

Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

for the

Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) Property Acquisition, Maintenance Yard, Transit and Administration Facility



Lead Agency:

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Table of Contents

1.0 Project Contacts and Information	1
2.0 Introduction	3
2.1 Project Summary.....	3
2.2 Lead Agency	3
2.3 Purpose of An Initial Study	4
3.0 Project Description	5
3.1 Project Location.....	5
3.2 Background and Purpose	5
3.3 Existing Setting.....	7
3.4 Project Components and Phasing	7
3.5 Project Action and Approvals	16
4.0 Environmental Checklist	26
4.1 Aesthetics.....	26
4.2 Air Quality.....	29
4.3 Biological Resources.....	34
4.4 Cultural Resources	44
4.5 Geology and Soils	46
4.6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions	48
4.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials.....	52
4.8 Hydrology and Water Quality.....	55
4.9 Land Use and Planning	60
4.10 Noise.....	63
4.11 Population And Housing.....	66
4.12 Public Services	67
4.13 Open Space/Recreation.....	68
4.14 Traffic And Transportation.....	69
4.15 Utilities And Service Systems	71
5.0 Mandatory Findings of Significance.....	74
6.0 Determination	76
7.0 Preparers and References.....	77
8.0 Acronyms and Abbreviations.....	79

List of Tables

Table 1: Summary of BCAG’s Existing and Proposed Huss Lane Facilities and Site Design	9
Table 2: Summary of Existing and Proposed Parking at the BCAG Transit Facility.....	12
Table 3: Storm Drain Extension Details	14
Table 4: Phasing Budget and Schedule.....	16
Table 5: Butte County Attainment Status	30
Table 6: 2022 and 2032 Construction Emissions	33
Table 7: 2022 and 2032 Operational Emissions.....	33
Table 8: 2005 BAU and 2022 Operational Emissions	51
Table 9: Summary of Proposed Project’s Surfacing	57

List of Figures

Figure 1: Regional Location and Roadways	17
Figure 2: Aerial Photograph/Overview.....	18
Figure 3: Land Use Designations.....	19
Figure 4: Zoning Designations.....	20
Figure 5: Boundary Line Modification	21
Figure 6: Existing Facility Layout.....	22
Figure 7: Proposed Site Plan	23
Figure 8: Aztec Drive Extension	24
Figure 9: Proposed Storm Drain Plan	25

Appendices

Appendix A	Transit Facility Needs
Appendix B	Project Level Air Quality and Greenhouse Gasses Analysis
Appendix C	Natural Environment Study
Appendix D	Delineation of Waters of the U.S.
Appendix E	Archaeology Inventory Survey
Appendix F	Phase 1-Initial Site Assessment
Appendix G	Phase 2-Environmental Site Investigation
Appendix H	Limited Phase 2-Site Investigation

1.0 Project Contacts and Information

This Project Information, Description, and Environmental Checklist contained herein constitute the contents of an Initial Study in accordance with Section 15063 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines:

Project Title	BCAG Property Acquisition, Maintenance Yard, Transit and Administration Facility
Lead Agency Contact and Address	Butte County Association of Governments Andy Newsum, Deputy Director 2580 Sierra Sunrise Terrace, Suite 100 Chico, CA 95928-8841 (530) 879-2468 (530) 879-2444 fax
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2.0 Introduction

2.1 Project Summary

The proposed project is the construction of a new Butte County Association of Governments Administration and B-Line Operations and Maintenance Facility and Yard (Transit Facility). The proposed Transit Facility would accommodate the expected growth of BCAG's B-Line transit services and replace the existing B-Line Transit Facility. The proposed project includes the following:

- Acquisition of approximately 10 acres adjacent to and including the existing facility.
- Boundary line modification (BLM) to cure an existing encroachment onto the existing BCAG transit facility parcel. A 10-acre parcel, consisting of the adjusted BCAG transit facility parcel (2.6 acres) and 7.4 acres of the adjacent parcel, will be created by deed at the close of escrow with the property seller. A BLM requires a separate discretionary action by the City of Chico's Map Advisory Committee (MAC).
- Phased construction and operation of the transit maintenance facilities, bus equipment and storage yard, associated operations building, and BCAG administrative office space.
- Construction of a regional storm drain infrastructure and outfall northwest from the project site via an easement across an adjacent parcel to Comanche Creek.
- Extension of Aztec Road, a public roadway to provide access to the northern portion of the project site.
- Construction of associated utility improvements to serve the project site.
- Demolition of the existing B-Line facility at 326 Huss Lane.

2.2 Lead Agency

2.2.1 CEQA Lead Agency

The Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) is designated as the CEQA Lead Agency for the proposed project. CEQA Guidelines Section 15367 defines the Lead Agency as "...the public agency, which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project." Other public agencies may use this environmental document in the decision-making or permit process and consider the information in this document along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process.

Although the proposed project is located within the City of Chico's city limits, because the project consists of acquiring federal funding for acquisition of land for construction of an expanded transportation facility, BCAG will be the "Lead Agency" for the preparation of all environmental documents.

2.3 Purpose of an Initial Study

2.3.1 CEQA Process

This document is an Initial Study (IS) with supporting environmental studies, which provide justification for a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This proposed MND has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and the State CEQA Guidelines, 14 California Code Regulations Section 15000 et seq. Additionally, because the project is located within the City of Chico, the document is consistent with the IS Checklist required under the City's CEQA guidelines.

An IS is conducted by a Lead Agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment. In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines Section 15063, an EIR must be prepared if an IS indicates that the proposed project under review may have a potentially significant impact on the environment. A Negative Declaration (ND) or MND may be prepared instead, if the lead agency prepares a written statement describing the reasons why the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment, and therefore, why it does not require the preparation of an EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15371). According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, an ND shall be prepared for a project subject to CEQA when either:

- a) *The initial study shows there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment, or*
- b) *The initial study identifies potentially significant effects, but:*
 - (1) *Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by or agreed to by the applicant before the proposed negative declaration is released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur and;*
 - (2) *There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.*

If revisions are adopted in the proposed project in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines Section 15070(b), a Mitigated Negative Declaration is prepared.

