



2008/09

Annual Report



**SR 99/East 1st Ave Phase 1
Off-Ramp Improvement**



New B-Line Bus



**Butte County
Checkerbloom**

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Message from the Executive Director

Enclosed you will find Butte County Association of Governments (BCAGs) 2008/09 Annual Report, which highlights some of the important planning studies and projects that were undertaken by BCAG during the past fiscal year.

The 2008/09 fiscal year presented many of the same challenges for transportation and regional planning as in past years – *“trying to deal with more planning requirements and fund needed transportation projects with less funding.”* While BCAG was able to complete or continue development for many of our ongoing planning studies and highway, street and road projects, the outlook for the coming fiscal year is more uncertain as California heads into another budget year with a statewide deficit in the \$20 billion range.

Looking back at the past year, the sole intention is not to focus on what was accomplished as much as to look at where we’re headed, based on the type of planning that is being developed to help guide our future here within the region.

A couple of areas within the Annual Report that demonstrate this include our continued planning work on the Butte Regional Conservation Plan and the continued commitment to improve our public transit system – Butte Regional Transit. Both the Butte Regional Conservation Plan and Butte Regional Transit system will play a very important role in shaping our future growth and development, and how we will move people to and from work, school and home in the future. As discussed in the Annual Report, a great deal of study and progress is being made in these two areas.

The Annual Report also provides BCAG staff the opportunity to thank the many individuals who participate in our planning process through our standing and ad-hoc committees. It is through their commitment and tireless effort that many of our studies and projects are completed successfully. Again, their hard work is appreciated.

There is no doubt that as we move forward into the next fiscal year, BCAG will face existing and new challenges that could affect our transportation projects, planning and programs that are needed in Butte County to address our transportation needs. As we have in the past, BCAG will draw upon the many individuals that participate in our planning process and on our committees to work with our Board of Directors and the staff at our member jurisdictions to resolve our challenges as best we can.

I hope this 2008/09 Annual Report provides interesting and useful information. Again, it touches on just some of the work that was developed on behalf of our member jurisdictions – the cities of Biggs, Gridley, Chico and Oroville, the Town of Paradise and the County of Butte. Up to date information on all of BCAG’s work activities, as well as a copy of this report, are available at our website located at www.bcag.org.



Executive Director

BCAG MEMBER AGENCIES

BCAG is a Joint Powers Agency (JPA) of the County of Butte, the Cities of Biggs, Chico, Gridley, Oroville and the Town of Paradise.

