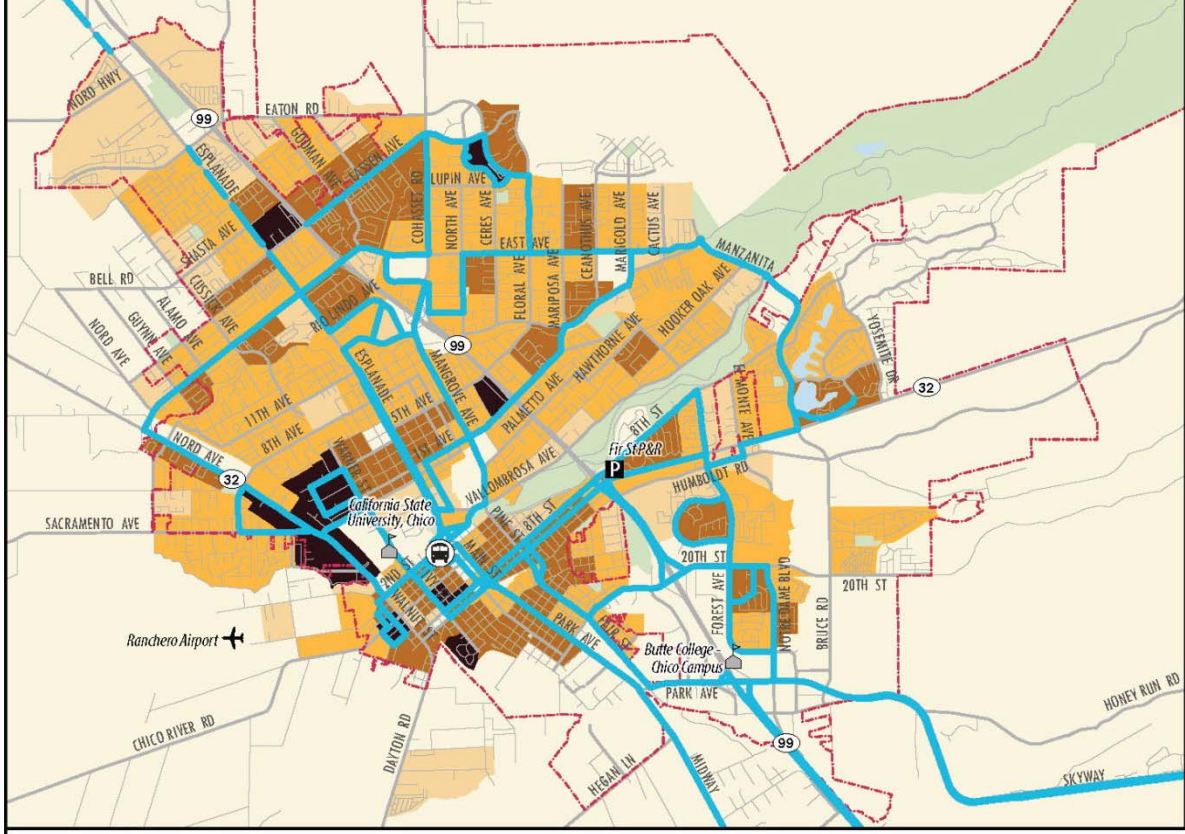
The population of Butte County is largely distributed between the cities and towns of Chico, Oroville, Paradise, Biggs, and Gridley. A number of smaller population centers are dispersed in unincorporated communities throughout the rest of the county. Chico is the most populous and dense of these places as of 2012, with 87,712 residents, or 39.5% of the county population.<sup>3</sup> A significant portion within this population is represented by students at the California State University, Chico. Figure 2-3 shows the population density across Butte County as of 2010.

Figure 2-4 and Figure 2-5 depict the anticipated population densities in Butte County in 2020 and 2035. In 2020, the areas that are expected to increase in population density include currently undeveloped areas to the east of Ceres and Lassen Avenues, along West Eaton Road in Chico. Neighborhoods to the northeast of Chico Mall are also expected to increase in population density by 2020. Population density is largely expected to remain the same in Oroville, Paradise, and other Butte County centers over the next several years.

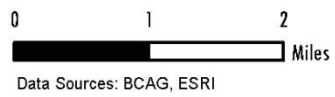
By 2035, however, it is anticipated that parts of Paradise and Biggs will increase in population, as will currently undeveloped parts of Chico near Sierra Sunrise Village along Route 32. Another area expected to densify is the former Diamond Match company site in southwest Chico, which is slated for future redevelopment and currently undergoing remediation.

<sup>3</sup> American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates (2012)

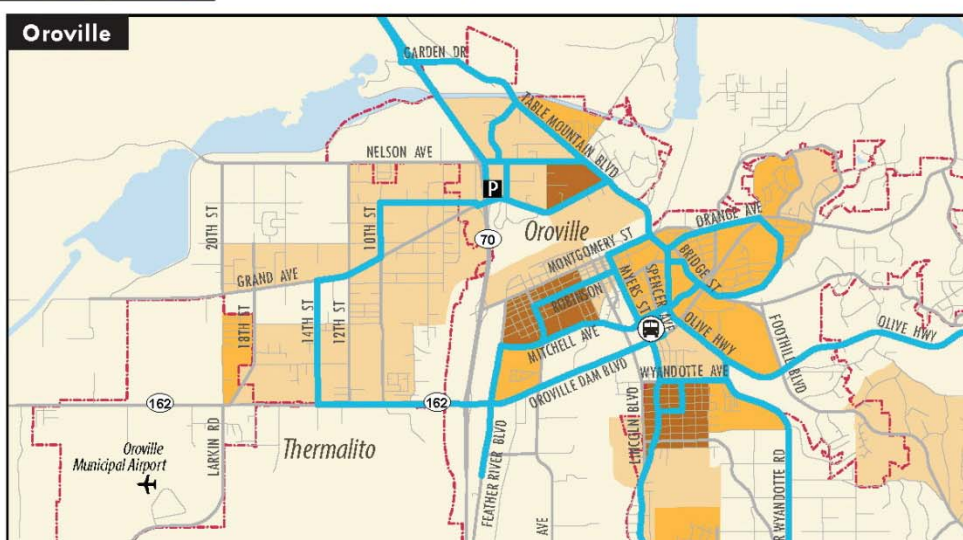
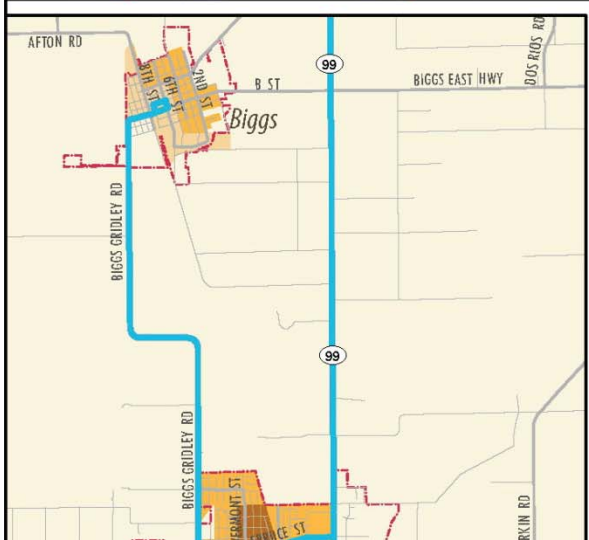
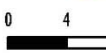
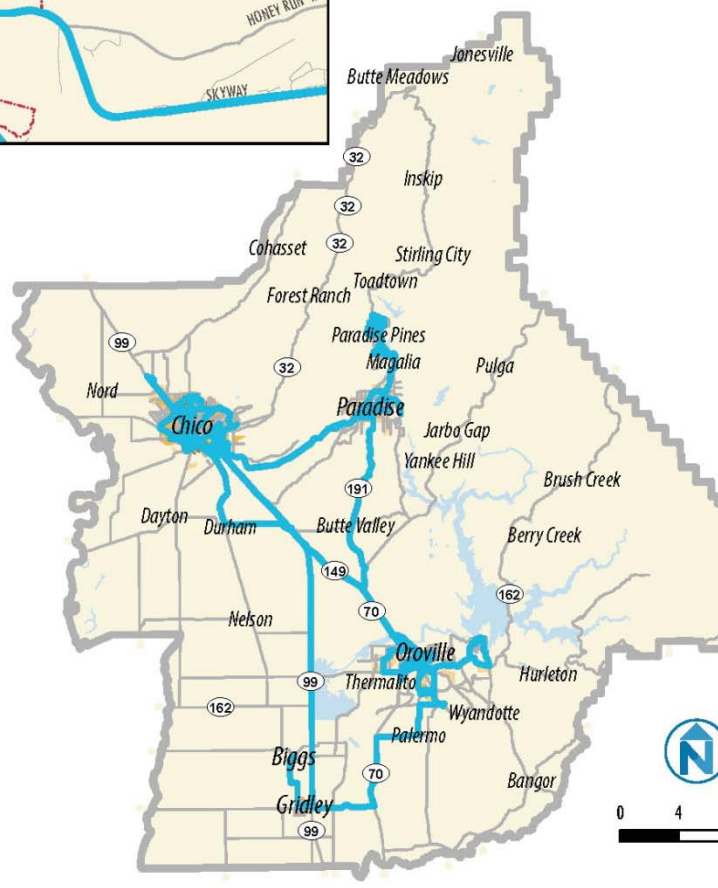
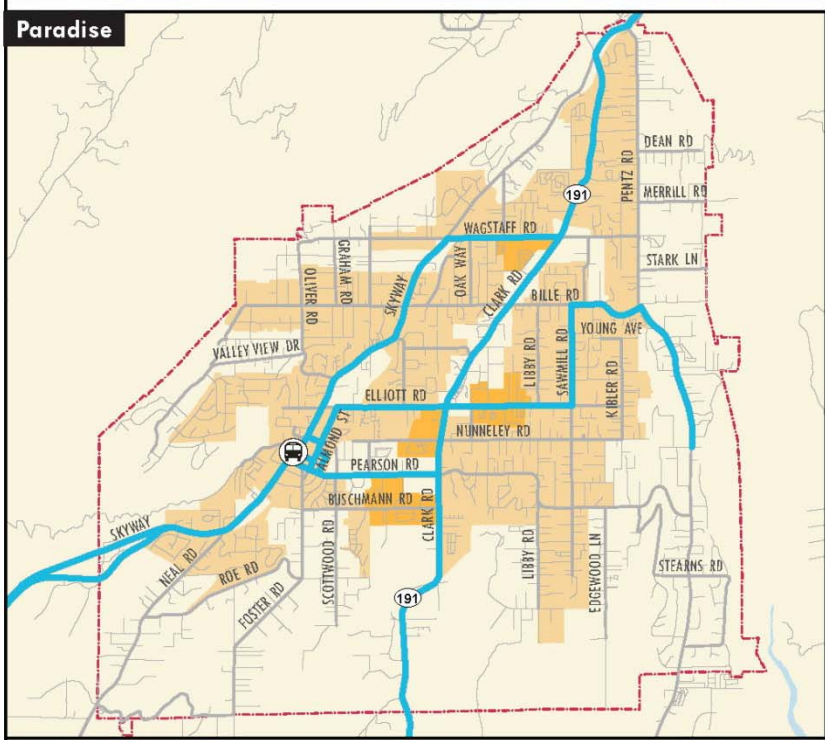
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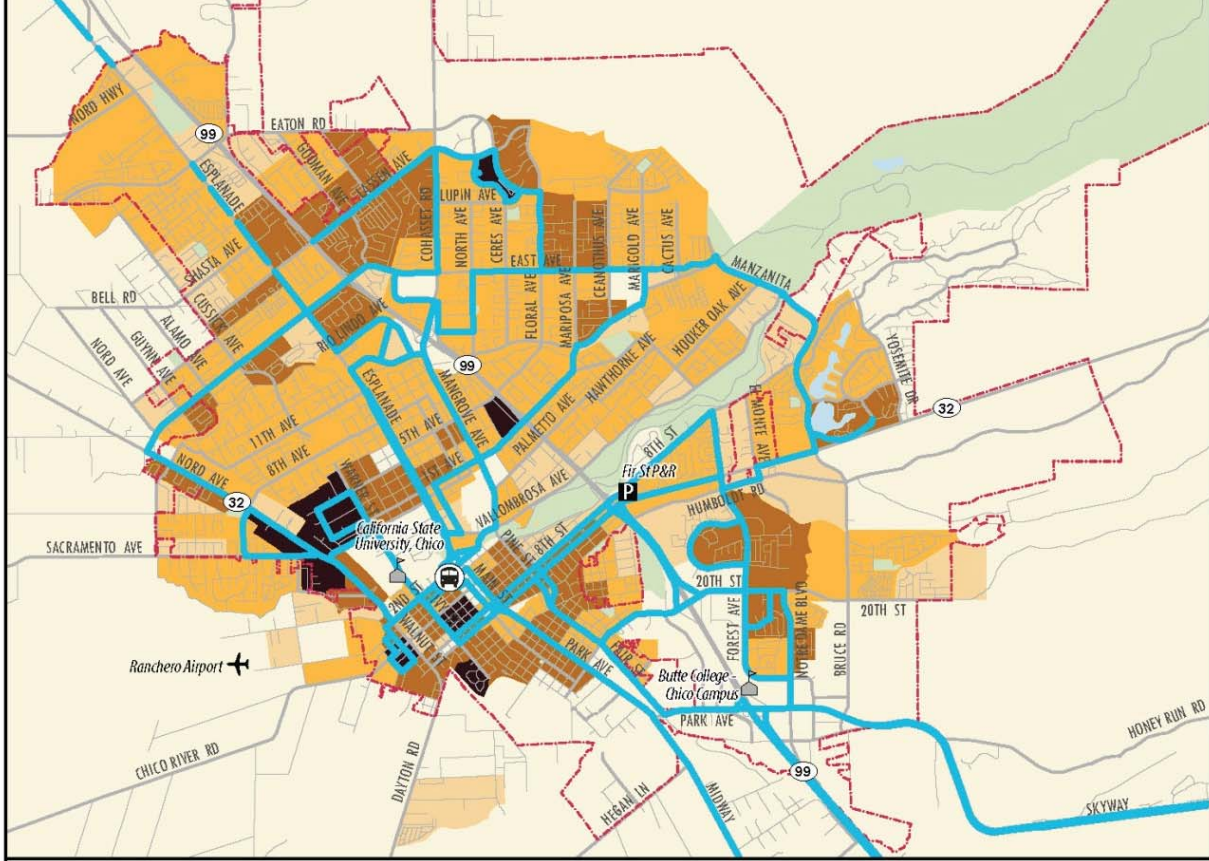


- Transit Center
- Park & Ride
- Airport
- B-Line Bus Routes
- City Limits
- Butte County Boundary



Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI

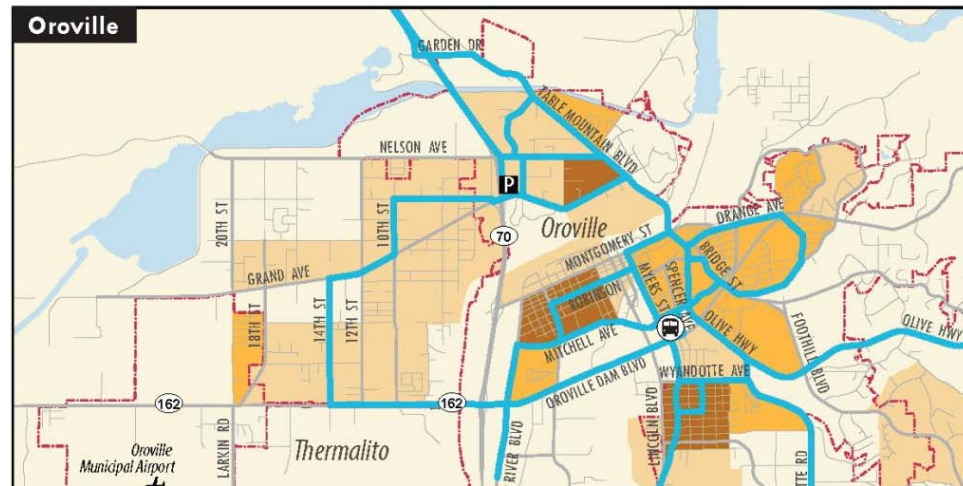
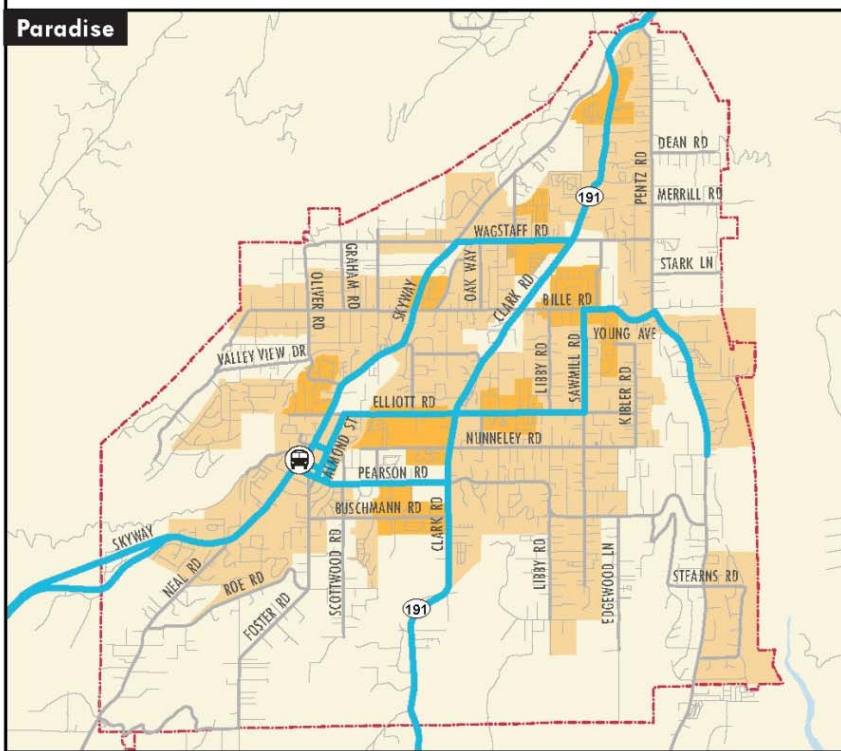