3.0 Project Description

3.1 Project Location

The proposed project would expand and replace the existing BCAG Transit Facility, located at 326 Huss Lane, within the southwestern boundary of the City of Chico; north of Hegan Lane, west of Huss Lane, south of Comanche Creek, and east of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) (**Figure 1**). The project site is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park and is accessed from Huss Lane via Hegan Lane, an east-west collector roadway that connects to Park Avenue/Midway to the east and Dayton Road to the west. Park Avenue/Midway and Dayton Road are north-south arterial roadways providing access to freeways and other arterials within Chico and to adjacent jurisdictions.

The Hegan Lane Business Park was founded in 1989, consists of 90 acres, and has a buildout capacity of two million square feet of industrial space. The Business Park is approximately 88 percent built out, and includes the existing transit facility. The portion proposed for acquisition and inclusion is part of a 34-acre parcel located within the Park. Additionally, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company (SNBC) owns and has future plans to develop a separate undeveloped 30-acre parcel located to the west and north of the proposed project (Bay Area Economics, 2008).

The proposed project site consists of approximately 10 acres, including the 2.6-acre parcel (APN 039-060-126), which contains the existing transit facility, and 7.4 acres of an adjacent 34-acre parcel (APN 039-060-125). The proposed transit facility site is bordered by Huss Lane to the east and the UPRR to the west. **Figure 1** shows the Regional Location and Roadways and **Figure 2** is an aerial photograph of the Project Site.

The center point of the project site is located at 121 °49' 19" W 39 ° 42' 12"N, and is within Section 1 of Township 21 North and Range 1 East, within the Chico 7.5" USGS quadrangle.

3.2 Background and Purpose

3.2.1 BCAG Overview

BCAG is a Joint Powers Agency (JPA) of Butte County, the cities of Biggs, Chico, Gridley, Oroville, and the Town of Paradise. BCAG is governed by a ten-member Board of Directors, which includes the five County Supervisors and one council representative from each of the five cities/town.

BCAG's primary responsibility is to prepare all state and federal required transportation plans and programming documents necessary for securing state and federal transportation funding for the county and cities. BCAG serves as the lead agency for development of state highway projects within Butte County. BCAG also provides the following functions:

- Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) – BCAG is the state-designated RTPA and is responsible for the preparation of all state required transportation planning and programming documents.
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – BCAG is the federally-designated MPO for Butte County and as such is responsible for the preparation of all federally required plans and programs for transportation.

- Census Affiliate Data Center – BCAG is the Census Affiliate Data Center for Butte County and is responsible for maintaining census data and coordination with the US Census.
- Butte Regional Transit Policy Board – BCAG serves as the day-to-day administrators and Policy Body for Butte Regional Transit, the "B-Line."
- Area Wide Clearinghouse – BCAG is the Area Wide Clearinghouse as designated by the Office of Management and Budget. Under this designation, BCAG is responsible for local review of grants for federal assistance, review of environmental documents from federal agencies for projects within the county, and coordination with state plans.

As noted above, BCAG is responsible for the administration and operation of the region's public transit service, Butte Regional Transit – the "B-Line." Establishment of the B-Line bus operation was the consolidation of the Chico Area Transit System (CATS), Oroville Area Transit System, and Butte County Transit into a single operation housed out of the original CATS facility on Huss Lane. Currently, BCAG contracts with Veolia Transportation Inc. to manage, operate, and maintain the Butte Regional Transit System. The current operation has significantly outgrown the existing facilities.

3.2.2 Project Need and Benefit

The expansion of the existing facility would allow BCAG to accommodate anticipated growth in operations over the next 20 years, through the year 2032. Furthermore, consolidation of BCAG's administration services with B-Line operations and maintenance services on one site would allow for more efficient implementation of BCAG's overall responsibilities and functions.

BCAG Administrative Operations

Currently, BCAG's administration services are headquartered in leased office space in a southeast Chico office, at 2580 Sierra Sunrise Terrace, Chico, CA. While the building meets current administrative needs, this facility is not owned by BCAG, nor does it allow for anticipated growth.

With the proposed expansion of the existing Transit Facility, BCAG's administrative operations' offices will be moved to the Huss Lane location, which will encompass all current and anticipated BCAG operations.

B-Line Transit

The B-Line's transit services are expected to continue growing as the region is built out. The current B-Line Transit Facility was designed to accommodate the following (TLCD Architecture, Maintenance Design Group, 2012):

- 50 full size buses ranging from 23-foot to 45-foot commuter buses (16 buses are stored in Paradise and Oroville)
- 8 support vehicles
- 66 employee and visitor parking spaces

Most of the growth for B-Line is anticipated in the paratransit operation at approximately five percent per year. Additional growth may be realized by starting late night service that extends past 9:30 PM and by adding commuter service to Yuba City and/or Sacramento.

3.3 Existing Setting

3.3.1 Existing Environment

The proposed project is located within the southwestern Chico City limits adjacent to existing commercial and light industrial land uses and the UPRR (**Figure 1**). The project site is surrounded by commercial buildings to the south and east, railroad tracks to the west, and irrigated cropland to the north (**Figure 2**).

The subject parcels are characterized by flat topography void of wetland features. Hydrology on the site consists of localized, overland runoff from precipitation events. Average precipitation in the area totals 25.66 inches per year and the average high temperatures in the area range from 63.0 degrees Fahrenheit (F) in the winter to 87.4 degrees F in summer, annually. The elevation of the site is approximately 191 feet above sea level (NorthStar, 2011).

The project site consists of disturbed annual grassland habitat. Due to past agricultural activities, the site has become dominated by weedy, non-native, herbaceous plant species. No tree or shrub species occur within the subject property except for six mature sycamore trees along Huss Lane.