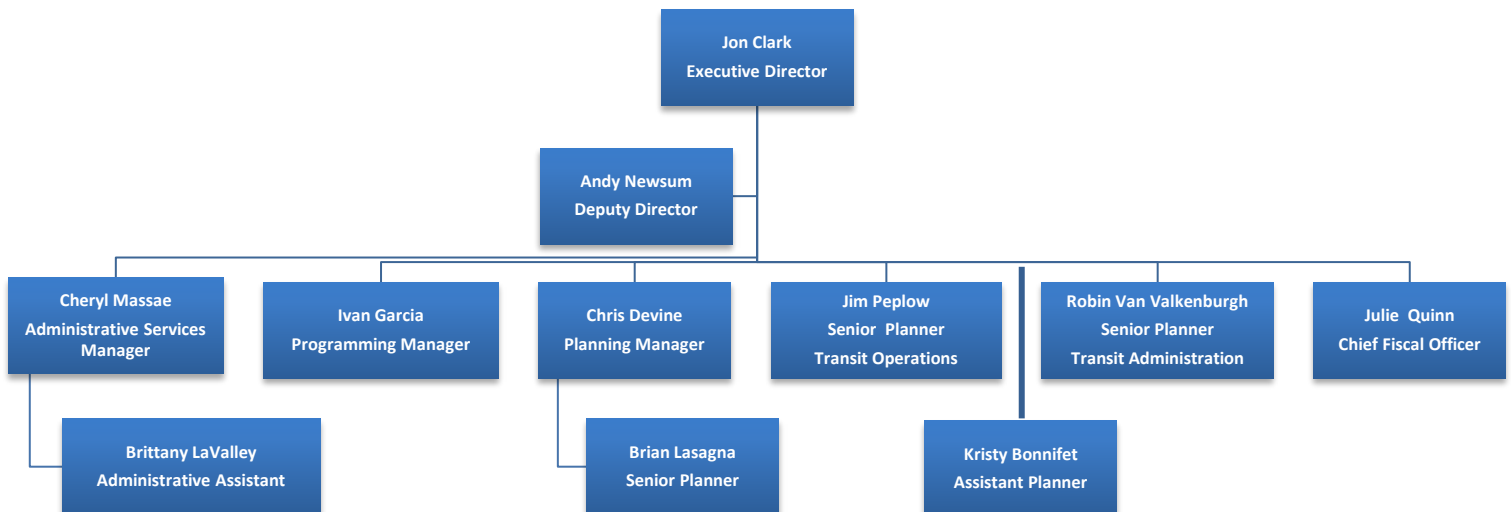


2008/09 BCAG Board of Directors

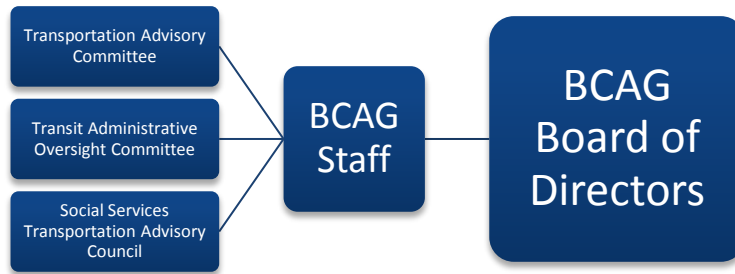
Bill Connelly – *Butte County District 1 (BCAG Vice Chair)*
 Jane Dolan – *Butte County District 2 (BCAG Chair)*
 Maureen Kirk – *Butte County District 3*
 Steve Lambert – *Butte County District 4*
 Kim Yamaguchi – *Butte County District 5*

Angela Thompson – *City of Biggs*
 Ann Schwab – *Mayor, City of Chico*
 Jerry Ann Fichter – *Mayor, City of Gridley*
 Jamie Johansson – *City of Oroville*
 Alan White – *Mayor, Town of Paradise*

BCAG STAFF



Planning & Decision Making Process.....



BCAG Board and Advisory Committees

- **BCAG Board of Directors**

BCAG is governed by a ten member Board of Directors that includes the five Butte County Supervisors and one city/town council representative from the incorporated communities. The Board of Directors is responsible for all policy decisions. Meetings of the Board of Directors are held every month and are noticed and open to the public.

- **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

A vital link in the planning process, the Transportation Advisory Committee provides technical analysis and input required with transportation project/programming development. The TAC includes staff representatives from the county, cities and town, public/citizen representation, Caltrans and other state/federal planning partners. Meetings of the TAC are noticed and open to the public.

- **Transit Administrative Oversight Committee (TAOC)**

The Transit Administrative Oversight Committee includes administrative and fiscal staff representatives from the county, cities and town who meet quarterly to review transit policy and budget issues that require Board action. This Committee ensures that the cities, town and county have review and input into the administration and operation of B-Line transit. These meetings are noticed and open to the public.

- **Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)**

The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council is a required committee under the Transportation Development Act (TDA) to oversee the development of the annual Unmet Transit Needs process. The SSTAC works with BCAG staff to evaluate testimony on perceived unmet transit needs then recommends a finding to the BCAG Board of Directors. These meetings are noticed and open to the public.

- **BCAG Staff**

BCAG staff is responsible for the administration and operation of BCAG and Butte Regional Transit, coordinating the meetings of the planning committees, preparing the monthly Board of Directors meeting and implementing BCAG's Overall Work Program & Budget.



Butte Regional Conservation Plan

...helping to plan where we grow

The **Butte Regional Conservation Plan** completed a second year of planning and development of several products aimed at assisting the cities and county with their future growth plans. Products completed include:

- ✿ Habitat & Species Models
- ✿ The Independent Science Advisory Panel Report
- ✿ A Draft Covered Activities Report
- ✿ Conservation Strategy Approach

The completed Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan products provide local planning staff and their decision makers with a significant amount of environmental data and mapping to make more informed decisions regarding their future land use plans. The benefit of having this comprehensive inventory and mapping of sensitive habitats and species will provide the opportunity for cities and the county to avoid or minimize their impacts to these natural resources. For those impacts that can't be avoided, the Butte Regional Conservation Plan will identify the agreed upon mitigations to allow for future growth to occur consistent with the general plans.

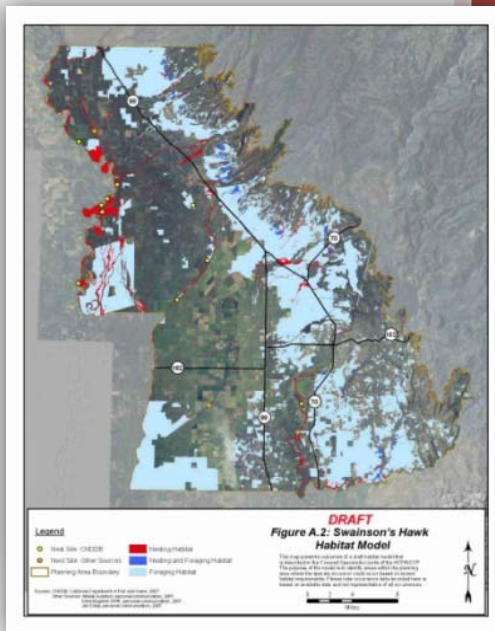
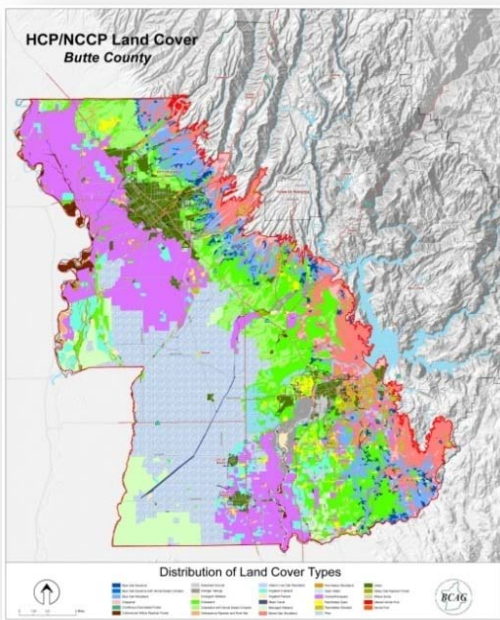
Funding for the Butte Regional Conservation Plan is being provided through grants from the US Fish & Wildlife Service and BCAG's planning funds. A final draft of the Conservation Plan is scheduled to be completed in 2011.

STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

The Butte Regional Conservation Plan Stakeholder Committee is the primary advisory group working with BCAG staff and their consultants on the development of the Butte Regional Conservation Plan.

The Committee is composed of representatives from agriculture, educational institutions, environmental groups, building industry, Caltrans, water districts, hunting clubs, special districts, state and federal wildlife agencies and other interest groups. They meet monthly to review draft products as well as working papers and to provide staff and their consultant's direction for plan preparation. The Committee's local knowledge and expertise has been instrumental on work done to date. Meetings are open to the public and are held at the BCAG offices.

More information about the Butte Regional Conservation Plan and meetings can be found at www.buttehcp.com.



Far Left
Butte County Land
Cover Map

Left
Habitat model for
Swainson's Hawk



Things kept *rolling* along for Butte Regional Transit during the 2008/09 fiscal year. Several significant projects were completed or initiated that will continue to improve service for B-Line riders.....Most notable were:

- **16 New Buses Added to Fleet**
- **Approval of Bus Shelter Improvement Plan & Implementation**
- **Homeland Security Grant to fund Security Cameras for Bus Fleet**
- **Market Based Transit Study Gets Underway**
- **Approval of \$300,000 for Paratransit Fleet Fareboxes**
- **Approval of \$700,000 for AVL/GPS**



Butte Regional Transit added eight new forty foot buses to the B-Line fleet during the fiscal year. The new buses from Daimler Bus of North America are considered *next generation* buses and feature a sleek European design with “low floors” which makes boarding and unloading more efficient and easier for passengers. Each of the buses run on clean Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and will replace older diesel fuel buses currently in the fleet. In addition to the eight new buses which went into service along the fixed route system, eight new paratransit buses were added to the fleet to serve the B-Line paratransit service.

When BCAG conducted an on-board ridership survey during the 2007/08 FY, the number one requested improvement was the addition of more bus shelters. BCAG had been working on a Bus Shelter Improvement Plan prior to the survey; the question was how best to implement the plan? Staff proposed to the BCAG Board of Directors that B-Line pursue a contract with a qualified vendor to provide bus shelter installation and maintenance in return for renting advertising space in the shelters, a practice used by many transit systems throughout the country. In October of 2008, Stott Outdoor Advertising was awarded a contract by BCAG to install and maintain bus shelters along the B-Line fixed route system. Stott will begin installation of fifty new shelters and twenty-six converted shelters in the fall of 2009 and will be making a capital investment of over \$600,000 for the new shelters, which is anticipated to be well received by B-Line riders.



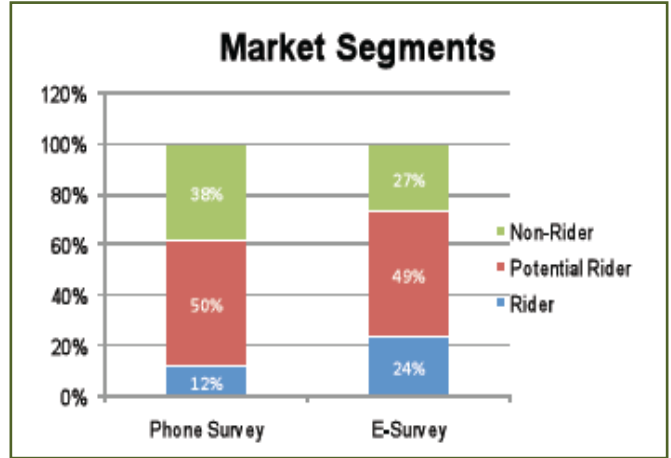
In an effort to improve passenger and driver safety, B-Line will be adding new video camera technology to its fleet as part of a project funded under the state’s Proposition 1B Transit Security Grant program. BCAG was awarded a grant of \$180,000 during the 2008/09 FY to purchase digital security cameras for a portion of the B-Line fleet. Buses will be equipped with eight digital cameras that provide B-Line with the ability to go back and view incidents, both internal and external, that may occur on the buses. These cameras ensure that B-Line has the best available security for the traveling public and our drivers. Additional cameras will be purchased during the next fiscal year to finish equipping buses with cameras.