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- Transit Center
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- Airport
- B-Line Bus Routes
- City Limits
- Butte County Boundary



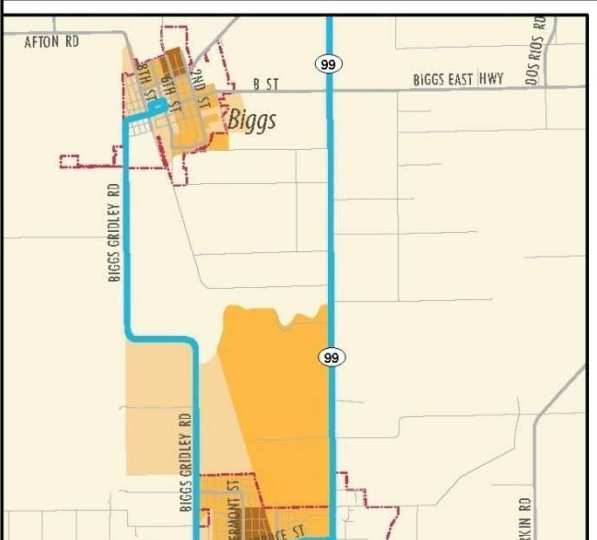
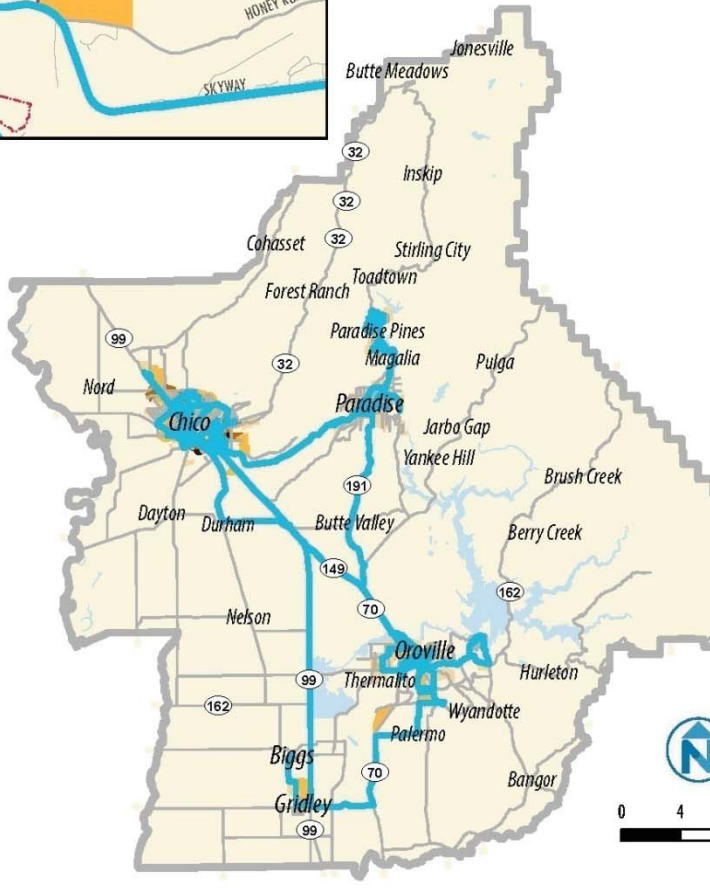
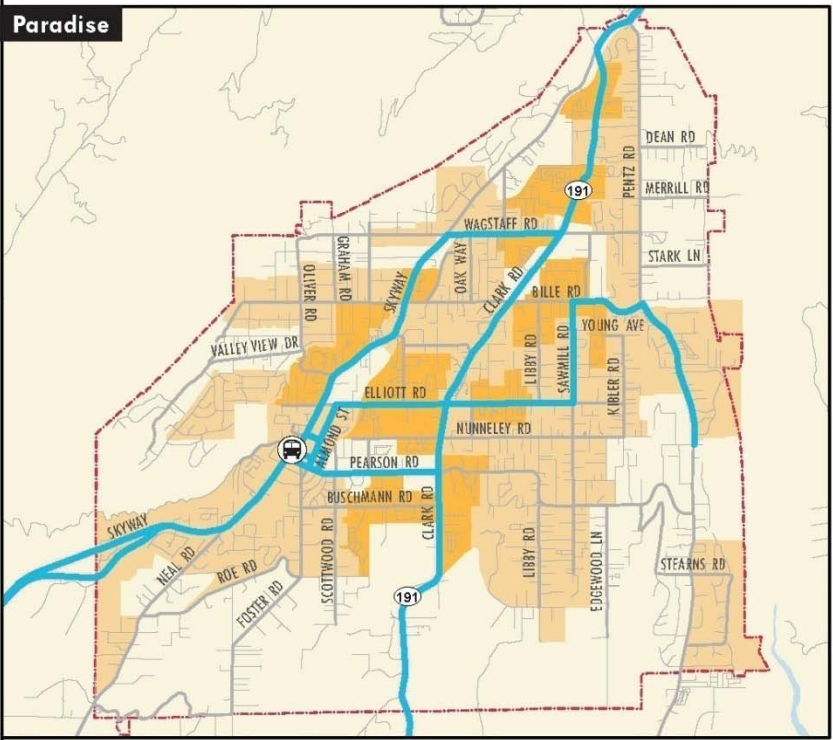
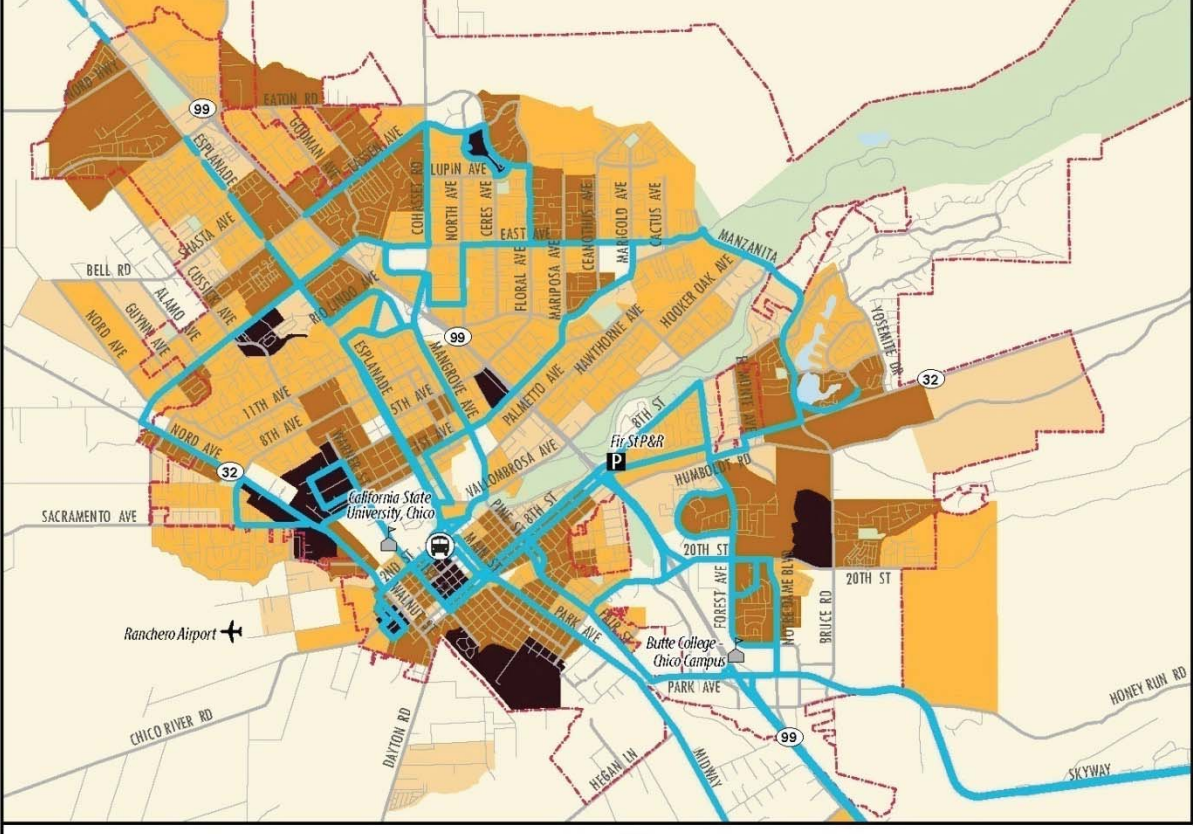
Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI



-  Transit Center
-  Park & Ride
-  Airport
-  B-Line Bus Routes
-  City Limits
-  Butte County Boundary



Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI







## **Transit-Dependent Populations**

Certain population groups are more likely to utilize transit than others based on their socio-economic status, age, and physical ability. These groups are known as captive riders—as opposed to choice riders—in that public transit, walking, or biking are their only affordable or practical options for transportation. Since walking and biking have their own limitations in terms of range and physical requirements, public transit can often be the sole option for captive riders. Transit efficiency and performance therefore become imperative, and inadequate service can generate significant impacts on these groups for their work, shopping, medical, and other trips.

For Butte County, these population groups were identified as follows:

- Low income populations
- Households without vehicles (also known as zero-vehicle households)
- Seniors, age 65 or older
- Youth, under age 18

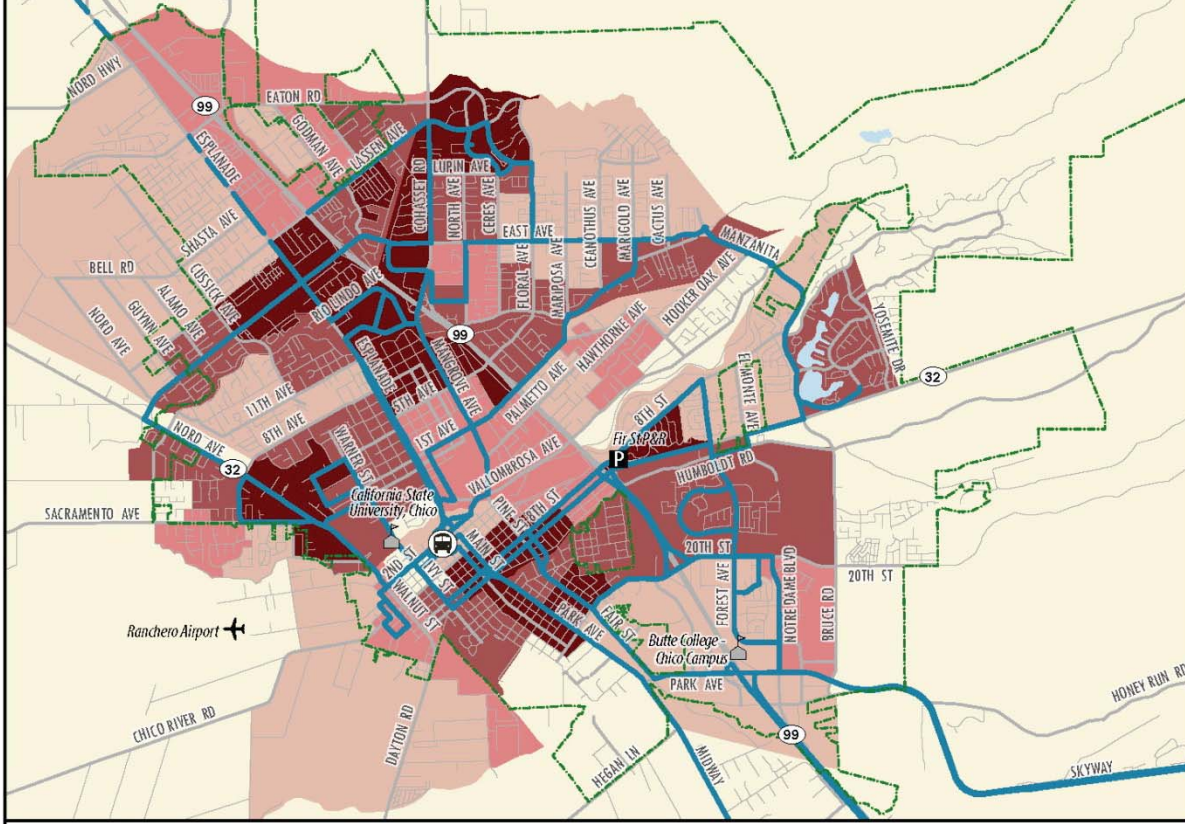
Figure 2-6 depicts a “Transit Dependency Demographic Index” for Butte County. The Index is based on median household income and combined densities of zero-vehicle households, seniors age 65 and older, and youth age 10 through 17. More detailed discussions of these population groups on an individual basis follow below.

On the whole, the areas in Butte County with the highest degree of expected transit dependency are not surprising. In Chico, they include areas of CSU student housing currently served by Routes 8 and 9, as well as neighborhoods to the northwest of downtown along the Esplanade and East Avenue. Neighborhoods around the intersection of Ceres and Lassen Avenues, near the Sycamore Glen Retirement Community, also have a high expected dependency on transit services.

In Oroville, areas with high transit dependency include the north portion of South Oroville, especially the residential neighborhood adjacent to Myers Street and Wyandotte Avenue. Residential areas in the vicinity of the Oroville Elementary School District Office on Yard Street and more remote sections of town near SR 70 and Oroville Dam Boulevard are also seen as having a high transit dependency. In Paradise, there are several areas with moderate to high transit dependency index findings, likely reflecting the presence of several mobile home communities and senior housing establishments in the area.