3.3.2 Land Use and Zoning

The property is located within the City of Chico limits (**Figure 2**). The area immediately surrounding the property to the south is within unincorporated Butte County and has a land use designation of orchard/agricultural. The project is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park, which consists of light manufacturing businesses and the existing transit facility. Consistent with the surrounding properties, the subject parcels are designated Manufacturing and Warehousing and zoned Light Manufacturing/Industrial (ML) (**Figures 3 and 4**). The existing and proposed use is an allowed use within the ML zone and is compatible with surrounding land uses.

3.4 Project Components and Phasing

BCAG is proposing to acquire a portion of the adjacent parcel to the west and expand its existing transit facility and administrative offices. To provide for the expansion of BCAG's facilities, the project includes several components, to be developed in phases, which are described below and detailed in **Table 1**:

- Phase I: Acquire approximately 10 acres of land including the existing BCAG B-Line Transit Facility parcel.
- Phase II: Construction of BCAG administrative offices, transit operations and maintenance facilities sufficient to meet the B-Line's projected growth and of BCAG's administrative functions (based on 2022 projected need), and associated off-site facilities including street and intersection improvements and storm drainage facilities. Phase II also includes demolition of the existing B-Line facility, which will be replaced by visitor and staff parking. Additionally, this phase includes construction of a solar shade canopy over the bus parking areas.
- Phase III: Expansion of the facilities constructed in Phase II to meet full buildout (based on 2032 project need).

This analysis focuses on the proposed project, which is Phase II, and also provides discussion on the full build-out of the project to meeting 2032 project need.

3.4.1 Land Acquisition

The current transit facility is located on approximately 2.6 acres at 326 Huss Lane. In order to develop this project, additional land will be needed to accommodate the various facilities, parking areas, circulation and landscaping required for expansion to meet current and projected needs. Towards this end, BCAG has applied for federal funding through the FTA to acquire approximately 10 acres of land that includes the existing BCAG transit facility parcel of approximately 2.6 acres and 7.4 acres of undeveloped land that is contiguous to the existing transit facility site.

A boundary line modification (BLM) is needed to cure an existing encroachment onto the BCAG transit facility parcel, (**Figure 5**). A BLM requires a separate discretionary action by the City of Chico's Map Advisory Committee (MAC). A 10-acre parcel, consisting of the adjusted BCAG transit facility parcel and 7.4 acres of the adjacent parcel will be created by deed at the close of escrow with the property seller. A parcel map is not required per California Civil Code Section 66428(a)(2).

3.4.2 Existing Transit Facility

The current facility for B-Line operations is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park, which was founded in 1989 and consists of light industrial warehouses and office buildings. The 2.6-acre parcel currently allows for a 50-bus fleet (see **Table 2**) with a total pull-in/pull-out of 48 buses per day (TLCD Architecture, Maintenance Design Group, 2012). The current B-Line Transit Facility houses operations and maintenance and includes a single bay vehicle lift, an outdoor vehicle washing area, and 66 parking spaces for employee and visitor vehicles. The majority of the fleet is stored in the parking area on the western part of the property; 16 buses are stored in Paradise and Oroville (TLCD Architecture, Maintenance Design Group, 2012). See **Figure 6** for the Existing Facility Layout.

3.4.3 Onsite Improvements

The proposed facility will provide administration, operations, and maintenance buildings for the B-Line Transit operations as well as offices for BCAG's administrative operations. **Table 1** provides a summary of the current and proposed facilities, including buildings, parking areas, internal circulation, and setback and landscaping. Appendix A contains the space needs for the future facilities. See **Figure 7** for the Proposed Site Plan.

Table 1
Summary of BCAG's Existing and Proposed Huss Lane facilities and Site Design.

	Current Facility		Proposed Project (2022) (Phase II)	Total at Buildout (2032) (Phase III)	
	Staff	Area (ft ²)	Area (ft ²)	Staff	Area (ft ²)
BCAG Administration	12	4,200	9,328	20	12,786
Operations	91	2,400	12,863	138	13,250
Maintenance	18	0	6,410	28	6,410
Maintenance – Shop Areas	n/a	6,400	20,386	n/a	27,466
Bus Wash/Clean Detail	n/a	0	4,318	n/a	4,318
Fuel Island	n/a	0	4,897	n/a	4,897
Solar Bus Canopy	n/a	0	23,850	n/a	23,850
Sub-Total Building Areas	121	13,000	82,052	186	92,977
Exterior Areas	n/a	0	5,060	n/a	5,060
Bus Parking/Circulation	n/a	56,350	72,936	n/a	73,896
Parking Areas	n/a	17,220	53,046	n/a	57,264
Sub-Total Site Areas	0	73,570	131,042		136,220
Total All Facility Areas	121	86,570	183,017	187	203,990
Circulation/Landscape/ Setback	n/a	10,180	137,262	n/a	152,992
Total Site Requirements	n/a	96,750	320,279	n/a	356,982
Acres		2.2	7.4		8.2

Source: BCAG B-Line Butte Regional Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility Programming Report (September 11, 2012).

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BCAG Administration Building

The Administration Building will receive the most public use, and accordingly is oriented to the visitor's parking lot. The BCAG Administration offices would accommodate the projected staffing increase from a current level of 12 staff to 20 by 2032. A portion of the increase in staffing will be from the BCAG's relatively new role in administering Butte County's Regional Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP). With this new role, BCAG anticipates an additional four staff members by 2017 and five vehicles by 2032.

In Phase II, the proposed Administration Building will be 9,328 square feet and is designed to include office areas, conference rooms, reception area, and various support areas such as storage, security room, copy room, computer room, restrooms, and storage areas. Phase III will include expansion of the building to 12,786 square feet (**Table 1**). Refer to Appendix B for a complete list of support areas.