Veolia Transportation is our contractor for providing day-to-day drivers, dispatching and mechanics that keep the B-Line system running. They contribute greatly to the success of our transit system.



Market Based Transit Study Underway

A Market Based Transit Study, funded in part by a Caltrans Transit Planning Grant, got underway during the 2008/09 FY. The purpose of the Study is to evaluate the current fixed route system and ridership trends, and identify route modifications that may better meet the needs of riders as they relate to their daily travel or commute patterns. The Study will draw upon several sources of information including the comprehensive ridership survey done last year, recent unmet transit needs testimony and an email and phone survey conducted with local businesses, Chico State and Butte College.



Transit Resource Center was selected by BCAG to develop the Market Based Transit Study for B-Line. The Study is being coordinated with the BCAG member jurisdictions as well as with a Project Development Team (PDT) that includes representatives from the Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee (SSTAC), Chico State University, Butte College and other transit stakeholders. The Study is expected to be completed during the 2009/10 FY and any recommendations approved by the Board would be implemented starting with the 2010/11 FY.



During the fiscal year, BCAG equipped all of the B-Line Fixed route buses with new state of the art electronic fareboxes by GFI Genfare. The new GFI fareboxes were installed to provide a better system for fare collection, more flexibility in fare media such as Smart Cards and to better track ridership data. The new fareboxes not only provide greater flexibility to B-Line riders, they also help BCAG staff with future planning efforts. Funding was approved this year to equip the Paratransit fleet with the same system. Installation is anticipated by December 2009.



BCAG updated both the Fixed Route Schedule & System Map and Paratransit Riders Guide during the fiscal year. Both documents are “must reads” for users of the B-Line fixed route and paratransit systems. Each guide provides riders with route and schedule information, fare information, hours of operations and essentially everything they need to know about using transit in Butte County. Both guides are available on the buses and at certain transit stop locations.

B-Line Ridership Profile from 2008 Survey



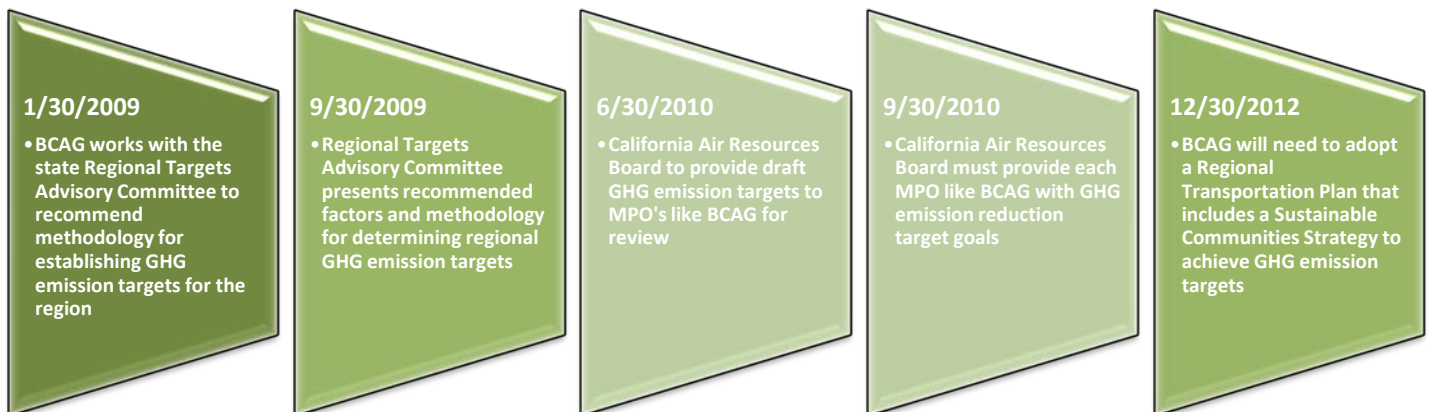
Sustainable Communities Strategy Development Preparations Underway

Building upon the passage of AB 32 *California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006*, SB 375 *Sustainable Communities Strategies* was enacted in October 2008 and outlines the regional planning requirements for reducing passenger vehicle related greenhouse gas emissions. AB 32 was enacted to provide the California Air Resources Board (CARB) with the authority to implement programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from various sources, including passenger vehicles. AB 32 requires that greenhouse gas emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020, with an 80% reduction to 1990 levels by 2050. The single largest source of greenhouse gases in California results from passenger vehicle emissions.