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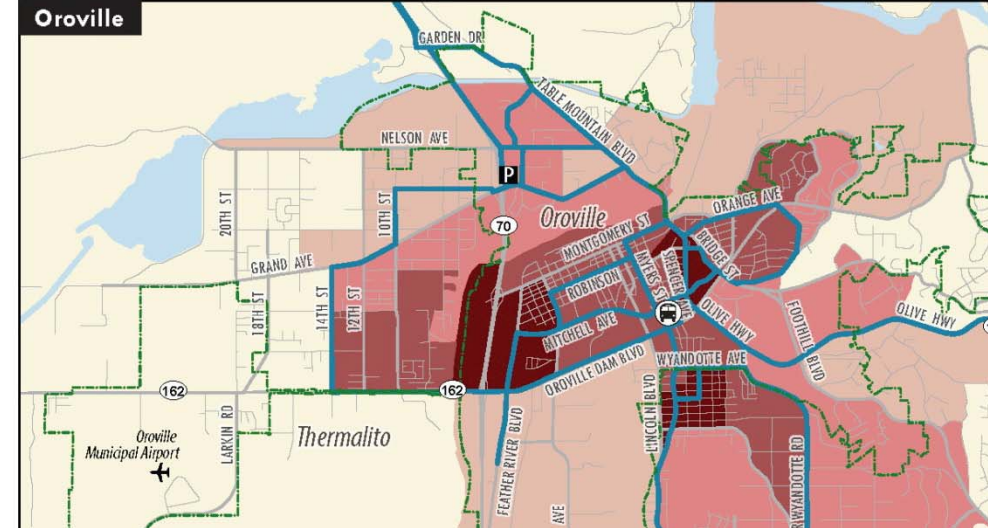
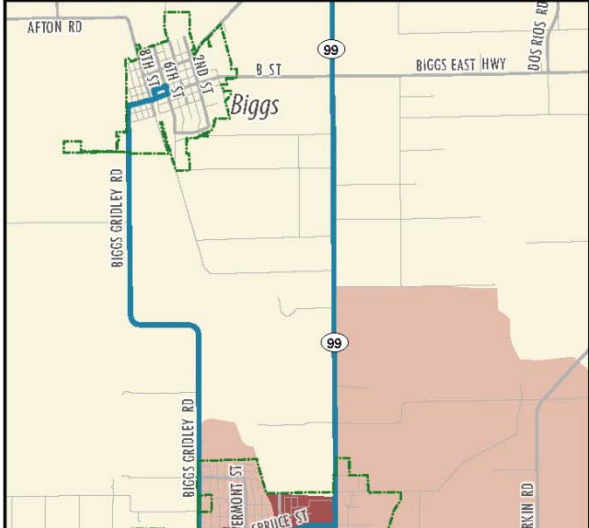
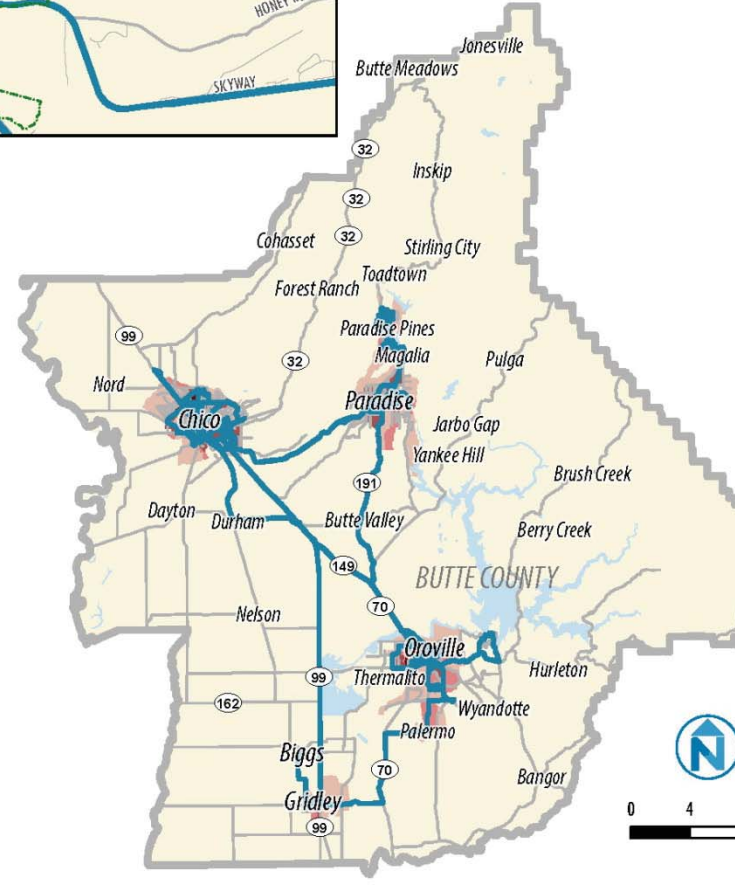
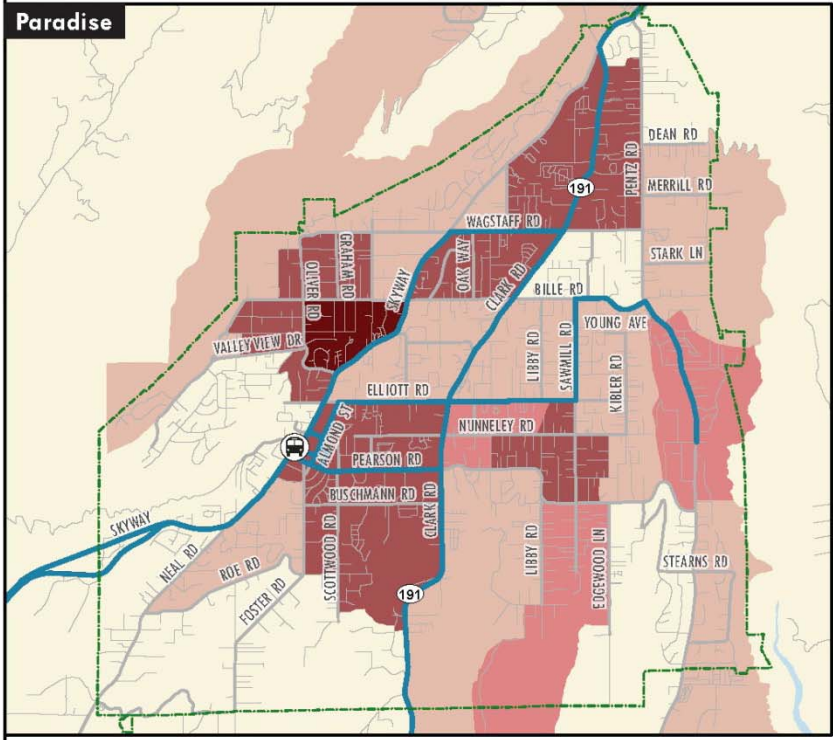
Transit dependency demographic index is based on median household income and combined densities of no vehicle households, seniors aged 65 and youth aged 10 through 17.



- Transit Center
- Park & Ride
- Airport
- B-Line Bus Routes
- City Limits
- Butte County Boundary



Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI, U.S. Census 2010, 2007 - 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate





**Low Income Populations**

Lower income populations have a stronger dependency on public transit than higher income populations due to the relatively higher costs and other financial requirements for owning a personal automobile. The marginal utility of each dollar is also much greater for lower income households, meaning that a change in bus fare, for example, requires reallocation of a greater percentage of a family budget than it would for a higher income household. These factors lead lower income populations to comprise one of the key ridership groups in determining transit performance and needs.

According to the most recent American Community Survey (2011), 19.8% of persons within Butte County are living below the poverty level, and 12.4% of Butte County families are living below this threshold.

Figure 2-7 describes how median earnings and household status relative to the federal poverty line are related to the choices for commute mode. This table shows a clear correlation of income versus the use of an automobile—transit and non-motorized travelers have approximately half the income of those who drive alone or carpool. In addition, 50 percent of all transit riders in Butte County are at or below the poverty line, making this specific population a significant ridership contingent.

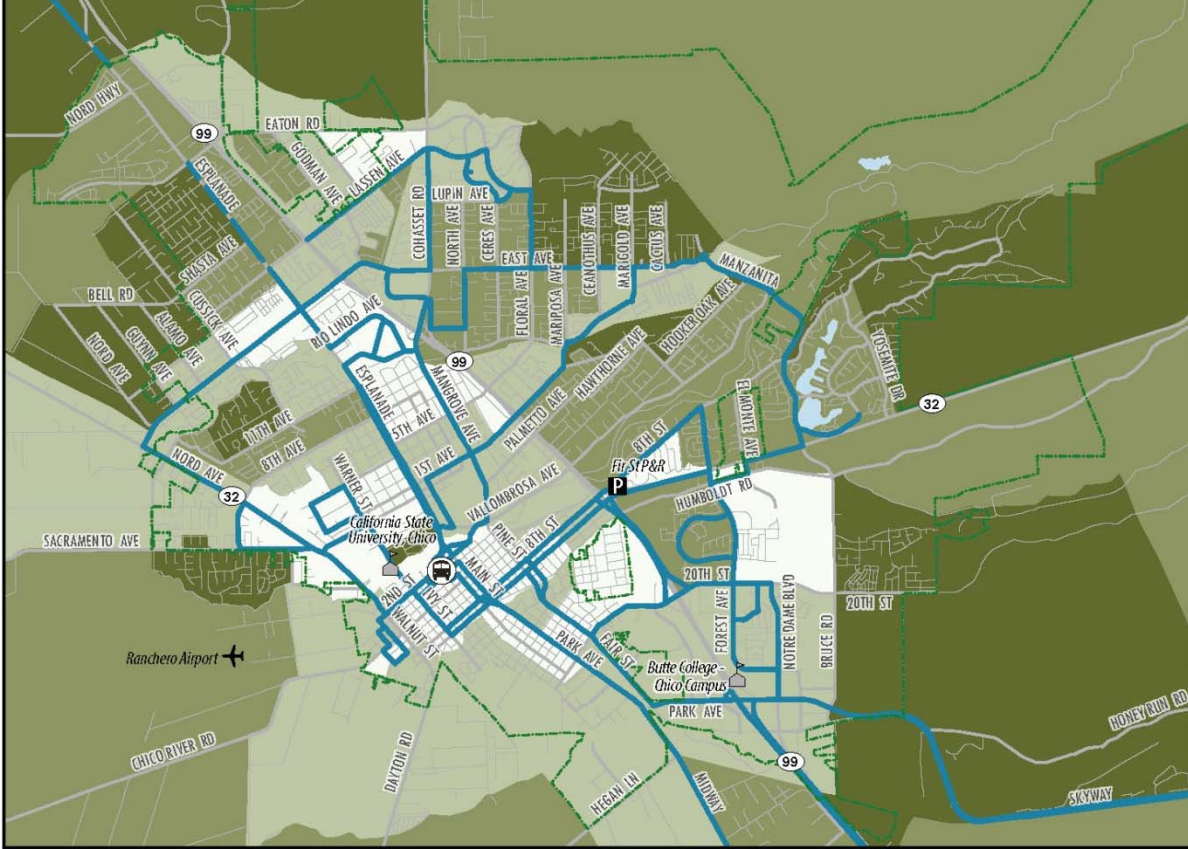
**Figure 2-7 Commute Mode and Median Individual Income in Butte County**

Commute Mode	Population Characteristics	
	Median Earnings	Percent At Or Below Poverty Line
Car, Truck, or Van – Drive Alone	\$26,662	12.2%
Car, Truck, or Van – Carpool	\$25,736	15.3%
Public Transportation – Excluding Taxicab	\$13,097	50.0%
Walk	\$11,817	21.9%
Bicycle, Motorcycle, Taxicab, or other means	\$12,324	38.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey

Figure 2-8 shows the distribution of median household income throughout the county. Of particular note, areas with the highest median household income are generally located outside of the major city and town centers. Large parts of central Oroville and Paradise have median household incomes of less than \$30,000.

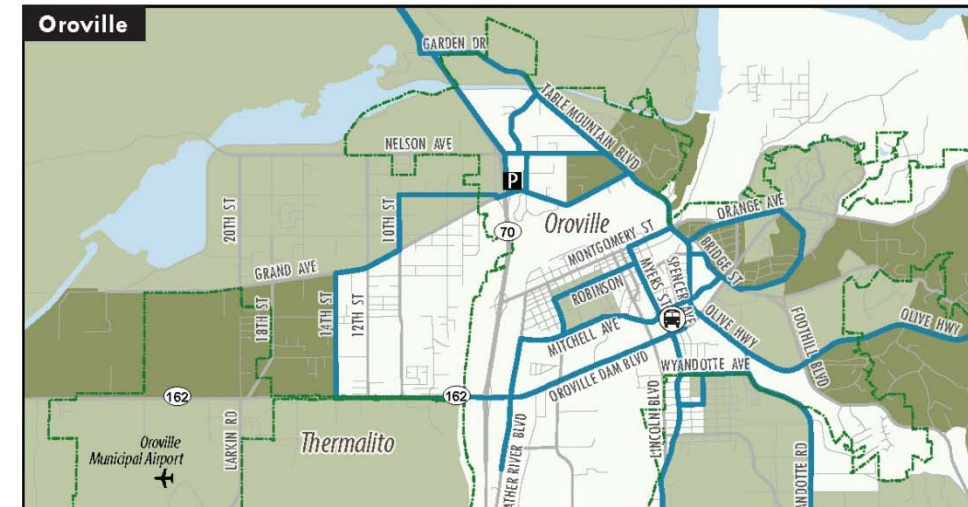
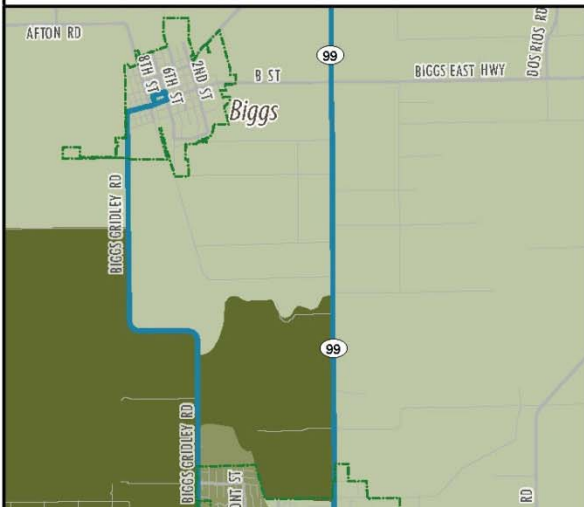
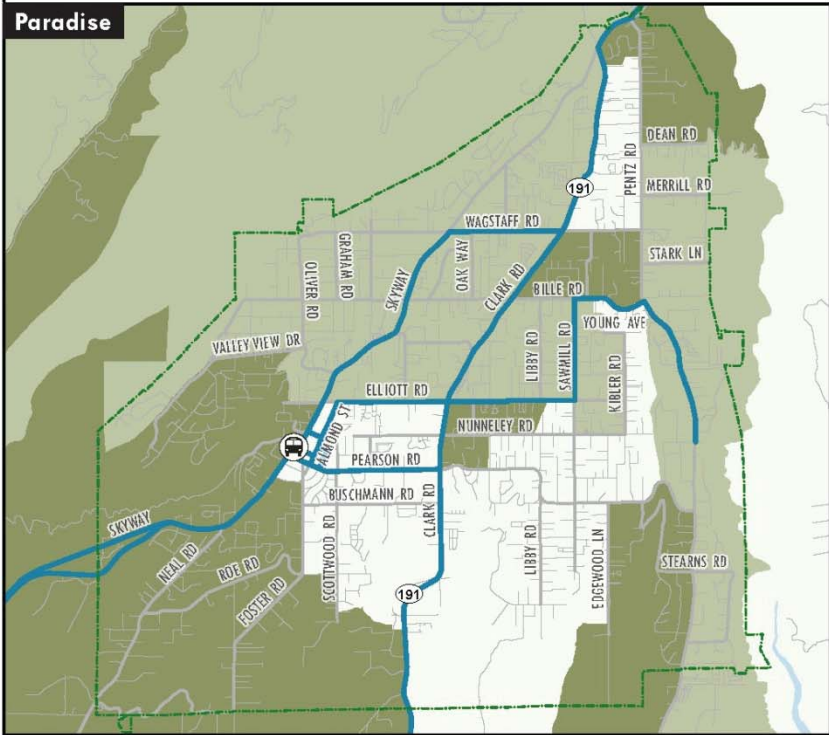
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Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI, U.S. Census 2010, 2007 - 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate





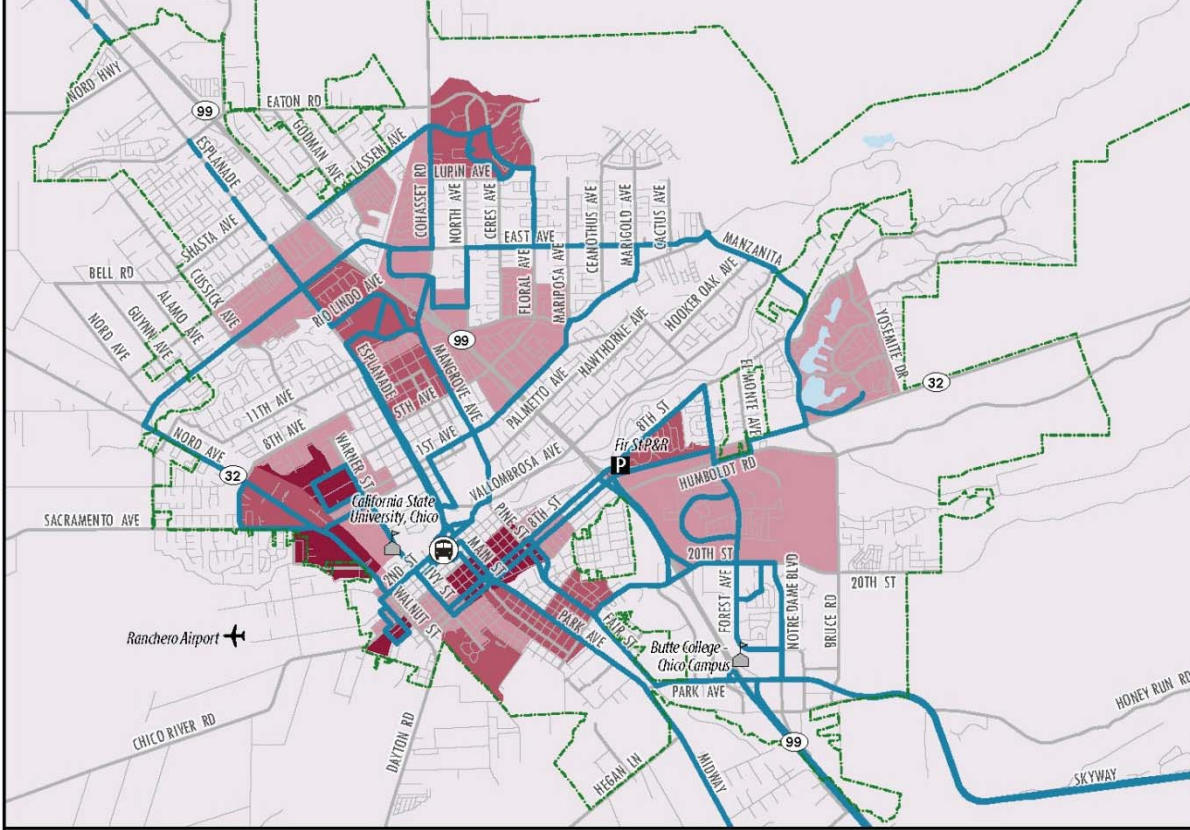


### **Households without Vehicles**

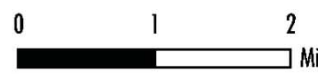
Vehicle ownership is a unique indicator that can identify transit dependency of households beyond an examination of income levels. Many households can have high incomes, but may also be burdened with high expenses or debt. In these situations, owning a vehicle becomes an expendable privilege that in turn generates greater dependency on public transportation. Zero-vehicle households can also be a result of a voluntary decision not to drive. While this population subset may or may not have a concrete dependency on transit, the availability of transit plays an important role in their transportation options.