B-Line Operations Building

The B-Line Operations Building will be designed to accommodate a staff of 138 by the year 2032, an increase of 45 persons from 2012. It will separate the site's public and private zones, and has distinct entrances from both. It receives a limited number of visits from the public and vendors, and accordingly is oriented to the staff parking lot.

The primary function of the Operations Building is related directly to the bus yard. Phase II of the project includes a 12,863 square foot building, which would include offices and areas consisting of storage rooms, break room, conference room and printing stations, and workstations. In addition to office areas, the building would include dispatch areas, training areas, drivers support areas, and building support areas such as a janitor room, computer room, and mechanical equipment room. Phase III includes an increase to this building of approximately 387 square feet (for a total of 13,250 square feet).

B-Line Maintenance Facilities

The B-Line Maintenance Buildings will be designed to accommodate 28 personnel. In Phase II, the 35,000 square feet of buildings will include office and support areas, six repair bays, a chassis wash bay, shop areas, support areas, a parts room, and building support areas, such as janitor room, computer room, and mechanical equipment room. Phase III includes the opportunity to add four repair bays with an increase of 7,080 square feet and a total buildout of 42,000 square feet.

Maintenance Facilities includes a vehicle fueling area, bus wash, and areas for storage of recycle and trash bins, as well as an area for an emergency generator to power the entire facility during a power outage. The bus yard is removed as far as possible from the adjacent public streets and will be screened from public view by buildings and fencing. The fueling area will include underground fuel tanks, a compressed natural gas (CNG) fuel system, and an overhead canopy for two fuel lanes. The bus wash will be an automated drive-through bus wash with water reclamation system.

Parking Facilities

Parking facilities in support of B-Line operations and maintenance will include uncovered bus parking for 64 buses of varied length and 20 non-revenue parking spots for transit facility support vehicles (there will be no change to these areas between Phase II and Phase III, see **Table 2**). As part of Phase II, BCAG plans to include a solar canopy structure over the bus parking area, which

would provide shade over the parked buses in addition to generating energy to offset energy consumption associated with operations. Additionally, the facility will include 162 parking spaces to accommodate employee and visitor parking needs in Phase II; increased to 175 in Phase III (TLCD Architecture, Maintenance Design Group, 2012). **Table 2** provides a breakdown of parking provided onsite by phase. Bicycle parking is also provided at several key public and employee building entrances.

Table 2
Summary of Existing and Proposed Parking at the BCAG Transit Facility.

Parking areas	Current	Proposed Project (2022) (Phase II)	Future Buildout (2032) (Phase III)
Bus Parking¹			
45 ft. Commuter Buses (Diesel)	0	3	5
40 ft. Buses (CNG)	15	18	18
40 ft. Buses (Diesel)	2	5	5
35 ft. Buses (Diesel)	15	15	15
30 ft. Buses (CNG)	6	6	6
Paratransit Buses – 23 ft. (CNG)	5	5	0 ²
Paratransit Buses – 23 ft. (UNL)	7	12	15
Subtotal	50	64	64
Transit Facility Support Parking			
Non-revenue Vehicles	8	11	11
BCAG Support Vehicles	0	3	3
Down/Ready Bus Parking	0	6	6
Subtotal	8	20	20
Employee/Visitor Parking			
BCAG Employee Parking	0	15	21
Operations Employee Parking	66	60	86
Maintenance Employee Parking		9	13
Visitor Parking		50	50
Handicapped Parking		5	5
Subtotal	66	162	175

¹ An additional 16 buses are parked in Paradise and Oroville.

² The CNG Paratransit Buses are planned for removal from the fleet.

Source: BCAG B-Line Butte Regional Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility Programming Report. September 11, 2012.

Onsite Circulation

Vehicle circulation has been designed to allow visitor and employee parking along separate streets, with 120 employee parking spaces (at buildout) on the Aztec Drive extension side and 55 visitor parking spaces on the Huss Lane side. Buses will enter and exit from opposite corners of the site, minimizing on-site maneuvering. The Maintenance Building and fueling and wash bays are strategically located to allow sequential fueling, fare retrieval, and vehicle washing before parking their vehicle. Public and employee parking lots each have street access independent of the bus yard and each other, and consist of two driveways each on Huss Lane and Aztec Drive.

Landscaping

Landscaping on the site can be divided into three themes: an agricultural theme in the parking lots and along the north and east sides of the site; a wetland theme at the bioswales along the perimeter of the site; and a native plant theme along the south and west perimeter.

Landscaping has been designed to reflect the agricultural character of the region, which within the project vicinity consists primarily of walnut and almond orchards to the west and south of Huss Lane. The project is designed around a grid of trees at the Huss Lane and Aztec Drive extension frontages, which is intended to extend the “orchard feel” into the development and provide abundant shade over the parking areas. Additionally, a majority of the existing sycamores along Huss Lane will be retained.

City of Chico landscaping requirements in the ML zoning district include 50 percent tree shading of parking areas by tree age 15, a 10-foot wide landscaped strip between parking areas and right-of-ways, irrigation, and a minimum of five percent of total interior parking areas shall be landscaped (Chico Land Use and Development Regulations, 2011; Section 19.70). The project includes the planting of 91 trees in a grid pattern throughout the visitor and employee parking areas, and along both street frontages, which will provide approximately 52 percent tree shading of parking areas. Landscaping plantings include valley oak (*quercus lobata*), blue oak (*quercus douglasii*), Dawyck beech (*pagus sylvatica 'fastigiata'*), western redbud (*cercis occidentalis*), California ash (*fraxinus dipetala*), October glory (*acer rubrum 'october glory'*), deer grass (*muhlenbergia rigens*), and California fuschia (*zauschneria californica*).