A core provision in SB 375 calls for the development of a *Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)*, which will be included in the area's next Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) updated in 2012. The purpose of the SCS is to demonstrate a transportation network and land use development scenario which accommodates the region's forecasted regional housing need while reducing GHG emissions, if feasible to do so. The new law requires that the SCS be developed within the framework of the local land use plans and that the associated transportation network be financially feasible. This will require the SCS to consider more transit-oriented, dense, and mixed-use development patterns that promote alternative modes of travel (bike/walk/bus). If the region's emission targets cannot be met through the SCS, BCAG will be required to develop an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) which is allowed to be shaped outside the confines of federal law and the local land use plans. The SCS, once adopted by the BCAG Board of Directors, will require final review and approval from the California Air Resource Board to ensure it is meeting the requirements of SB 375 and the goals of AB 32.

While the SCS is not a binding land use plan and is not required to be adopted by the cities and county, transportation projects and funding allocations identified in the RTP will need to be consistent with the SCS for funding approval.

Milestone Dates for BCAG's SB 375 Implementation



Regional Projects

Several of the regional transportation projects being developed by BCAG have made good progress during the 2008/09 fiscal year.

Forest Highway 171 is a 9.6 mile reconstruction project that will pave the current gravel road between Inskip and Butte Meadows. This project's primary goal is to improve the roadway surface, decrease maintenance costs, improve roadside drainage, provide recreational access to National Forest Land and allow for improved access to and from the upper ridge areas of Butte Meadows, Inskip, Magalia, Paradise Pines and the Town of Paradise in the event of a major fire on the ridge. The project is part of the federally designated Forest Highway road network, which makes it eligible for federal funding under the Public Lands Highway program administered by the Federal Highway Administration. Construction of the project is underway in September 2009.



Forest Highway 171 near Inskip

an auxiliary lane to East First Avenue and improvements at the southbound on-ramp at East First Avenue with an auxiliary lane and off-ramp improvements at SR 32. Construction of the Phase 2 project is scheduled to begin in April 2010 provided funding from the state.

State Route 99 in Chico is being improved between State Route 32 and East First Avenue to include auxiliary lanes in both the north and south bound directions and is intended to provide operational improvements. A first phase project to widen the north bound off-ramp at East First Avenue was completed in December 2008. During the 2008/09 FY, a Phase 2 project was designed that will include improvements at the northbound SR 32 on-ramp with

The State Route 99 Gridley Widening Project began construction during the 2008/09 FY. BCAG awarded construction of the \$2 million project to Sierra Nevada Construction from Sparks Nevada. The project broke ground in June 2009 with a ceremony held at the project site. Completion is scheduled for late November 2009.



BCAG Director Jon Clark, Gridley Mayor Jerry Ann Fichter and Supervisor Steve Lambert break around in Gridley



The new off-ramp at SR 99 & East First Avenue

Stimulus Funding Supports Several Transportation Projects in the Region

The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was signed in February of 2009 in an effort to provide funding for several programs throughout the nation in order to stimulate the economy and create jobs. For transportation, approximately \$47 billion was identified nationwide, with California receiving approximately \$5 billion. Butte County's share of the Stimulus funding during the 2008/09 FY year was \$12,277,000 with \$9,374,000 going towards highway and local road projects, \$2,615,000 going towards transit capital projects and \$288,000 going towards transportation enhancement projects.

Below is a breakdown of the projects and funding amounts for the Stimulus funded projects in Butte County:

Highways & Local Road Projects

- Chico – SR 99 Skyway Interchange	\$ 5,500,000
- County – Midway & Lower Honcut Rehabilitation Project	\$ 1,280,000
- Oroville – Table Mountain & Grand Avenue Rehabilitation Project	\$ 1,094,000
- Paradise – Overlay Rehabilitation for Pearson Road and Clark & Skyway	\$ 1,500,000

Transit Capital Projects

- Butte Regional Transit – Purchase of Six Clean Diesel Buses	\$ 2,475,000
- Butte Regional Transit – ADA Paratransit Operations	\$ 140,000

Transportation Enhancement Projects

- Oroville – SR 70 at Montgomery Landscape Project	\$ 75,000
- County – Lincoln Avenue Landscaping Project	\$ 213,000