Figure 2-9 shows the distribution and density of zero-vehicle households throughout the county. As expected, the densest cluster of households without vehicles is located in central Chico and in residential areas populated by CSU Chico students. Neighborhoods around the intersection of Ceres and Lassen Avenues in north Chico are also classified as having a relatively high density of zero-vehicle households, likely due to the presence of senior housing in that area. Finally, much of central Oroville has a moderate to high proportion of households that do not own vehicles.

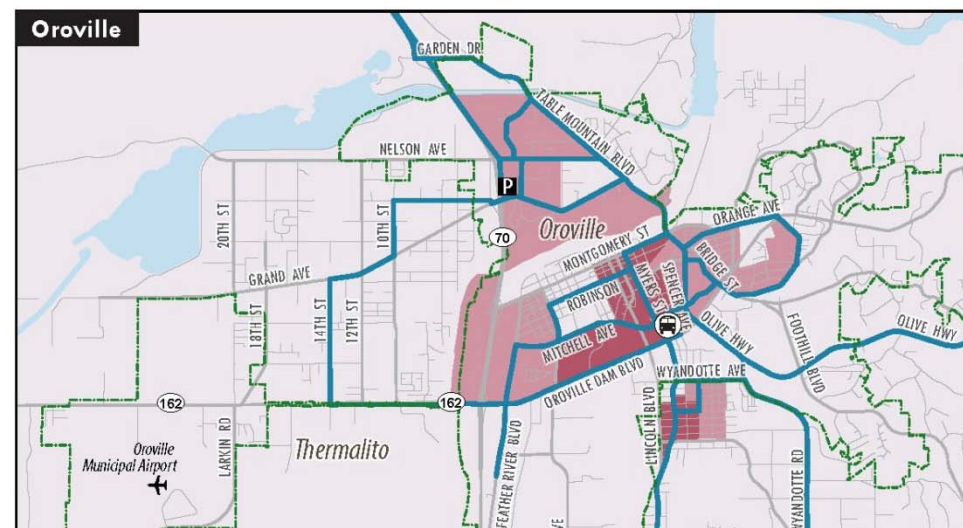
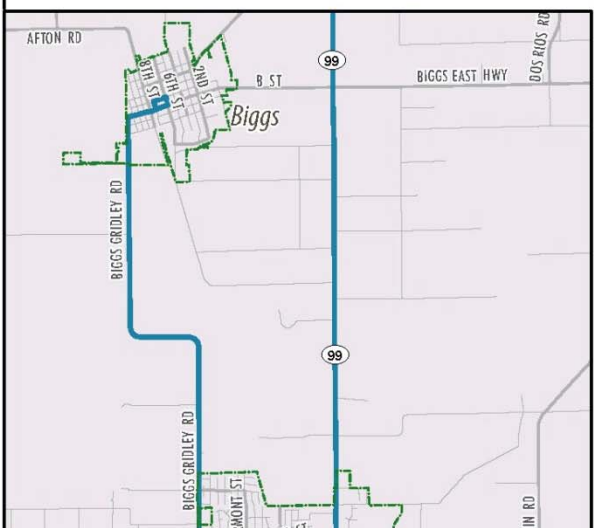
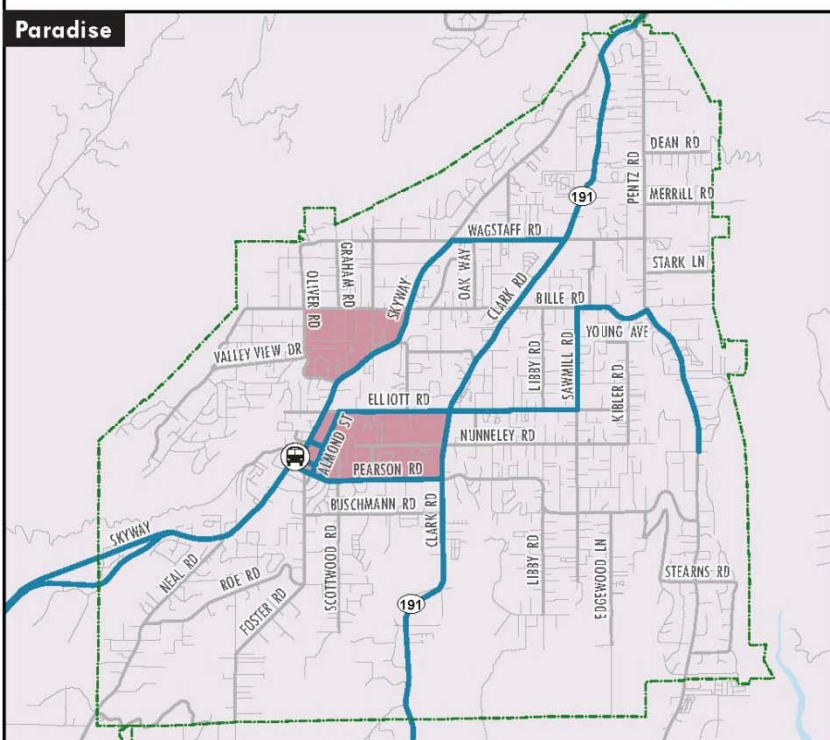
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- Transit Center
- Park & Ride
- Airport
- B-Line Bus Routes
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- Butte County Boundary



Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI, U.S. Census 2010, 2007 - 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate



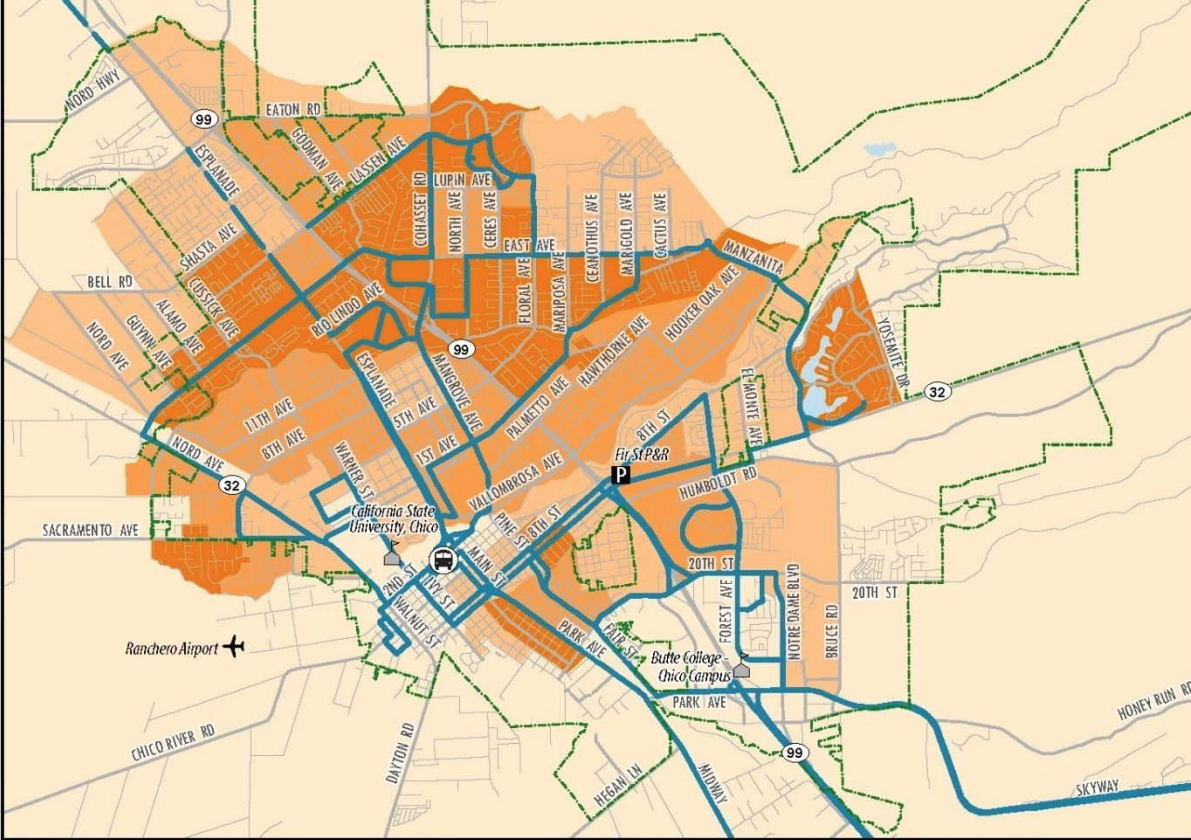


## **Seniors**

The transportation needs for older populations gradually change with advancing age. The ability to own or operate a personal vehicle may become more limited, thereby increasing the importance of public transportation, and possibly paratransit services, for this segment of the population. Most research suggests that the 65 and over population group uses transit largely for non-work, locally oriented trips, and may depend on public transportation for shopping and medical trips. According to the most recent American Community Survey data (2012), persons age 65 and older constitute 15.8% of the county's population.

Figure 2-10 shows the distribution and density of seniors over the age of 65 throughout the county. Senior citizens live throughout Butte County, with moderate to high numbers of older adults per acre in Chico, Gridley, Oroville, and Paradise. Generally, the densities of senior citizens in Chico, Oroville, and Paradise correspond to the locations of senior housing facilities.

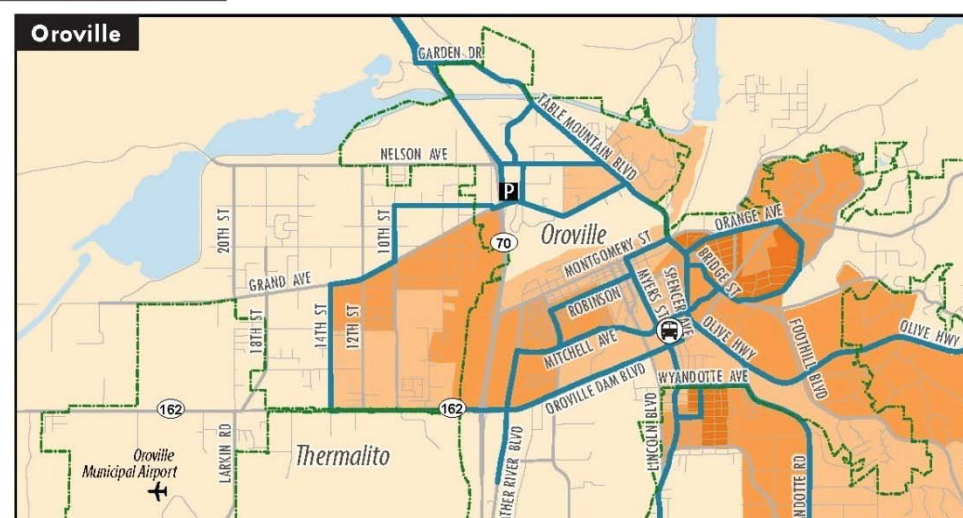
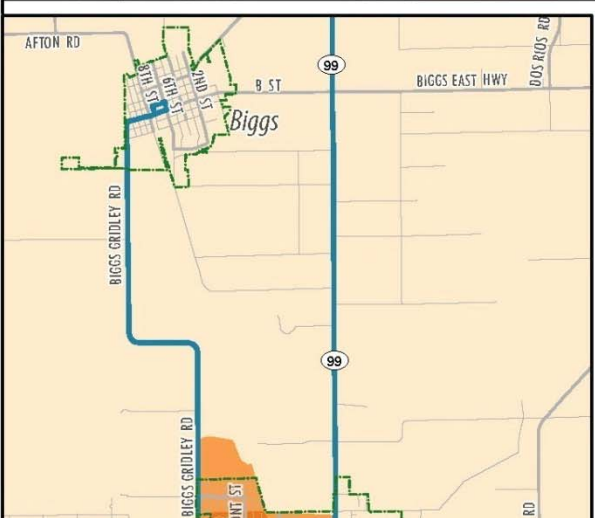
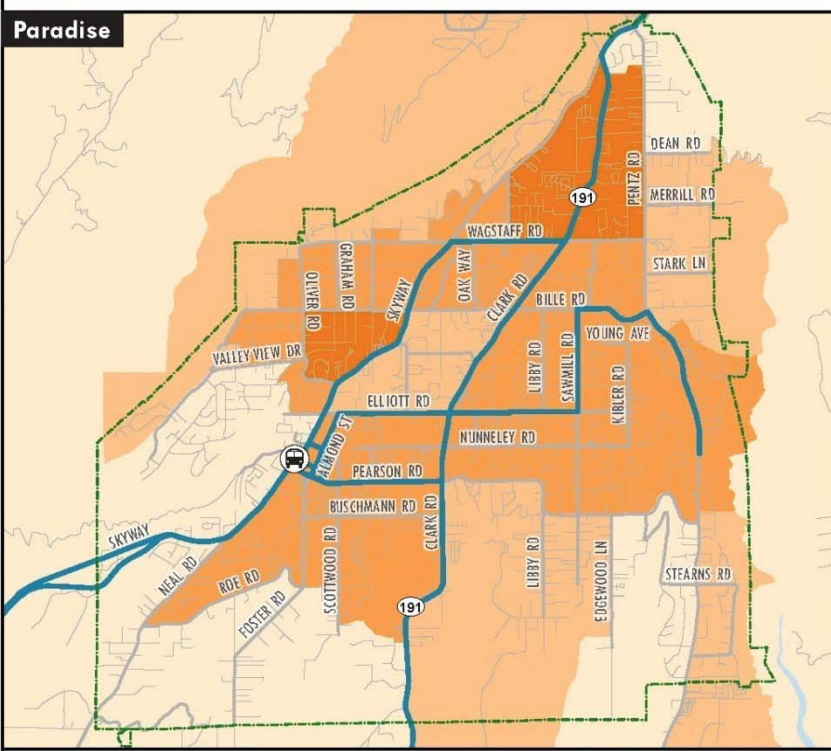
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Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI, U.S. Census 2010, 2007 - 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate





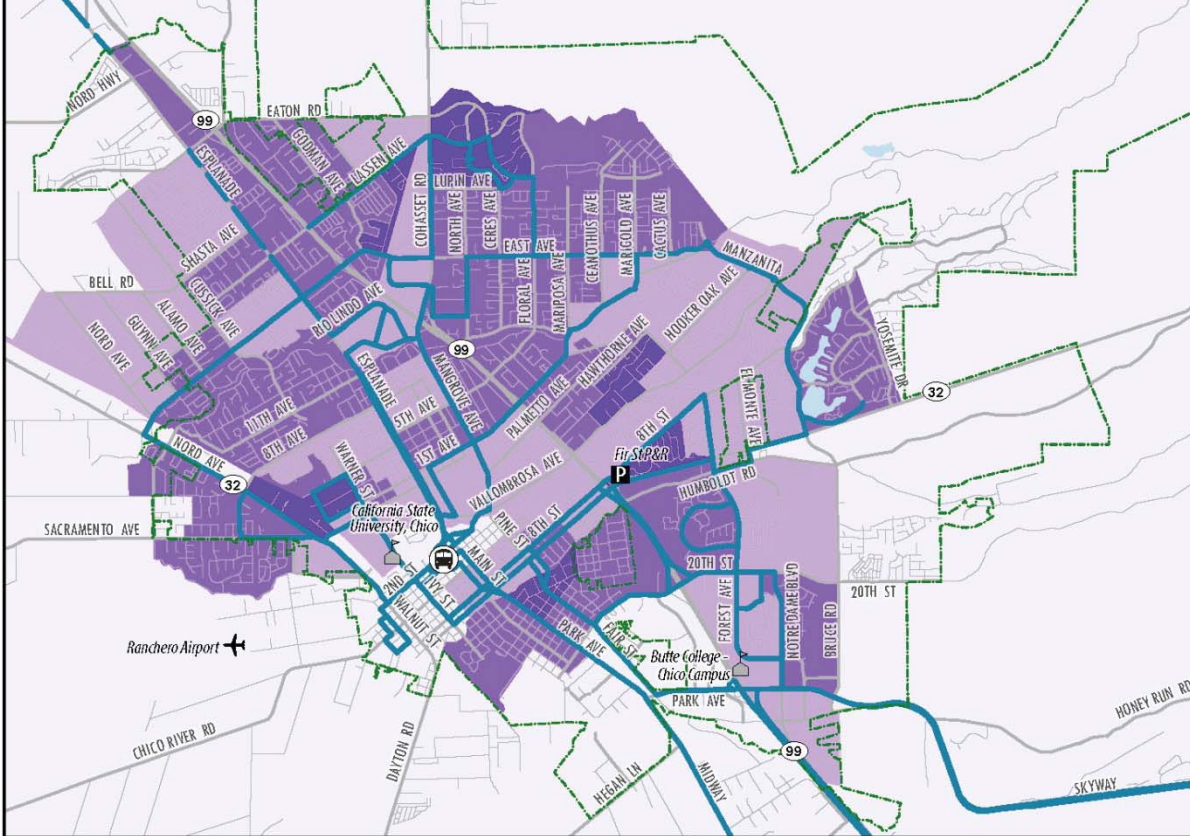


## **Youth**

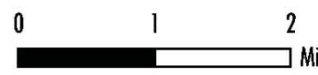
Transit, walking, and biking are frequently used by younger populations that do not have access to a vehicle. Unlike seniors however, this group often has the option to rely on parents or guardians for transportation. Additionally, youth transit trips are often in the late afternoon or evening, after the end of the school day. While public transportation is many times a secondary option for travel to or from school, it can be preferable to school buses due to costs and convenience. According to the most recent American Community Survey data (2012), youth under the age of 18 constitute 15.2% of the overall county population.