The visitor and staff parking lots both include planter strips around the perimeters and through the middle of the lots, with small strips separating parking spaces such that no more than four spaces are contiguous. The lots are separated from each roadway by a landscaped setback approximately 35-feet in width, within which the sidewalk is located. The proposed project includes a no-curb design for the staff and visitor parking lots, which are bordered by bioswales. The design is intended to allow stormwater runoff to enter the bioswales for maximum onsite infiltration; overflow would be directed to the storm drain system. Sidewalks would be constructed within the landscaped setbacks along the Aztec Drive and Huss Lane frontages, inset from the roadways. Curbs and gutters would be constructed along the roadways.

Bioswales will be developed around the perimeter of the project site. While runoff from the maintenance area will be drained to the City’s wastewater system to capture potentially polluted runoff, other runoff will be drained to the perimeter bioswales for natural filtering and onsite infiltration. Plantings along this perimeter (**Figure 7**) will screen the project and consist primarily of native species. The site will also contain approximately 2.2 acres of planted areas within the development, including the 20-foot wide strip of constructed bioswales along the south and west sides of the property. Landscaping and bioswales will make up approximately 26 percent of the site.

Other landscape features included in the design are intended to be social spaces (**Figure 7**). The entry patio denotes arrival to the adjacent Administration and Operations Building entrances. Patios, public and private, are located at other key locations as well, with larger patios subdivided into smaller areas to accommodate multiple activities.

3.4.4 Offsite Improvements

Street Improvements

The project will also include the extension of Aztec Drive, **Figure 8**, along the northern boundary of the site to meet project need, as well as anticipated growth on adjacent properties to the north and south. Currently, Aztec Drive ends at the junction with the northern terminus of Huss Lane. With the project, Aztec Drive would be extended westward approximately 750 feet from its existing stub-out. Construction of the extension would include extending all utilities and services to adjacent lands to the north. Design includes a 40-foot wide roadway, curb and gutters on both sides, concrete driveways, a separated sidewalk on the south side of the road extension, extension of all utilities and services, installation of City standard street lights, and construction of an asphalt concrete turn around at the end of the road extension.

Some improvements to Huss Lane will also be required along the project frontage. Improvements would consist of installation of three concrete driveways and a separated sidewalk along the project frontage, curbs and gutters, installation of a sewer lateral, and construction of a City standard pedestrian ramp and truncated domes at the intersection of Huss Lane with Aztec Drive.

Storm Drainage

The development of the BCAG facilities will require installation of a new regional storm drainage infrastructure and outfall into Comanche Creek. The storm drain system will be necessary to drain excess onsite surface storm water and will be sized to accommodate adjacent parcels along the Aztec Drive extension. The storm drainage infrastructure will be installed running westward along the north side of the proposed Aztec Road extension. At the existing railroad spur on the adjacent property to the north (owned by Sierra Nevada Brewery), the storm pipe will be jacked and bored under the railroad spur to lie between the spur and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. In this location, the storm drain will run parallel with the tracks in a northward direction, terminating in an outfall on the south bank of Comanche Creek. The route for the storm drainage extension is depicted in **Figure 9**. **Table 3** provides Storm Drain construction details.

**Table 3
Storm Drain Extension Details.**

Location	Length (feet)	Diameter (inches)	Description
BCAG facility to the end of the Aztec Drive Extension	350	36	SD pipe across open field
End of Aztec Drive to Spur Crossing	295	48	SD pipe across open field
At Spur Crossing	50	48	Jack and bore SD pipe in 60 inch diameter steel casing
Spur Crossing to UPRR R/W	90	48	SD pipe across open field
Railroad	1,120	54	SD pipe along railroad in constrained R/W.
Comanche Creek	n/a	54	SD outfall with flap gate

Source: NorthStar Engineering, 2012.

3.4.5 Existing Facility Demolition

Once the new facilities have been constructed, operations and maintenance facilities associated with the B-Line will be moved into the new facilities and complete demolition of existing structures and other associated uses on the 2.6-acre parcel will commence. The space currently occupied by the old facility will be converted to visitor parking (discussed above in Section 3.4.3).

The following structures and associated uses will be demolished/removed:

- Approximately 2,400 square feet of office, dispatch, training and driver's support areas
- Approximately 6,400 square feet of bus repair bays, other bays, repair shops, support areas, and parts room
- Approximately 56,350 square feet of parking and support vehicle parking areas
- Approximately 17,220 square feet of employee and visitor parking areas

3.4.6 Project Operations

The BCAG Administration's office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Current B-Line operations run seven days a week, with varying hours generally between 5:00 AM to 9:00 PM. However, additional service expansion may include a late night service that extends past 9:30 PM and the addition of a commuter service to Yuba City and/or Sacramento. Maintenance operates in three shifts from 3:30 AM to 12:00 AM.

B-Line's existing fleet consists of 50 buses (plus an additional 16 buses stored in Paradise and Oroville) and a current maximum of 48 pull-in/pull-out per day. The estimated future fleet would consist of 64 buses and 70 pull-in/pull-out per day.

3.4.7 Project Construction

Construction Methodology

Transit Facility

Construction of the transit facility will be by typical industry methods. The site will be cleared and graded, which will be performed primarily with graders and dozers. Utilities and drainage infrastructure will be installed by trenching with trenchers and backhoes. Once the new facilities are constructed and moved into, the existing B-Line facility will be demolished and the site paved and landscaped for employee and visitor parking.

Storm Drain Infrastructure and Outfall

Installation of the storm drain pipeline from the BCAG facility northwards to the rail spur will consist of trenching and cast-in-place concrete SD pipe across an open field. At the rail spur, HDPE pipe will be jack and bored under the spur. From the spur, the pipeline will be trenching and cast-in-place concrete SD pipe to and within the east side of the UPRR right-of-way (R/W), running parallel to the tracks to Comanche Creek. At the Creek, a concrete outfall will be placed in the south bank. For work within the bank, the Creek will be dewatered by installation of a cofferdam.

Schedule and Budget

Phase I is the acquisition of a portion of an adjacent parcel to accommodate the proposed transit facility. Federal funds will be necessary for the land acquisition, for which application is currently in process.