Total Stimulus Funding in 2008/09	\$12,277,000
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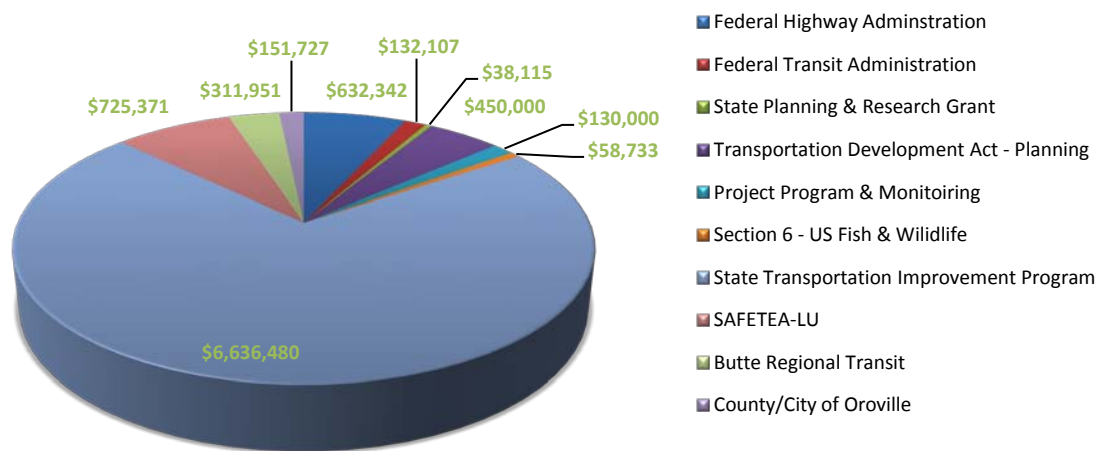
While BCAG received most of its share of the Stimulus Funds during the 2008/09 FY, there are other opportunities to secure additional funds during the next fiscal year under some of the state discretionary transportation programs for local projects. BCAG will continue to work with Caltrans and the local jurisdictions to secure Stimulus Funds where and when possible. For more information about all of the funding and programs under the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act, visit www.recovery.gov.

A Look at the End of Year Financials – Summary of Revenues & Expenditures

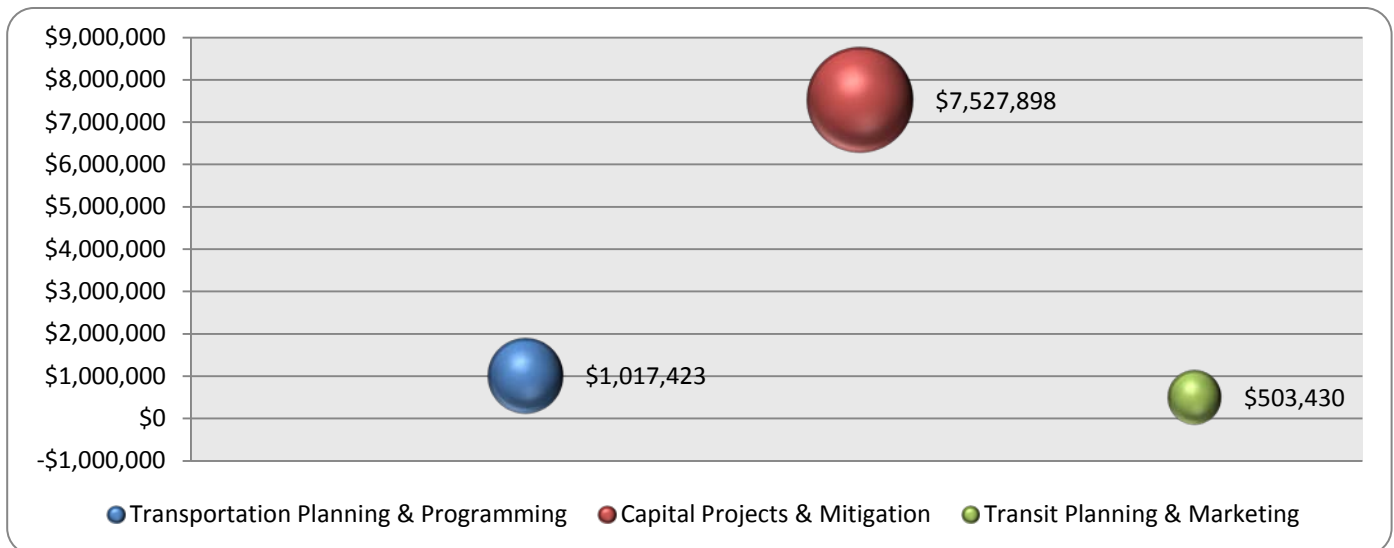
BCAG’s 2008/09 Overall Work Program and Budget included twenty-eight specific work elements that were initiated, completed or carried forward into the 2009/10 fiscal year. Many of the work elements were to fulfill state and federal planning requirements, while others included BCAG’s ongoing capital projects program and the development of regional planning studies such as the Butte Regional Conservation Plan.

BCAG’s 2008/09 final adopted budget was **\$20,259,339**; however, the actual expenditures totaled **\$9,048,751**. Actual revenues totaled **\$9,266,826**. A breakdown of the revenues for fiscal year 2008/09 is listed below.

Actual Revenues



Actual Expenditures by Program



Butte Regional Transit..... *B-Line*

Operating Expenses and Revenues

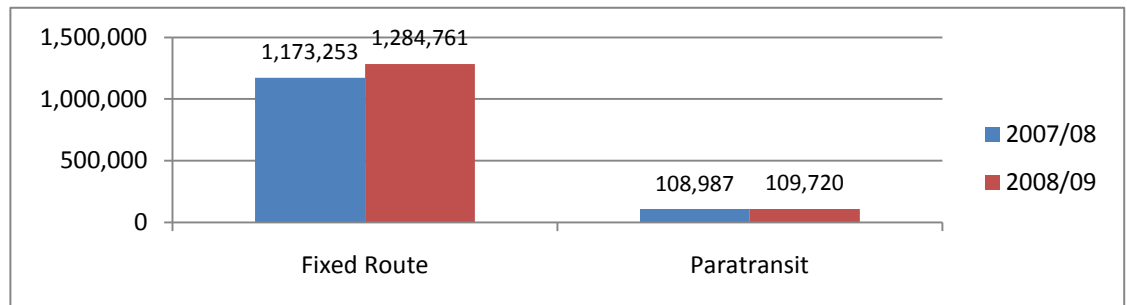


In addition to the transportation Overall Work Program and Budget, BCAG is the administrator and operator for the regions public transit system, the *B-Line*.