Figure 2-11 shows the distribution and density of youth under the age of 18 throughout the county. In Chico, these areas include the neighborhoods around Ceres and Lassen Avenues on the north edge of the city and neighborhoods on Hooker Oak Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street, as well as near CSU. Gridley and Oroville have relatively large youth populations, with the highest densities centered on residential neighborhoods on the outskirts of the downtown areas. South Oroville in particular has a high number of youths per acre.

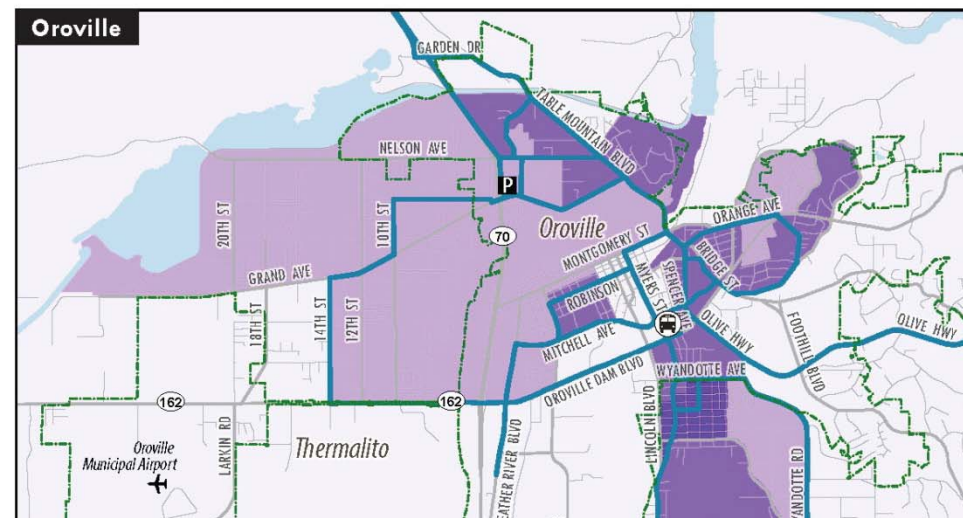
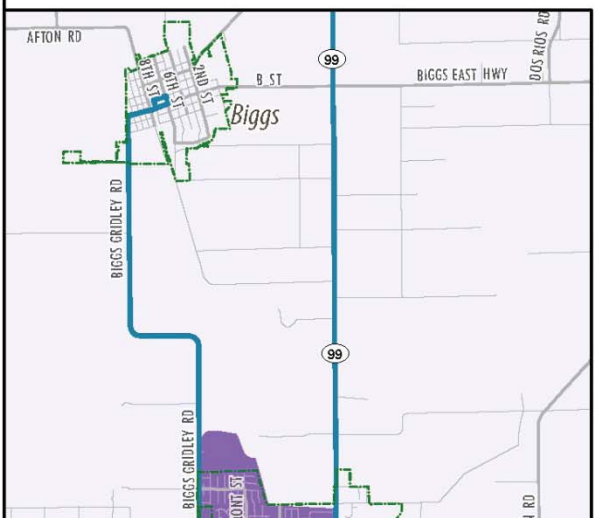
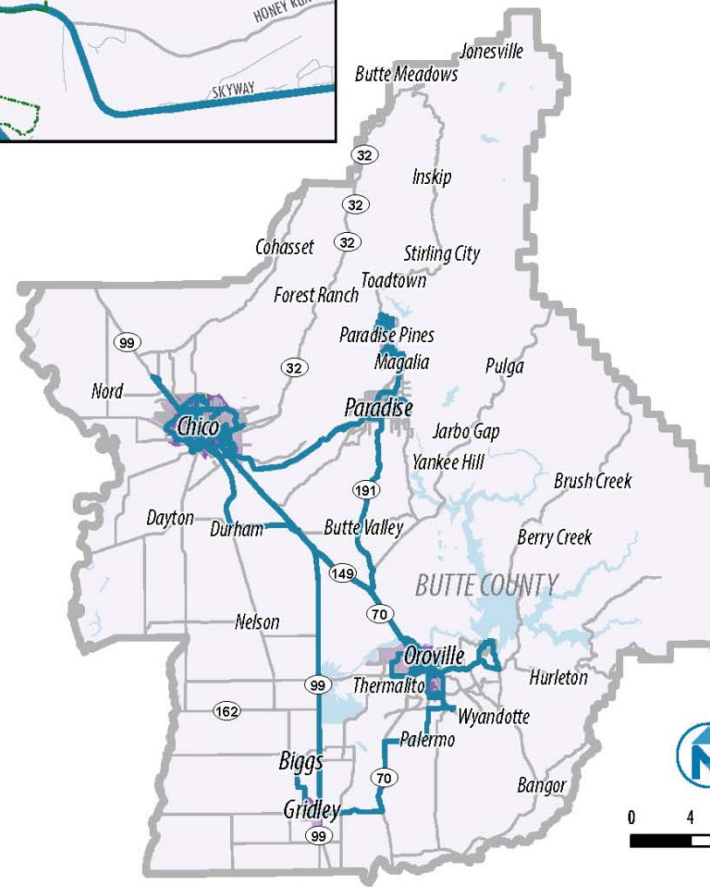
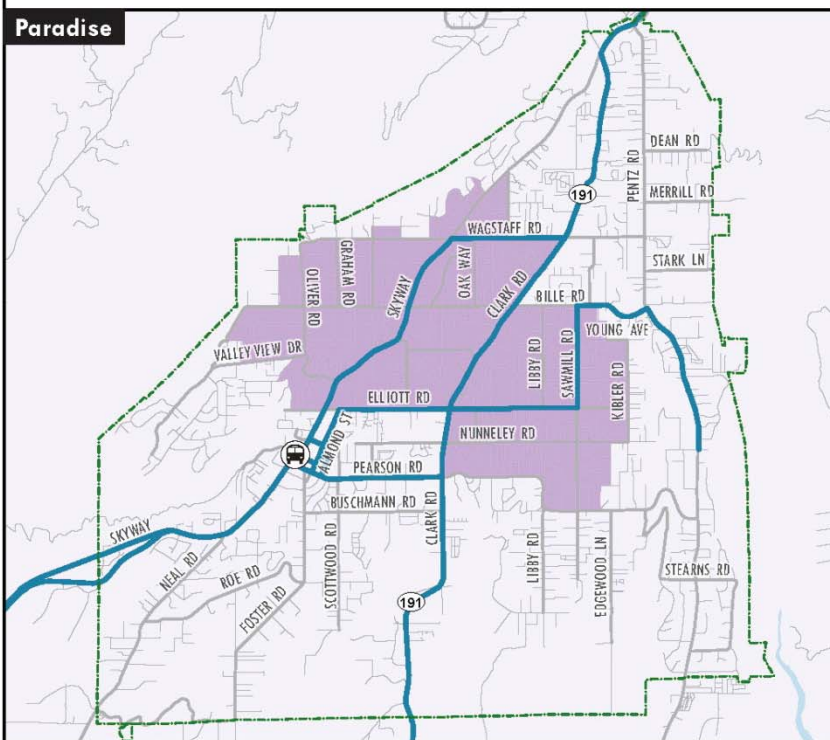
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Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI, U.S. Census 2010, 2007 - 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate



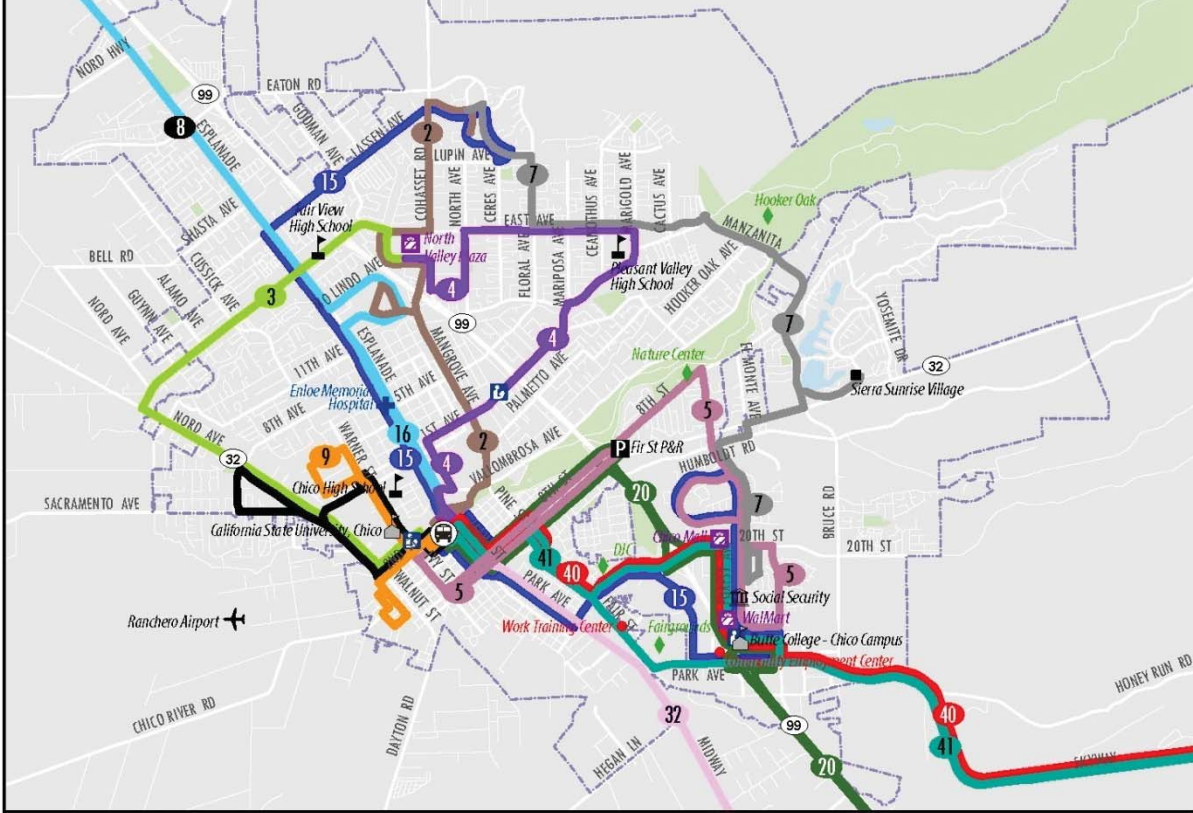


## **MAJOR EMPLOYERS AND TRANSIT GENERATORS**

Major trip destinations are important to identify when evaluating transit, walking and biking transportation. These destinations include major employers, schools, medical facilities and shopping centers. Locating the most commonly traveled-to sites in and around Butte County can help define primary travel corridors and deduce travel patterns. This review includes destinations for both potential choice riders and transit-dependent riders who may require access to social services, low wage jobs, and senior programs.

Figure 2-12 presents an overview of major destinations throughout the county and current B-Line fixed route services.

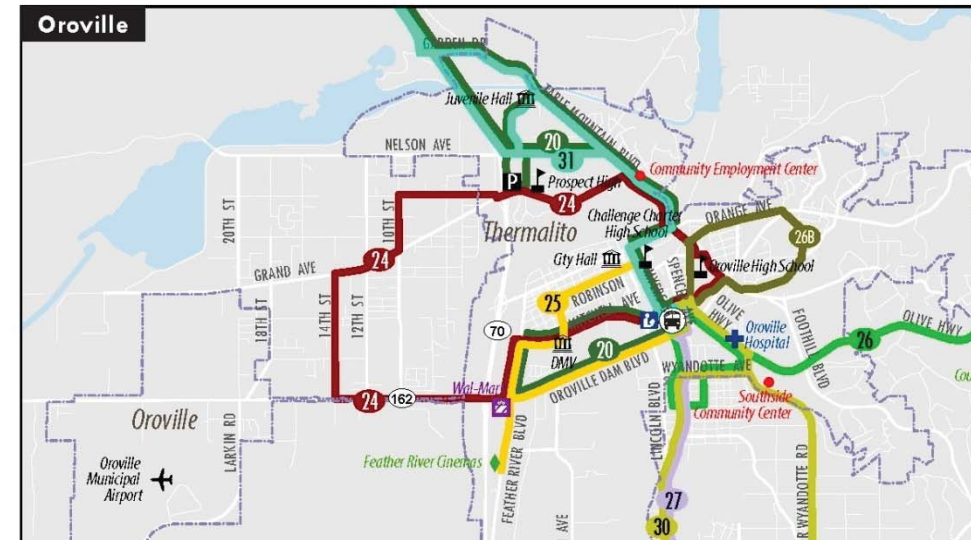
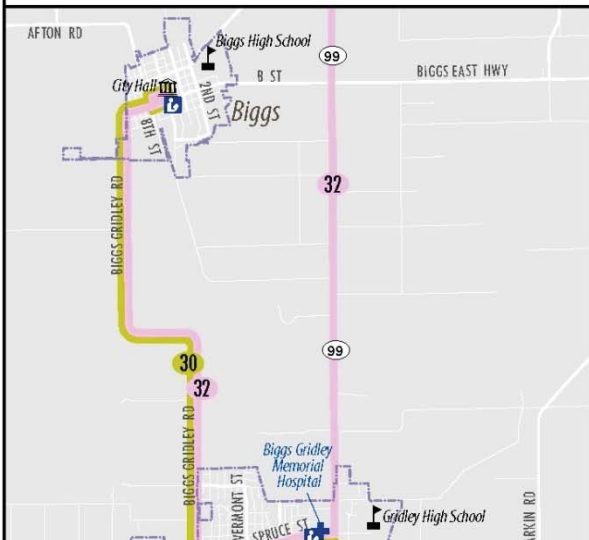
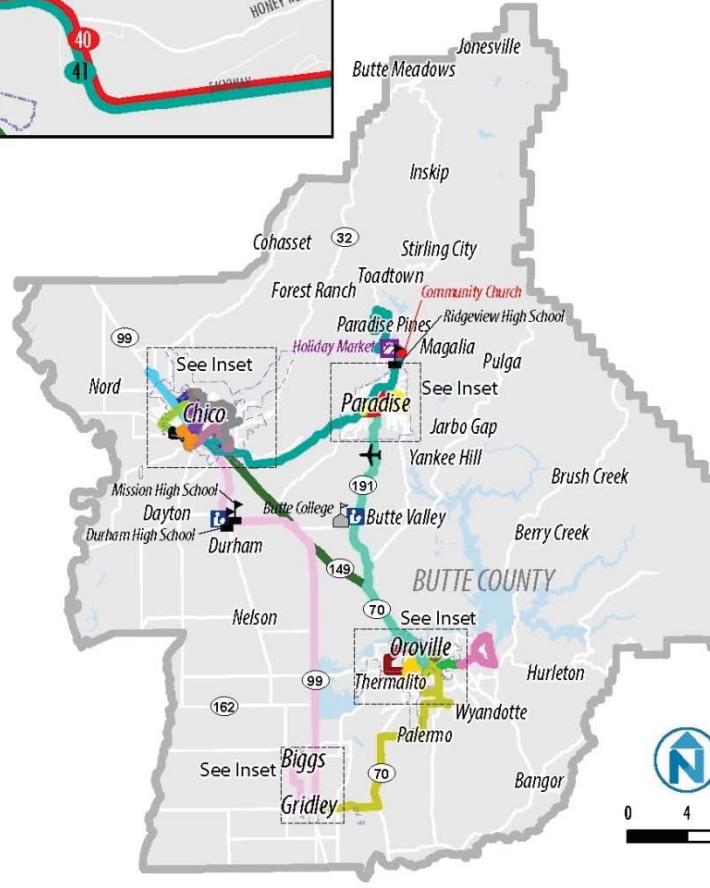
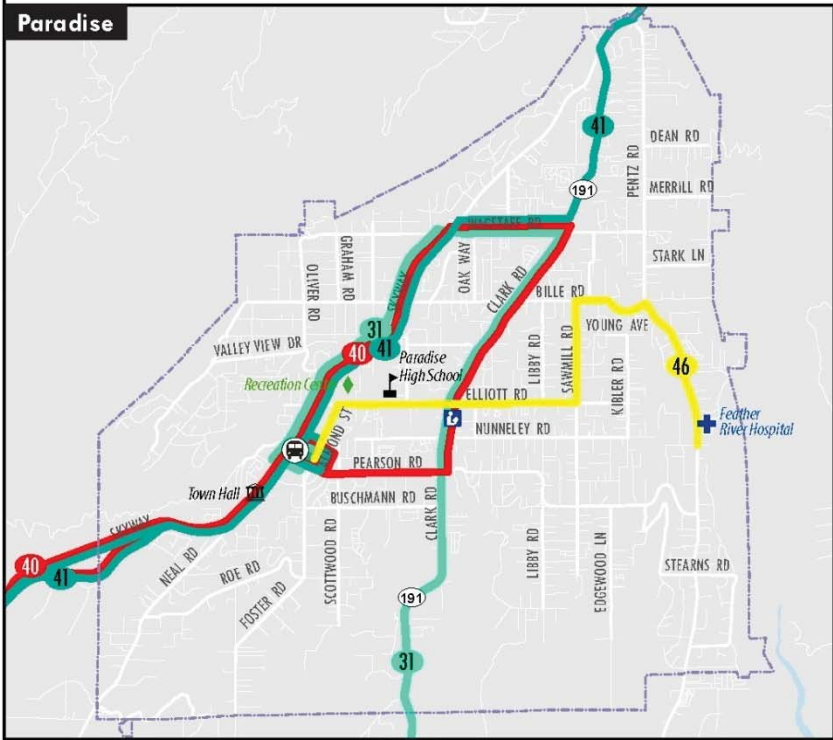
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- College / University
  - High School
  - Airport
  - Library
  - Hospital
  - Other
  - B-Line Bus Routes
  - County Boundary
  - City Limits
- 16
  - 20
  - 24
  - 25
  - 26
  - 26A
  - 26B
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  - 30
  - 31
  - 32
  - 40
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  - 46



Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI







## **Major Employers & Projected Employment Growth**

The largest employers in Butte County are public agencies, medical facilities, retail companies, casinos, and agricultural and manufacturing businesses. Many jobs are focused around and generated by the CSU, which also brings in a large consumer base in the form of its students. Several healthcare facilities (identified in a later section) form another set of employers, which are also supported by college nursing programs and vocational schools. Other major employers include WalMart and several casinos around Oroville.

Figure 2-13 shows the existing employment density in Butte County as of 2010, while Figure 2-14 and Figure 2-15 show the projected employment density in 2020 and 2035, respectively. Current B-Line service appears to provide adequate service to the major employment centers throughout Butte County. Two minor exceptions are the lack of direct service to the commercial parks off of Hegan Lane, near the B-Line bus base, and businesses further up Route 32 northwest of West East Avenue.

Between the present (i.e., 2010) and 2020, the number of jobs per acre is generally projected to increase in peripheral areas and along major roadway corridors, but roughly in areas that currently have moderate to high employment density. In Chico, for example, areas along Park Avenue to the southeast of downtown are expected to add jobs, as are areas near Costco and the Sierra Nevada Brewing Company on East 20th Street.

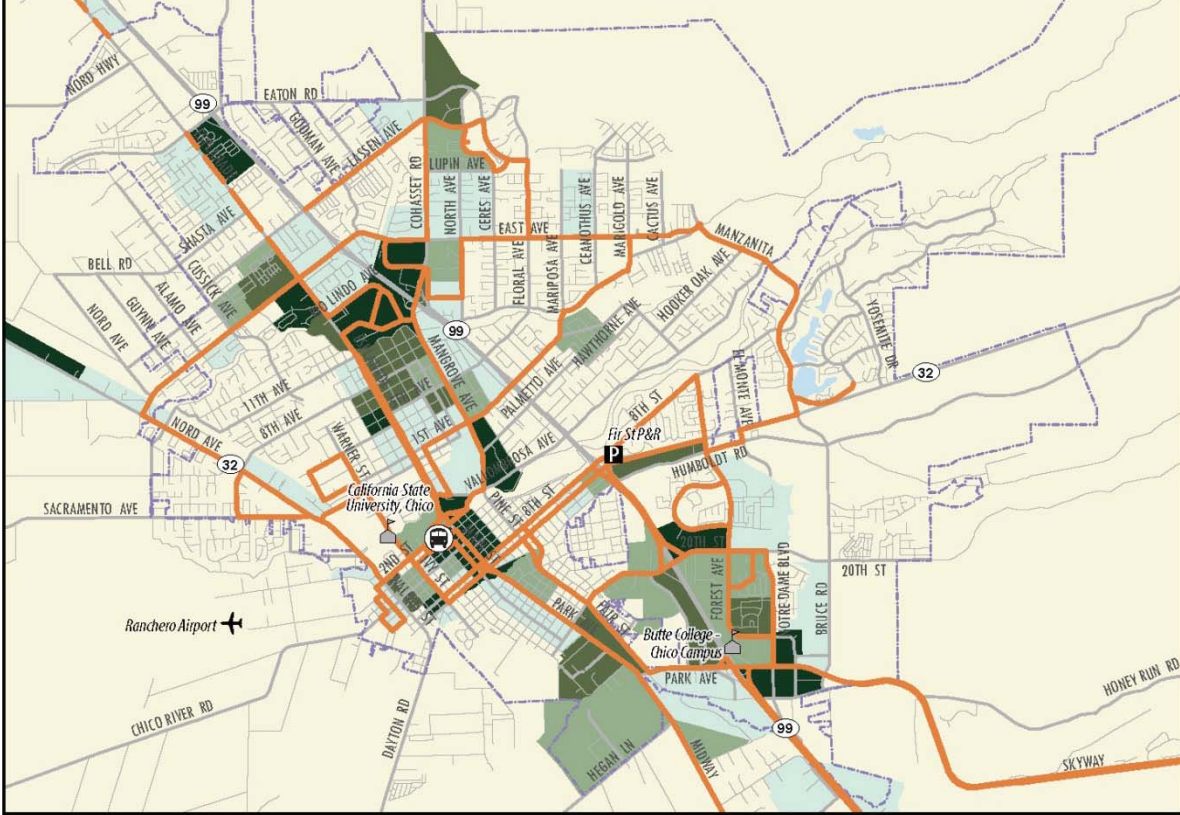
In Oroville, employment density is expected to increase along Oroville Dam Boulevard and lower Feather River Boulevard to the southwest of downtown. In Paradise, by 2020 the employment density is expected to increase southwest of downtown Paradise, along Skyway Road north of Neal Road.

By 2035, projections indicate that several portions of the peripheries of Chico and Oroville will have added many new jobs. In particular, as with the population projections, the area around the redeveloped Diamond Match factory site is expected to have a moderate level of jobs per acre, making the area generally bounded by Park Avenue, Fair Street, and Hegan Lane into a major source of commute travel demand. Likewise, areas in the vicinity of East 20th Street and Bruce Road near Chico Mall are also expected to increase in employment density by 2035. The Nord Avenue corridor, especially near 8th Street, is also expected to have a relatively high number of jobs per acre in 2035.

In Oroville, the trends begun in 2020 are expected to continue into 2035, with gains in employment density continuing down lower Feather River Boulevard by that year. The number of jobs per acre north of downtown Oroville, on Table Mountain Boulevard at Garden Drive, is expected to develop into an employment center by 2035 as well. In Paradise, employment density is expected to intensify along Clark Road by 2035. Finally, much of central Gridley is expected to host more than 10.1 jobs per acre in the final projection year.

Figure 2-16 depicts the population and employment growth index for Butte County for the period between 2010 and 2035. According to both population and employment projections, areas in Butte County that are expected to add the most jobs and persons per acre include not only the traditional town and city centers such as downtown Chico and central Paradise, but also include peripheral development areas and corridors, like along Skyway and Clark Roads in Paradise, areas along Olive Highway (Route 162) to the east of the Oroville Transit Center, and parcels in and around Chico Mall and the Sierra Sunrise Village area in Chico.

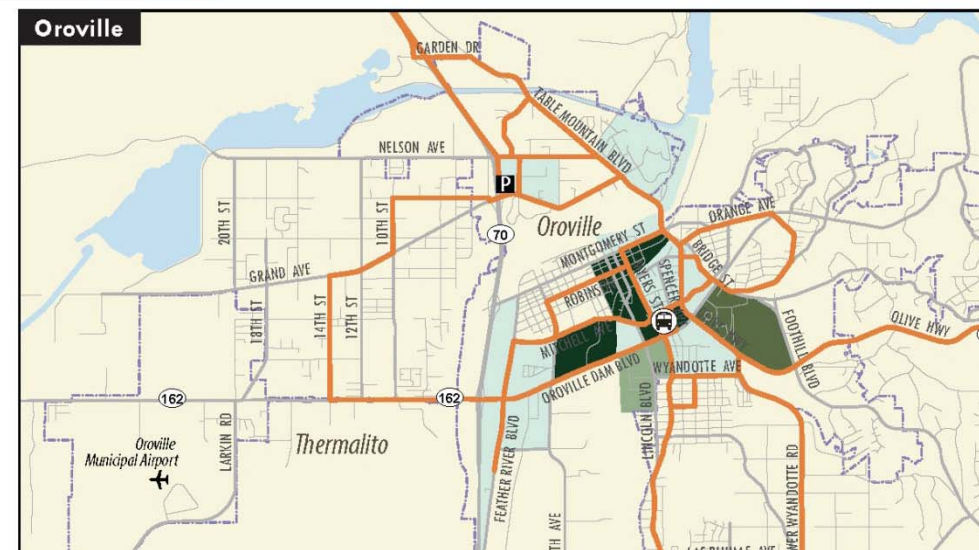
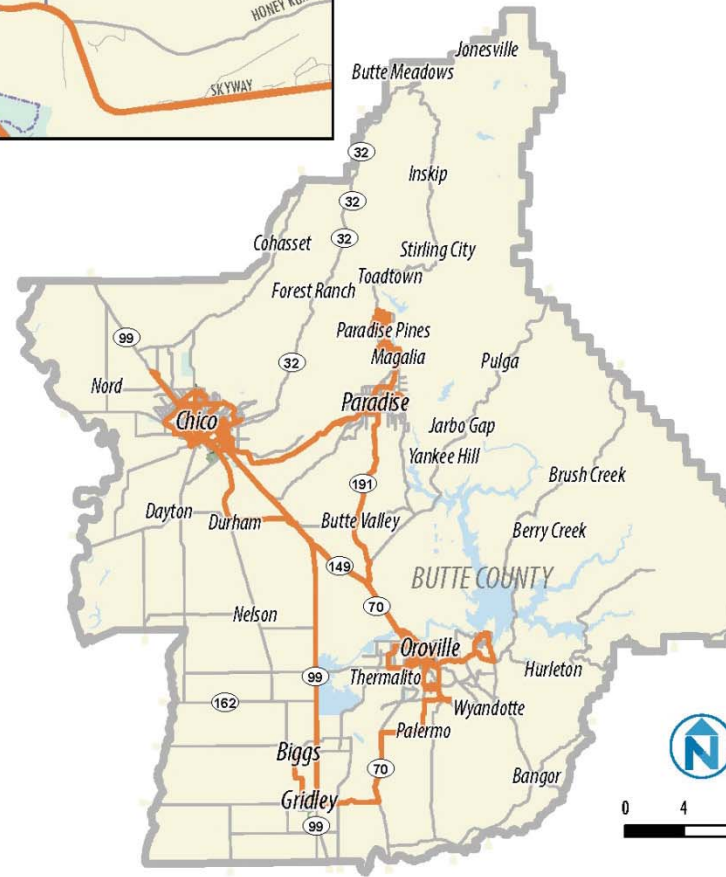
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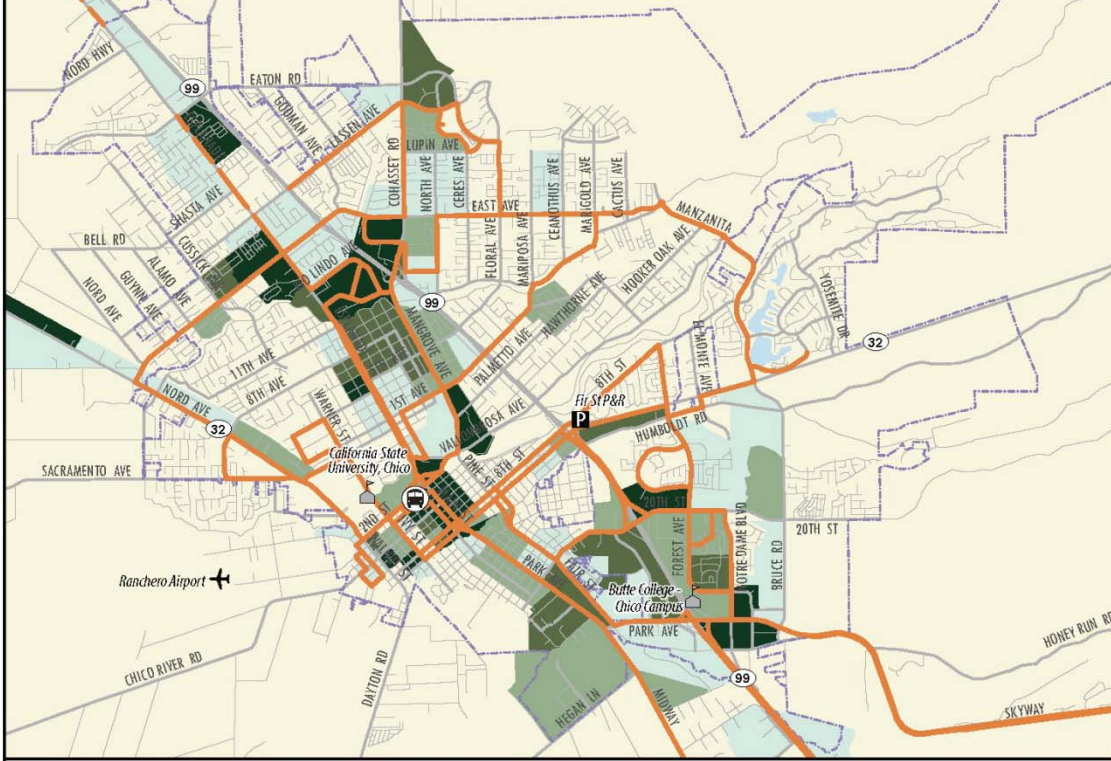


- Transit Center
- Park & Ride
- Airport
- B-Line Bus Routes
- City Limits
- Butte County Boundary