Phase II of the project consists of construction of new and expanded administration, operations and maintenance facilities to meet projected 2022 needs (see **Table 1**). This phase also includes construction of offsite improvements including extension of Aztec Drive and installation of the storm drain line and outfall. Demolition of the current facility will occur within this phase as well.

Phase III is the ultimate buildout of the project, which is intended to meet projected 2032 needs. Included in this phase is a slight expansion of the facilities constructed in Phase II, as noted in **Table 1** above.

Table 4
Phasing Budget and Schedule

Phase	Estimated Budget	Schedule
Phase I	\$1.5 million	2013
Phase II	\$28 million	End of 2014–Spring 2015
Phase III	\$ To Be Determined	2032 (projected)

3.5 Project Action and Approvals

The proposed project will require a number of permits and approvals, including but not limited to the following local, state, and federal actions:

3.5.1 City of Chico

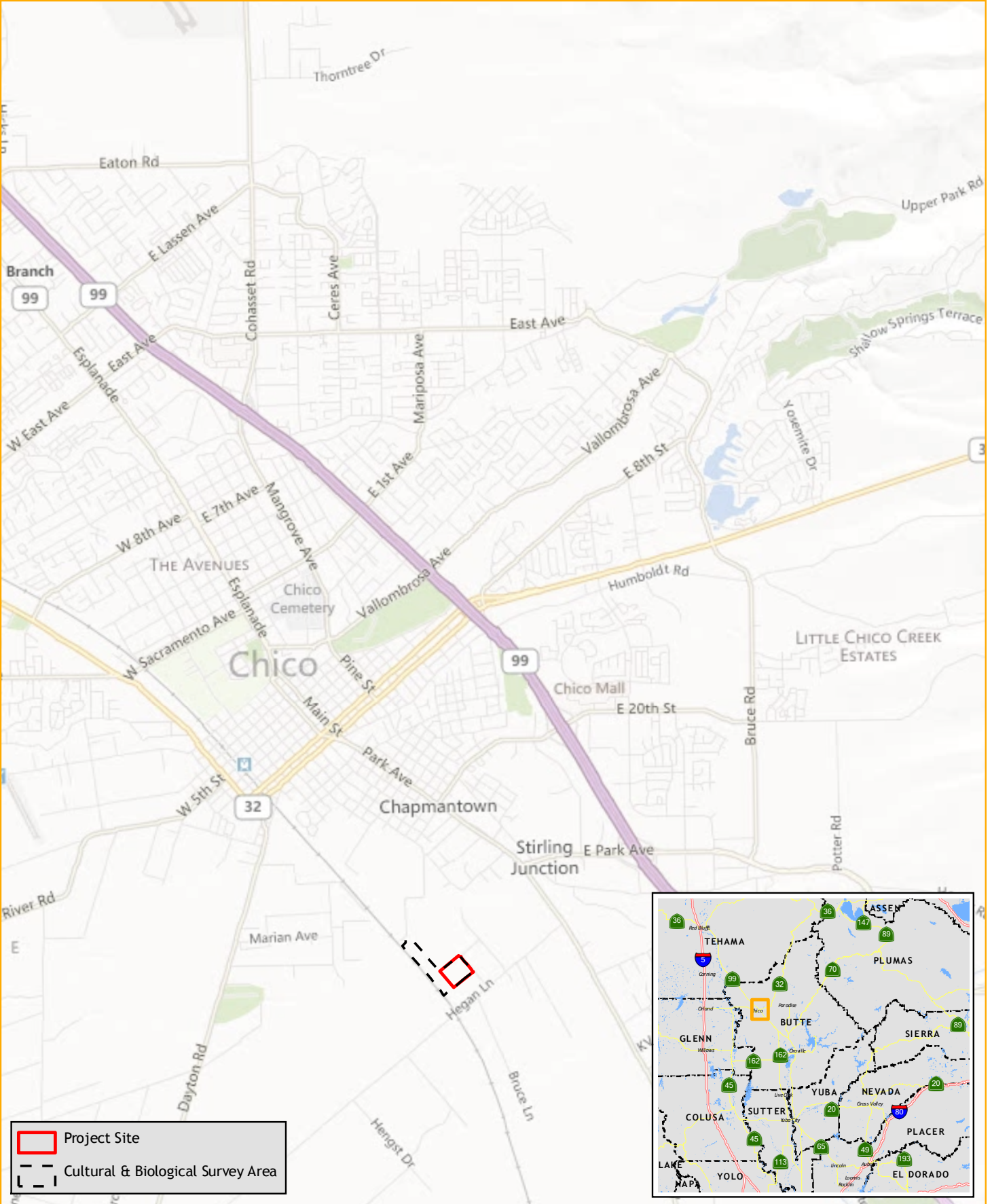
- Boundary Line Modification, Map Advisory Committee
- Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board Review
- Building and Grading Permits
- Public Works Sewer and Water Permits



3.5.2 State Agencies


- State Water Resources Control Board – NPDES General Construction Permit
- Regional Water Quality Control Board – Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification (*Storm Drain Outfall*)
- California Department of Fish and Game – Fish and Game Code Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement (*Storm Drain Outfall*)

3.5.3 Federal Agencies

- Federal Transit Administration – NEPA clearance for federally funded project
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service – Informal Consultation associated with NWP (*Storm Drain Outfall*)
- Army Corps of Engineers – Clean Water Act Section 401 and 404 Nationwide Permits (NWP)



 Project Site
 Cultural & Biological Survey Area

 Within Section 1 of T21N, R1E Butte County, CA.
 Chico USGS 7.5' Quad.
 Map Date: 10/17/2011