B-Line provides fixed route and complementary paratransit service to each of the cities, town and county. During the 2008/09 FY, *B-Line* provided approximately 67,000 hours of service along the five intercity fixed routes and local routes in Chico, Oroville and Paradise. Paratransit service, which is provided within Chico, Paradise and Oroville provided approximately 46,000 hours of service.

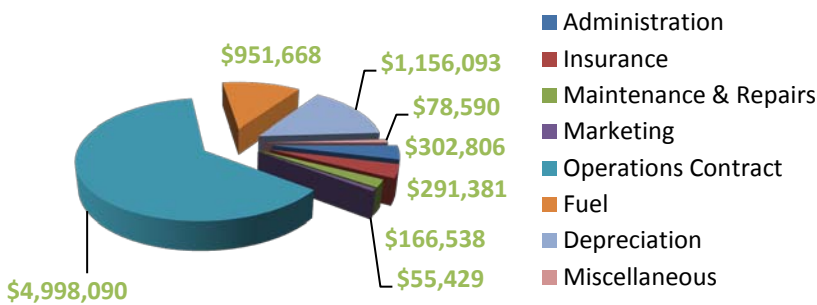
Ridership along the fixed route system during the 2008/09 FY increased by over 9.5% from the prior FY; with ridership totaling 1,284,761 rides. Paratransit service ridership increased only slightly during the year by about 0.6%, with a total of 109,720 rides provided.

B-Line Ridership

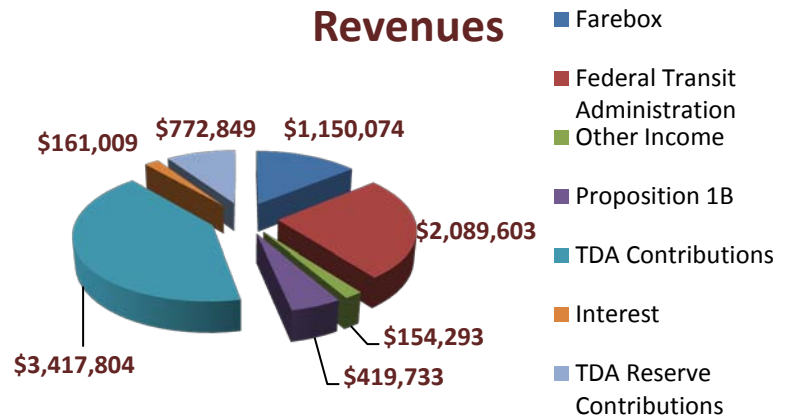


The final adopted 2008/09 operating budget, including depreciation, for *B-Line* was **\$8,016,099**. Actual operating expenses totaled **\$8,000,595** and are broken down below. *B-Line revenues* for the year were **\$8,165,365**. The excess in revenues over expenses represents changes to net assets invested in capital assets. Budgeted TDA operating contributions by jurisdictions were **\$4,679,154** of which **\$3,417,804** was applied to operating revenues and the remaining **\$1,261,351** represents deferred revenue carried forward to future fiscal years.

Operating Expenses



Revenues



Funding Allocations to Member Jurisdictions

There are three primary funding programs that BCAG administers and allocates to the BCAG member jurisdictions annually – these funds are often referred to as “passthrough funds”. They include the Local Transportation Funds (LTF), which are provided through the Transportation Development Act (TDA), State Transit Assistance (STA) and Surface Transportation Program/State Exchange (STP/SE).

Surface Transportation Program/State Exchange

Surface Transportation Program (STP) / State Exchange funds are allocated annually by the state to the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies for allocation to eligible projects. Surface Transportation Program funds come from the federal transportation program SAFETEA-LU, and are based on the old Federal Aid Urban/Federal Aid Rural program. Funds are allocated to local jurisdictions by a formula which takes into consideration road miles maintained and population. BCAG has historically exchanged these federal funds with Caltrans for state dollars in order to eliminate the federal programming requirements, which allows for a more streamlined process for local jurisdictions in spending these funds.

Local Transportation Funds (LTF)

The Local Transportation Fund (LTF) was established under the Transportation Development Act (TDA) of 1972. The TDA creates in each county an LTF for the transportation purposes specified in the Act. Revenues to the LTF are derived from 1/4¢ of the retail sales tax collected statewide. The 1/4¢ is returned by the State Board of Equalization to each county according to the amount of tax collected in that county. Payments from the LTF are made by the county auditor in accordance with allocation instructions issued in compliance with the Act by the county's Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA). BCAG is the RTPA for Butte County.