0 1 2 Miles

Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI

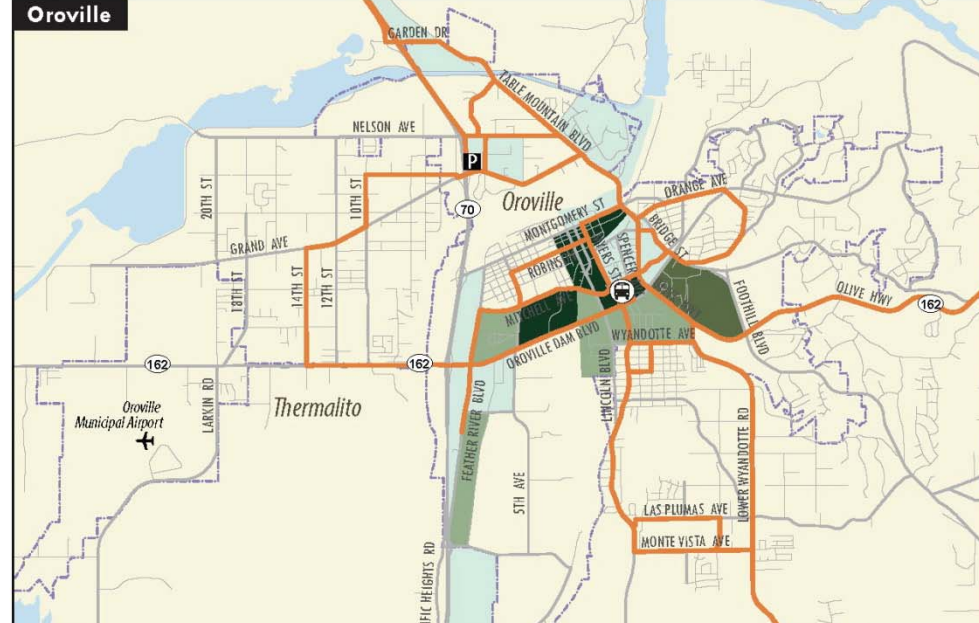
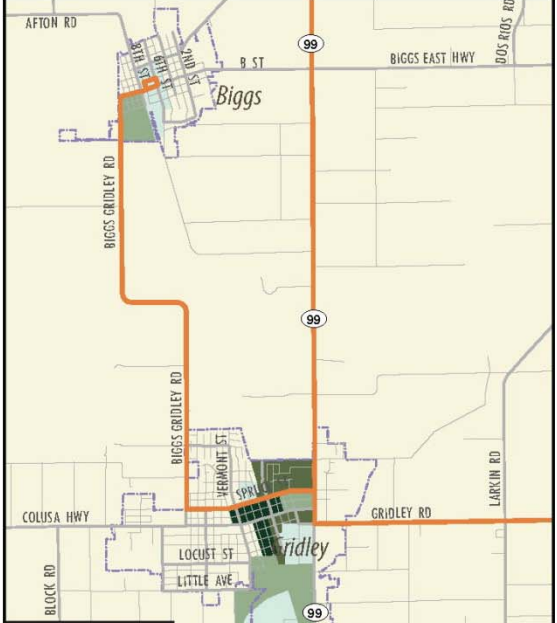
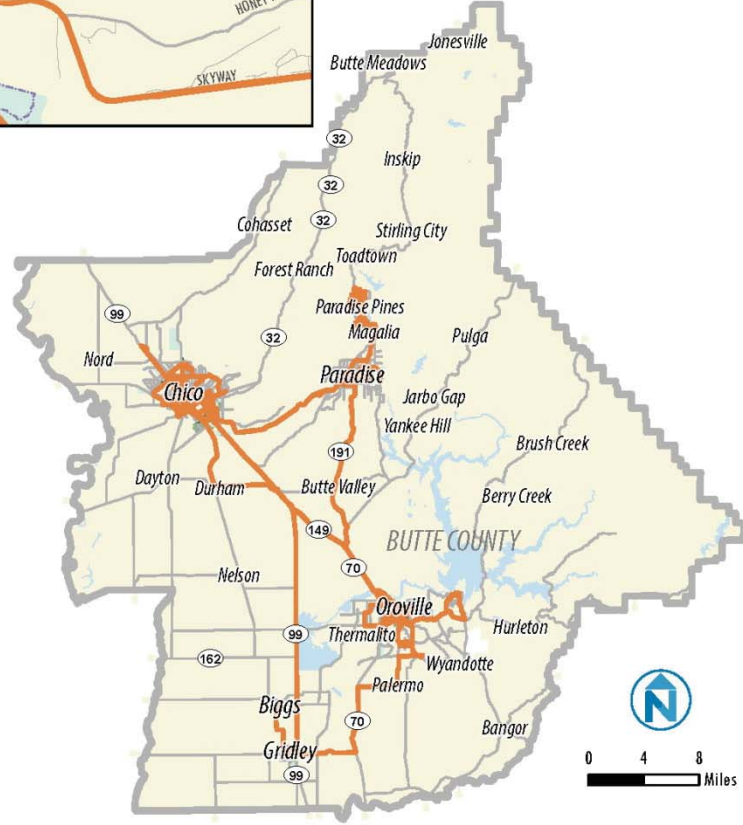


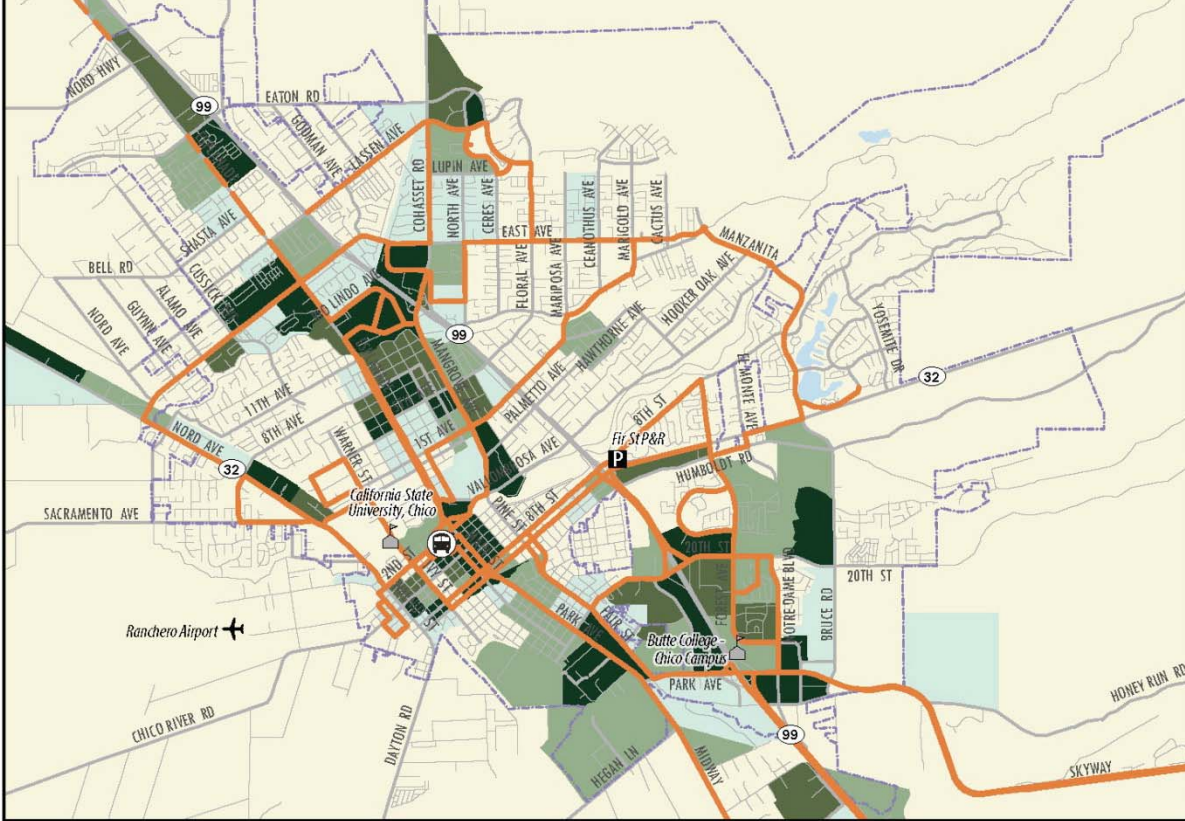


- Transit Center
- Park & Ride
- Airport
- B-Line Bus Routes
- City Limits
- Butte County Boundary

0 1 2 Miles

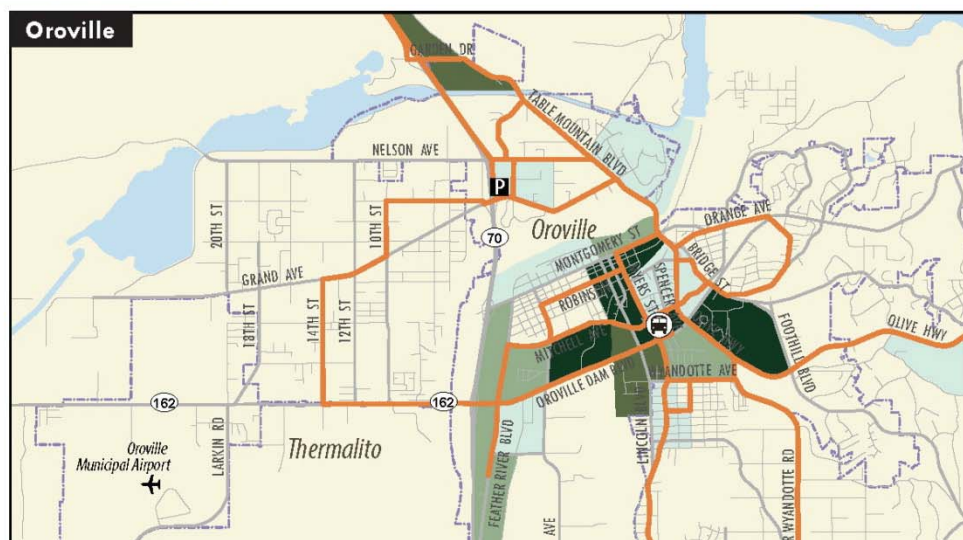
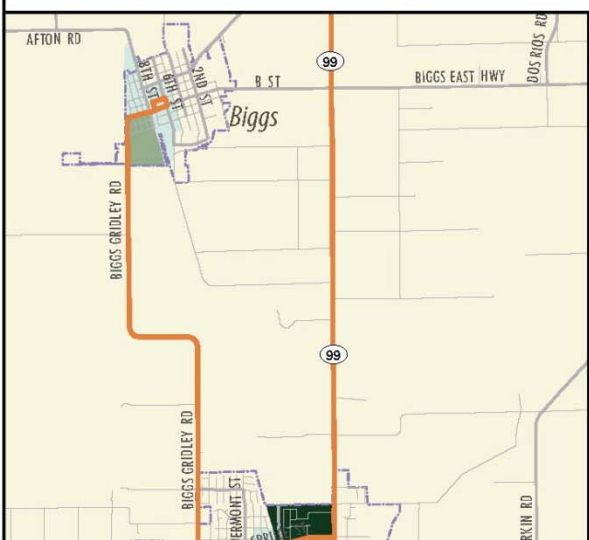
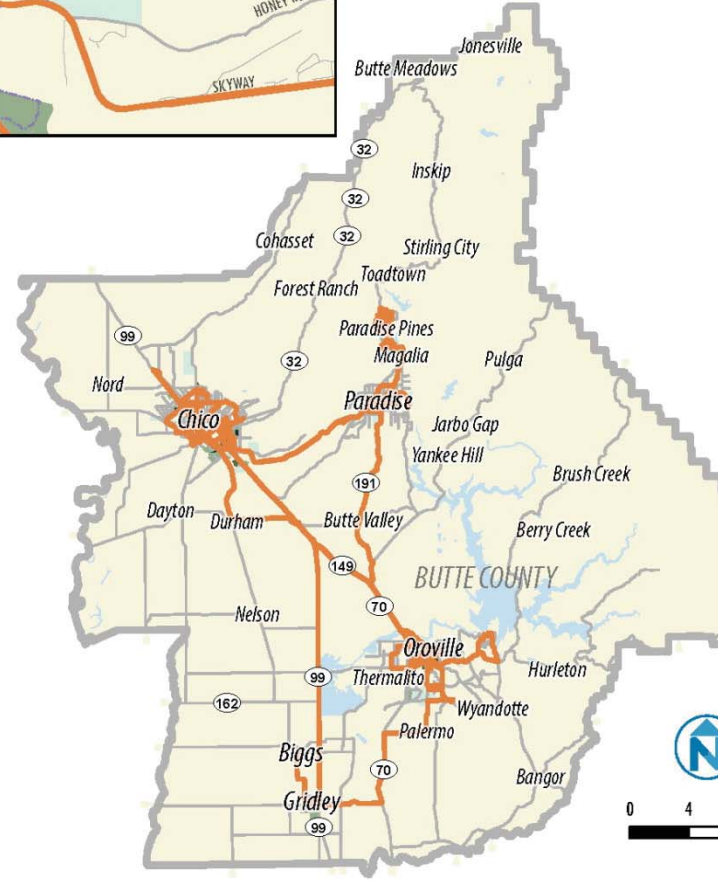
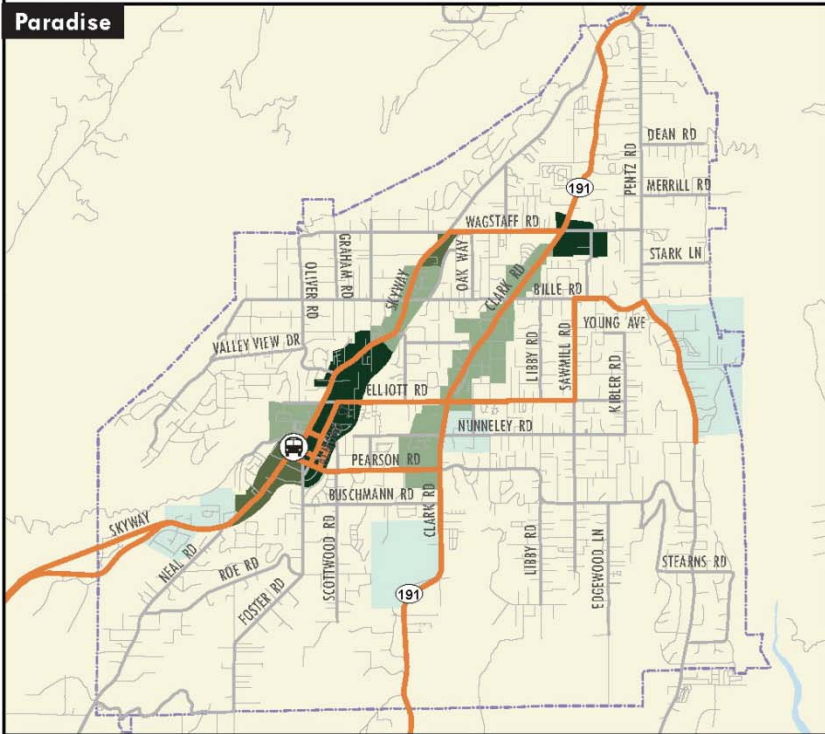
Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI

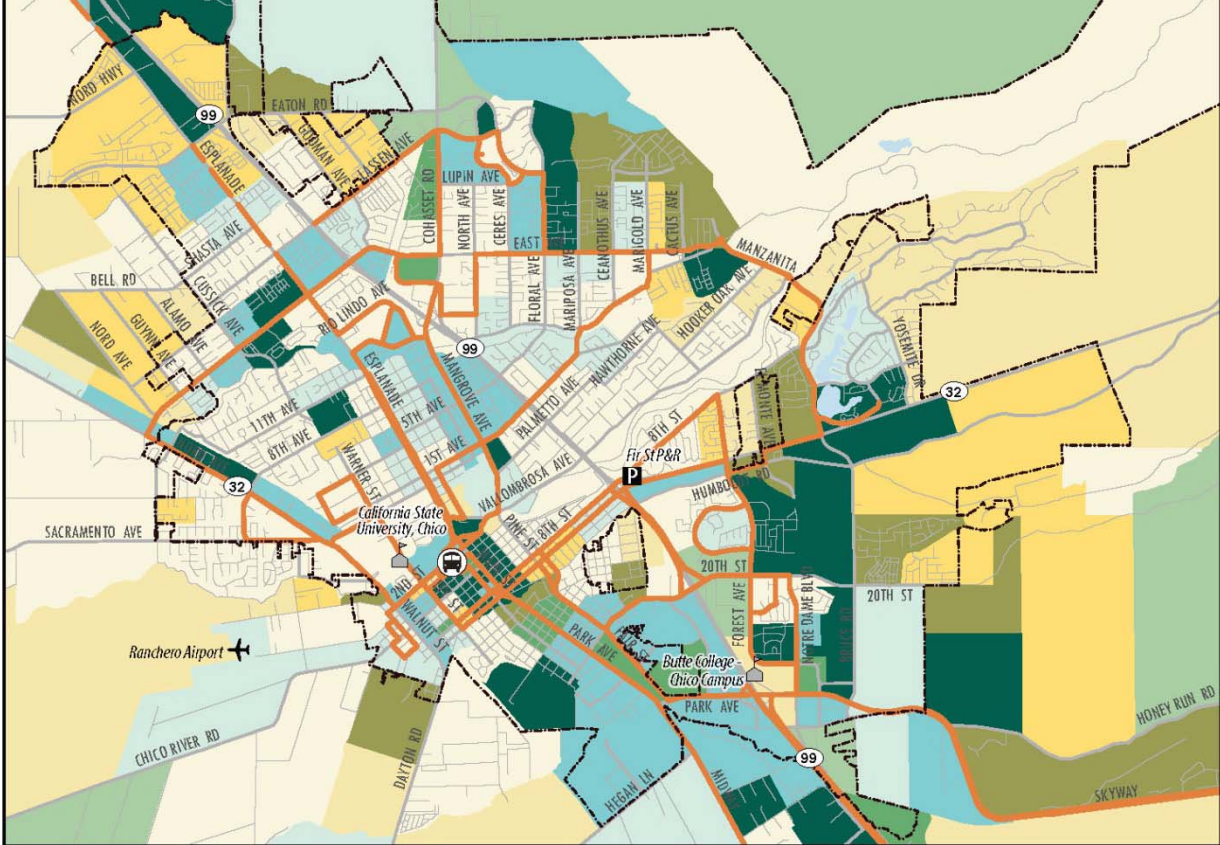




- Transit Center
- Park & Ride
- Airport
- B-Line Bus Routes
- City Limits
- Butte County Boundary