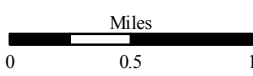
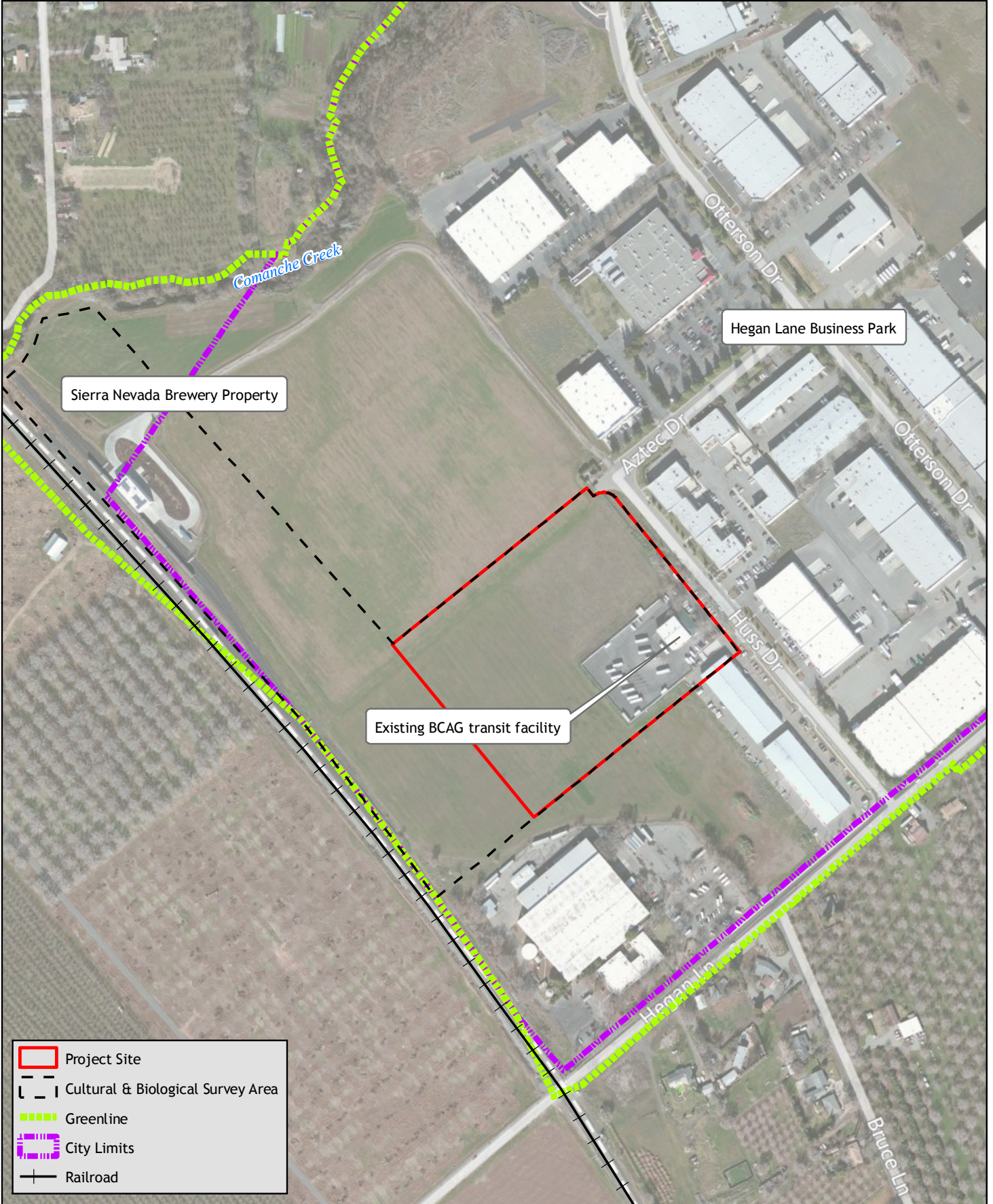