State Transit Assistance Funds (STA)

The State Transit Assistance (STA) program was created under SB 620 in 1979. The program provides a second source of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funding for transportation planning, public transportation and community transit purposes as specified by the Legislature. Unlike LTF, STA funds **may not** be allocated for fund administration, streets, roads, or pedestrian/bicycle facility purposes. STA funds are derived from the Statewide sales tax on motor vehicle fuel (gasoline) and use fuel (diesel), both of which are deposited in the Transportation Planning and Development Account in the State Transportation Fund. The formula allocates 50% of the funds on the basis of the population of the region compared to the population of the state, and the remaining 50% is allocated according to the prior-year proportion of regional transit operator revenues compared with statewide transit operator revenues. STA allocations are deposited in each regional entity's STA fund. The process for allocation and payment of funds from the STA fund is done in conjunction with the LTF funding.

2008/09 Pass-Through Allocations

Jurisdiction	STP/Exchange	LTF	STA	Total
County of Butte	\$818,245	\$2,365,591	\$230,339	\$3,414,175
City of Biggs	\$11,437	\$49,862	\$6,303	\$67,602
City of Chico	\$729,402	\$2,409,774	\$248,134	\$3,387,310
City of Gridley	\$60,349	\$176,088	\$16,925	\$253,362
City of Oroville	\$143,400	\$412,394	\$38,498	\$594,292
Town of Paradise	\$273,582	\$741,404	\$71,165	\$1,086,151
Total	\$2,036,415	\$6,155,113	\$611,364	\$8,802,892

Agency	Location	ARRA	STIP / State Funds (State Funds)	CMAQ	PLH	FTA 5307, 5309, 5311	SAFETEA - LU	SHOPP	Safety	Bridge	Rec Trails	Local Funds	Totals
County	Lower Honcut Rd	\$620,000											\$620,000
County	Agua Frias Rd at Butte Creek									\$516,728			\$516,728
County	Ord Ferry Rd at Sacramento River Br.									\$625,021			\$625,021
County	Midway Rehabilitation	\$660,000											\$660,000
Biggs	Bike and Pedestrian Project (TE)		\$319,000										\$319,000
BCAG	Forest Highway 171 Project				\$5,902,000								\$5,902,000
BCAG	Butte Regional Transit - Cap & Ops	\$2,615,111				\$2,050,000						\$4,866,000	\$9,531,111
BCAG	Plan, Program and Monitor (PPM)		\$130,000										\$130,000
BCAG	Butte Regional Transit - Para Fareboxes			\$300,000									\$300,000
BCAG	Butte Regional Transit - AVL/GPS			\$700,000									\$700,000
BCAG	SR 99 Auxiliary Project - Phase 2			\$1,200,000									\$1,200,000
BCAG	SR 70 Georgia Pacific Way Project						\$1,034,000					\$134,000	\$1,168,000
Chico	SR 99/Skyway Interchange	\$5,500,000											\$5,500,000
Chico	Upper Bidwell Park - Rec Trails Project										\$175,802	\$57,000	\$232,802
Oroville	SR 70 and Montgomery St. TE Project		\$400,000										\$400,000
Oroville	Table Mountain Blvd Rehabilitation	\$1,095,000											\$1,095,000
Oroville	Veach St. at SR 162 Safety Improvements								\$236,880				\$236,880
Paradise	Pentz, Pearson. Clark Rehabilitation	\$1,498,962											\$1,498,962
Paradise	Skyway-Wagstaff Signalization Project			\$528,000									\$528,000
Caltrans	SR 70 Passing Lane Project		\$3,100,000										\$3,100,000
Caltrans	SR 70 Ophir Rd Project						\$3,380,329						\$3,380,329
Caltrans	SR 99 Near Biggs Rio Bonito to SR 162 Rehabilitation	\$16,310,033											\$16,310,033
Caltrans	SR 70 - Emergency Repair Wild Fire Damage							\$460,000					\$460,000
Caltrans	SR 162 at Veach St - Install Signals							\$284,760					\$284,760
Caltrans	SR 70 from PM 13.6 to 16.7 upgrade guardrail and gore areas							\$1,466,948					\$1,466,948
Caltrans	SR 99 Near Chico Garner to Broyles base repair							\$246,331					\$246,331
Caltrans	SR 70/191 Bridge Rehabilitation							\$1,031,499					\$1,031,499
Caltrans	SR 70 Ophir to Georgia Pac Way Signal							\$1,256,107					\$1,256,107
	TOTAL Allocations & Obligations	\$28,299,106	\$3,949,000	\$2,728,000	\$5,902,000	\$2,050,000	\$4,414,329	\$4,745,645	\$236,880	\$1,141,749	\$175,802	\$5,057,000	\$58,699,511