0 1 2 Miles  
Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI



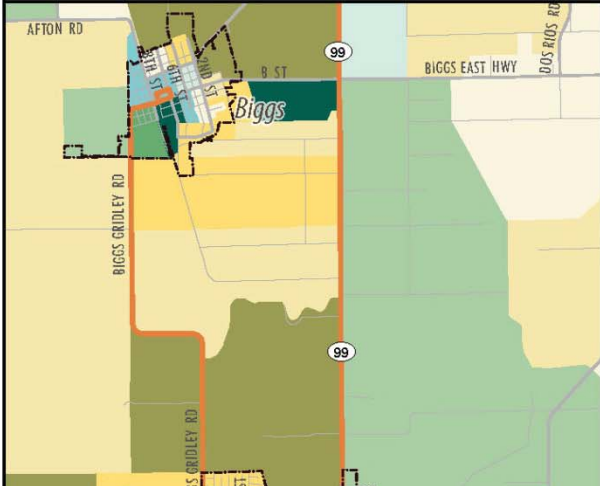
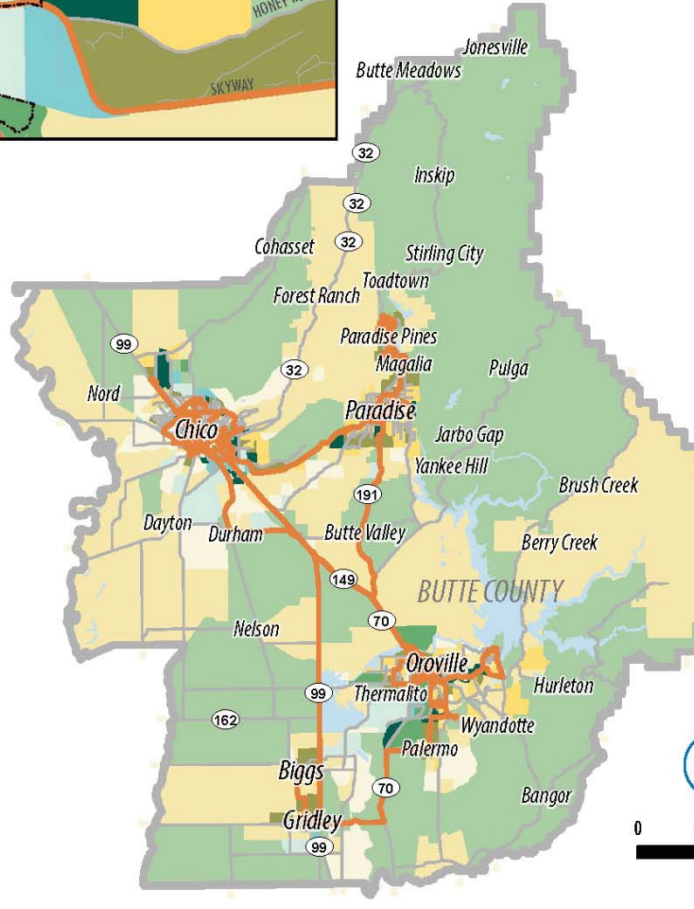
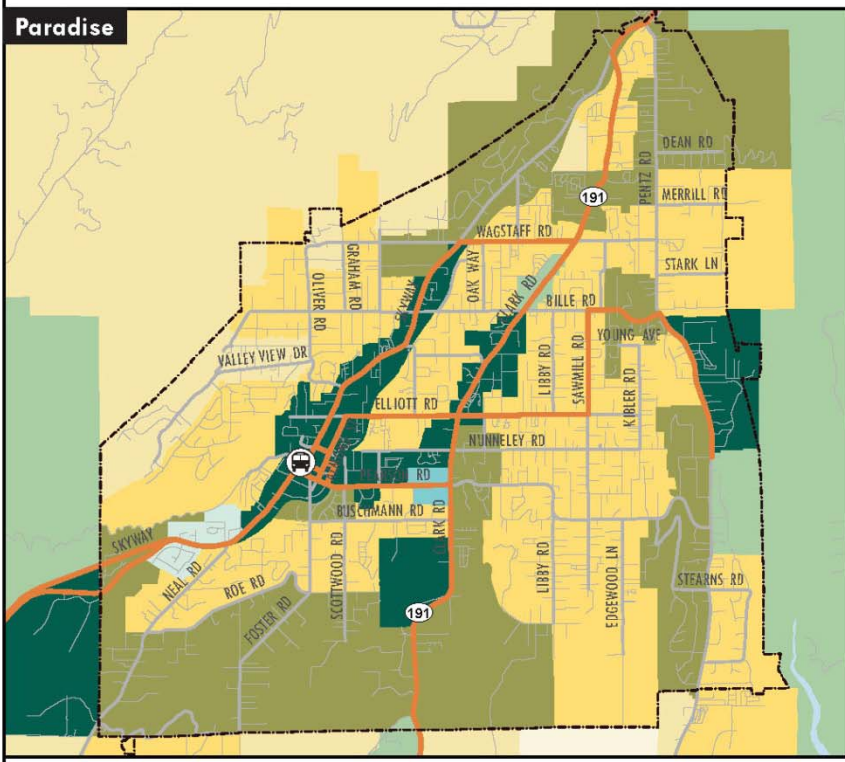


0 — 0.4 — 60  
Jobs per Acre  
Employment Growth

- Transit Center
- Park & Ride
- Airport
- B-Line Bus Routes
- City Limits
- Butte County Boundary

0 1 2  
Scale Bar

Data Sources: BCAG, ESRI



## **Educational Facilities**

Universities, colleges, and vocational schools are important bases for transit, walking, and biking trips. Parking fees, limited automobile access, and the close concentration of major destinations for students like groceries, retail, and nightlife all promote higher transit ridership and non-motorized travel. Typically, colleges and universities may partner with transit agencies to provide optimized and/or discounted service for students and faculty.

In addition, local public and private schools frequently have younger students that may choose to take public transportation to their schools over school buses due to costs or convenience.

Butte County hosts several educational institutions, including the following schools:

- **California State University, Chico (or Chico State University)**, is a four-year and post-graduate degree institution with a central campus in downtown Chico. In 2012, the university had a total student enrollment of 16,356 and staff of 1,777.
- **Butte College** is a two-year degree institution with a main campus located rurally between Chico, Oroville and Paradise, and several satellite campuses throughout Butte County and nearby Glenn County. In 2012, the college had a total student enrollment of 13,286 and staff of 971.
- **15 public school districts comprised of approximately 90 public schools.** B-Line already serves many major public schools, including Chico High School, Fair View High School, Pleasant Valley High School, Chico Junior High School, Oroville High School, Prospect High School (Oroville), and Paradise High School. In particular, students attending Parkview Elementary School in Chico and Las Plumas High School in Oroville are anecdotally known to take B-Line buses to school (on Routes 5 and 27, respectively), and ridership patterns suggest that this activity may be more widespread throughout Butte County.

## **Medical Facilities**

There are a number of hospitals and medical clinics located throughout Butte County, including the following major facilities:

- Enloe Hospital (Chico)
- Oroville Hospital (Oroville)
- Biggs-Gridley Memorial Hospital (Gridley)
- Feather River Hospital (Paradise)
- Butte County Public Health Clinics (Chico, Oroville)

Smaller clusters of medical facilities and doctors' offices also exist throughout B-Line's service area in Butte County, particularly in the vicinity of Cohasset and Parmac Roads in northwest Chico and along East Avenue near Pleasant Valley High School.

## **Shopping**

Major shopping destinations within Butte County are centrally located in Chico, including Chico Mall, WalMart, North Valley Plaza, several grocery stores, and strip malls. In Oroville, major shopping locations include the FoodMaxx shopping center and the WalMart, both on Oroville Dam Boulevard to the south of downtown. Several other strip malls are located along Oro Dam

Boulevard. Additionally, a Raley's is conveniently located immediately adjacent to the Oroville Transit Center. In Paradise, a Big K-Mart and other shops are located at Paradise Plaza, at the corner of Clark & Wagstaff Roads; Paradise Shopping Center offers a grocery among other shops on Skyway Road near the Terry Ashe Recreation Center. Finally, B-Line serves the SavMor market (formerly Holiday Market) on Lakeridge Circle, which is one of a few shopping destinations in Paradise Pines and Magalia.

Elsewhere throughout the county, there are additional shopping destinations largely in the form of strip malls and smaller neighborhood shops in city and town centers. .

## **FUTURE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

Planners and developers have put in place numerous plans to spur development in Butte County. In fact, according to the City of Chico's Building & Development Services department, as of July 2013 there are several residential projects either under consideration or approved in Chico, including over 2,000 approved and 600 proposed dwelling units.

Significant development plans and projects throughout Butte County are summarized below.

### **Plans & Development Projects - Chico**

- **Chico Opportunity Sites.** In the most recent General Plan (2011), a total of 15 "opportunity sites" are expected to be the focus of change and redevelopment over the next two decades.<sup>4</sup> On a basic level, these areas include:
  - Downtown Chico, South Campus, and East 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Street (Central City sites)
  - North Esplanade, Mangrove Avenue, Park Avenue, Nord Avenue, and East Avenue (Corridor sites)
  - North Valley Plaza, East 20<sup>th</sup> Street, and Skyway (Regional Center sites)
  - The Wedge (Chapman/Mulberry neighborhoods), Vanella Orchard, Pomona Avenue, and Eaton Road (Other sites)
- **Chico Special Planning Areas.** In the most recent General Plan (2011), the Chico Planning Department designated five (5) areas in Chico as Special Planning Areas (SPAs), which are areas with significant new growth potential.<sup>5</sup> They include:
  - **Bell Muir**, located northwest of W. East Avenue. Future growth may include single-family residential development designed in such a way as to ease the transition between rural farms and built-up Chico. 644 dwelling units are estimated for this SPA.
  - **Barber Yard** (the former Diamond Match Company site) will largely feature mixed-use residential development of varying densities (from 6 to 15 units per acre). It will also feature a village center, parks, walkable streets, and additional office, light industrial, and public land uses. The General Plan estimates a total of 1,096 dwelling units and over 400,000 square feet of non-residential square uses in the Barber Yard SPA.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information, consult Appendix B of the General Plan, here:  
[http://www.chico.ca.us/document\\_library/general\\_plan/documents/AppendixB\\_OpportunitySites.pdf](http://www.chico.ca.us/document_library/general_plan/documents/AppendixB_OpportunitySites.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Please consult Appendix C of the 2011 General Plan, here:  
[http://www.chico.ca.us/document\\_library/general\\_plan/documents/AppendixC\\_SpecialPlanningAreas.pdf](http://www.chico.ca.us/document_library/general_plan/documents/AppendixC_SpecialPlanningAreas.pdf)



- **Doe Mill/Honey Run**, located in the foothills at the eastern end of East 20<sup>th</sup> Street and north of Honey Run Road and Skyway. Potential development would be a recreation oriented, mixed-use development with a range of housing types and densities. Like Barber Yard, it would feature a village center with a mix of professional offices, retail, and other services. This SPA is expected to have 2,095 dwelling units and nearly 375,000 square feet of non-residential uses.
- **North Chico**, located north of the city, west of Chico Municipal Airport, and east of State Route 99, would have a mix of multi-family, single-family, commercial mixed-use, industrial-office mixed-use, public facilities, open space, and parks. The General Plan estimates that up to 1,899 dwelling units and over 1 million square feet of non-residential uses could be built in the North Chico SPA.
- **South Entler**, outside of the city, adjacent to State Route 99 on the east and bounded by Entler Avenue to the north and Marybill Ranch Road to the south, is envisioned as a mixed-use development that will function as a southern gateway to the city. This SPA would be anchored by a regional shopping center and bounded by low-density housing. A total of 949 dwelling units and approximately 1,350,000 square feet of non-residential land uses are estimated for the South Entler SPA.
- **Chapman/Mulberry Neighborhood Plan**, which recommends zoning changes to encourage higher density residential uses on Humboldt Avenue (between Willow Street and Aspen Street) and in the triangle of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, 19<sup>th</sup> Street, and C Street. This triangle also has a recommended zoning change from light manufacturing to neighborhood commercial.<sup>6</sup>
- **Chico Downtown Vision**, which highlights a few useful, desired concepts, including downtown intensification, mixed-use development, pedestrian activity, the redevelopment of the South Downtown District, and a transition of development intensity in adjacent neighborhoods.<sup>7</sup>

## Plans & Development Projects - Oroville

- **Martin Ranch** is a 71-acre high-density smart growth project being phased in over 10 to 12 years. This development will likely necessitate consideration for a future transit stop.
- **Gateway Development** is a 15-acre development to be located at Highway 70 and Montgomery, with largely commercial and hotel land uses. This development will be important for walking and biking connectivity, especially for guests desiring to bike on trails.
- The **Rio d'Oro** project is a proposed mixed-use (but primarily residential) development encompassing a total of 685 acres located along Highway 70 in southwest Oroville. In addition to up to 2,700 residential units, two commercial centers totaling up to 248,000 square feet and public facilities including parks and a school are proposed.
- The City of Oroville is planning to build a large senior housing project (50 units) at **1511 Robinson Street** in the short-term future. The short-term service plan will ensure that

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<sup>6</sup> Source: Chapman/Mulberry Plan, [http://www.chico.ca.us/planning\\_services/documents/ChapmanMulberryPlan.pdf](http://www.chico.ca.us/planning_services/documents/ChapmanMulberryPlan.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> For more information, consult [http://www.chico.ca.us/document\\_library/general\\_plan/documents/DowntownVisionIllustration.pdf](http://www.chico.ca.us/document_library/general_plan/documents/DowntownVisionIllustration.pdf)

despite substantial route changes within Oroville, this location will continue to be served by fixed route buses.

- The proposed **Super WalMart** will become both a major destination for shopping trips as well as a significant employer in not just Oroville, but the county as a whole. Transit service will become a major consideration for this development.

## **Plans & Development Projects – Other Regional Centers**

- In Biggs, the **Downtown Visual Master Plan** recommends development code changes that promote mixed-use development, higher density, and diversity in the downtown core.
- In Gridley, the **2030 General Plan** calls for mixed-use, neighborhood center-focused growth at the north edge of the city, west of Highway 99 and on both sides of the rail line.
- In Paradise, the **Paradise Community Village** project is a significant high-density, multi-unit housing development. It will also feature subsidized low-income housing. The first phase of this development is complete and operational. Increasing transit service to this area will likely become a priority, as the nearest existing bus stop is nearly a mile away.

## **Adopted Long-Range Plans**

The following long-range plans have been adopted in Butte County. The most relevant of these to this report are discussed in more detail in Chapter 1.

- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)
- Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP)
- Administration of the Transportation Development Act (TDA) Funds
- Regional Housing Needs Study
- Air Quality Conformity Determinations
- US Census Data Center
- Butte Regional HCP/NCCP
- 2012 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS)
- Nord Ave Corridor Plan
- Skyway Corridor Study
- Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan

## **CONCLUSION**

The information presented in this chapter illustrates pockets of potential transit demand, as well as demand for non-motorized modes in portions of Butte County. This current demographic information, activity center data, and travel analysis serves as the basis for near-term transit alternatives presented in Chapter 7. Based on an array of demographic factors, it appears that current B-Line routes cover transit-dependent areas relatively well, with the exception of more rural areas off of main corridors in Oroville and Paradise that do not readily support traditional fixed route operations. Other current needs are minor, including service to employment areas on

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Hegan Lane to the southwest of Park Avenue, and further northwest on Route 32, past East Avenue. Longer-term alternatives for potentially expanded service to these areas may include a mix of fixed-route services or, as have been implemented in other small cities and growing cities, hybrid fixed-deviated services or flex-route services.

The greatest concentrations of people and jobs in Butte County are within Chico and Oroville, with a concentration of population around CSU in Chico and in the established downtown Oroville and South Oroville residential neighborhoods. With the exception of CSU in Chico, many of the largest employers in Butte County are located in peripheral areas and near freeways, like the WalMart stores in Chico and Oroville, and the Feather Falls and Gold Country Casinos outside of Oroville. Modest population and employment growth is expected in these peripheral areas, some of which are outside of B-Line's current fixed route service area. In Chico, areas to explore expanding service in the long-term include the North Chico Specific Plan Area (NCSPA) Village Core area, new developments along the Eaton Corridor, and along Bruce Road south of Sierra Sunrise Village. In Paradise and Chico, long term service strategies may include increasing service span or frequency in areas with population and employment gains.