Figure 1



Boundary provided by Butte County
Aerial: Microsoft
Map Date: 10/16/2011



NorthStar
ENVIRONMENTAL
Formerly Gallaway Consulting

Figure 2

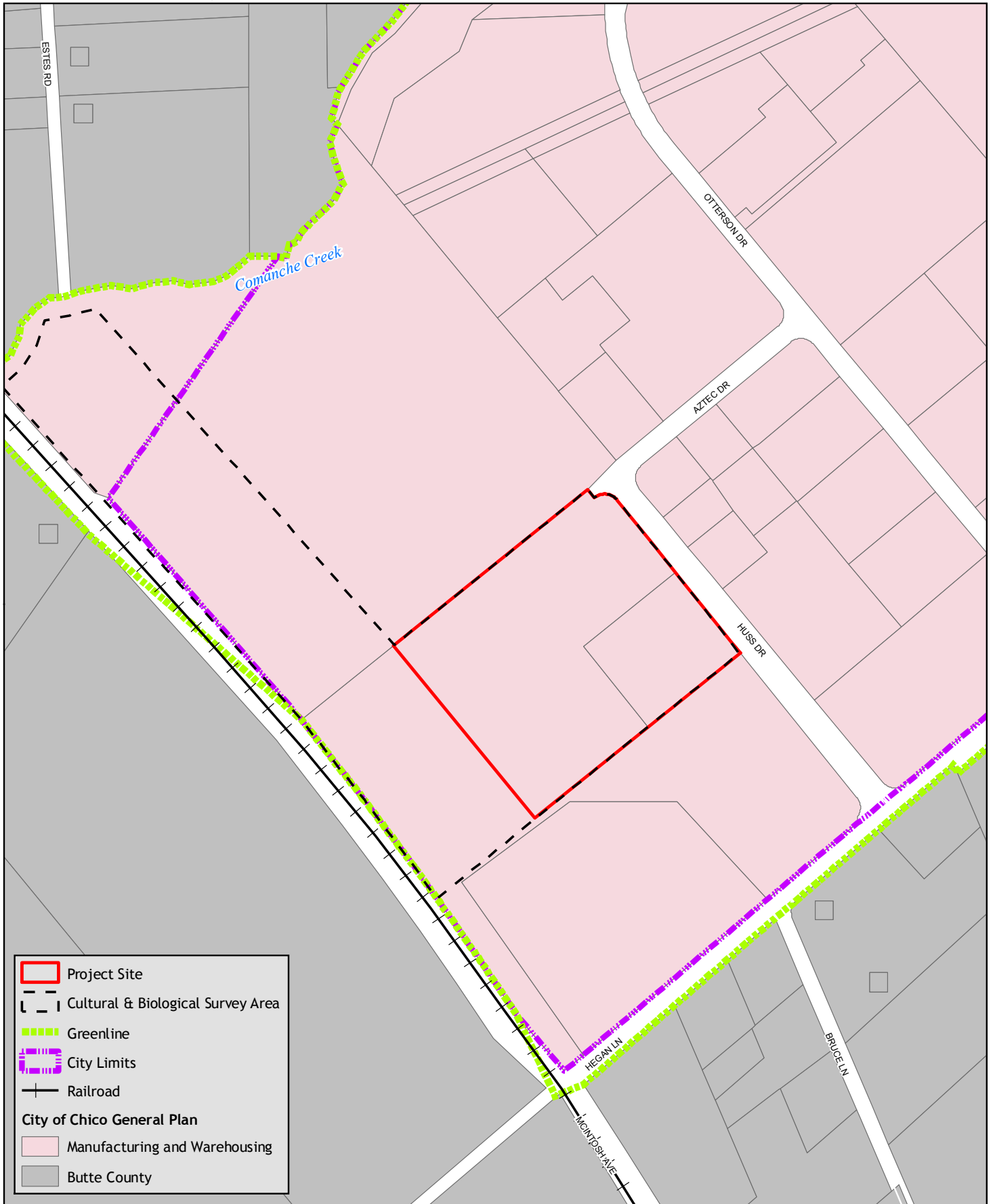
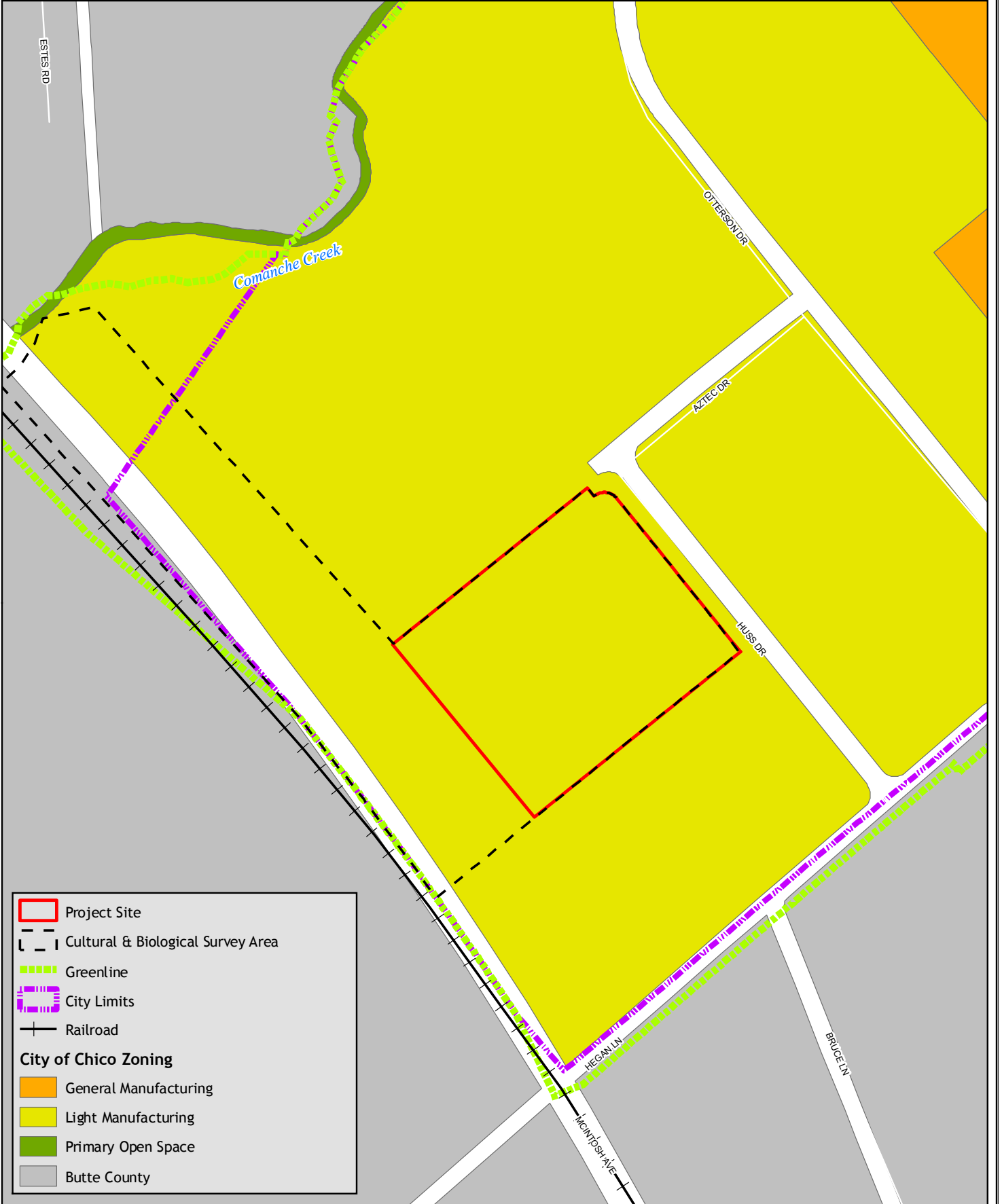


Figure 3



Zoning provided by City of Chico
 Boundary provided by Butte County
 Aerial: Microsoft
 Map Date: 10/16/2012



Figure 4

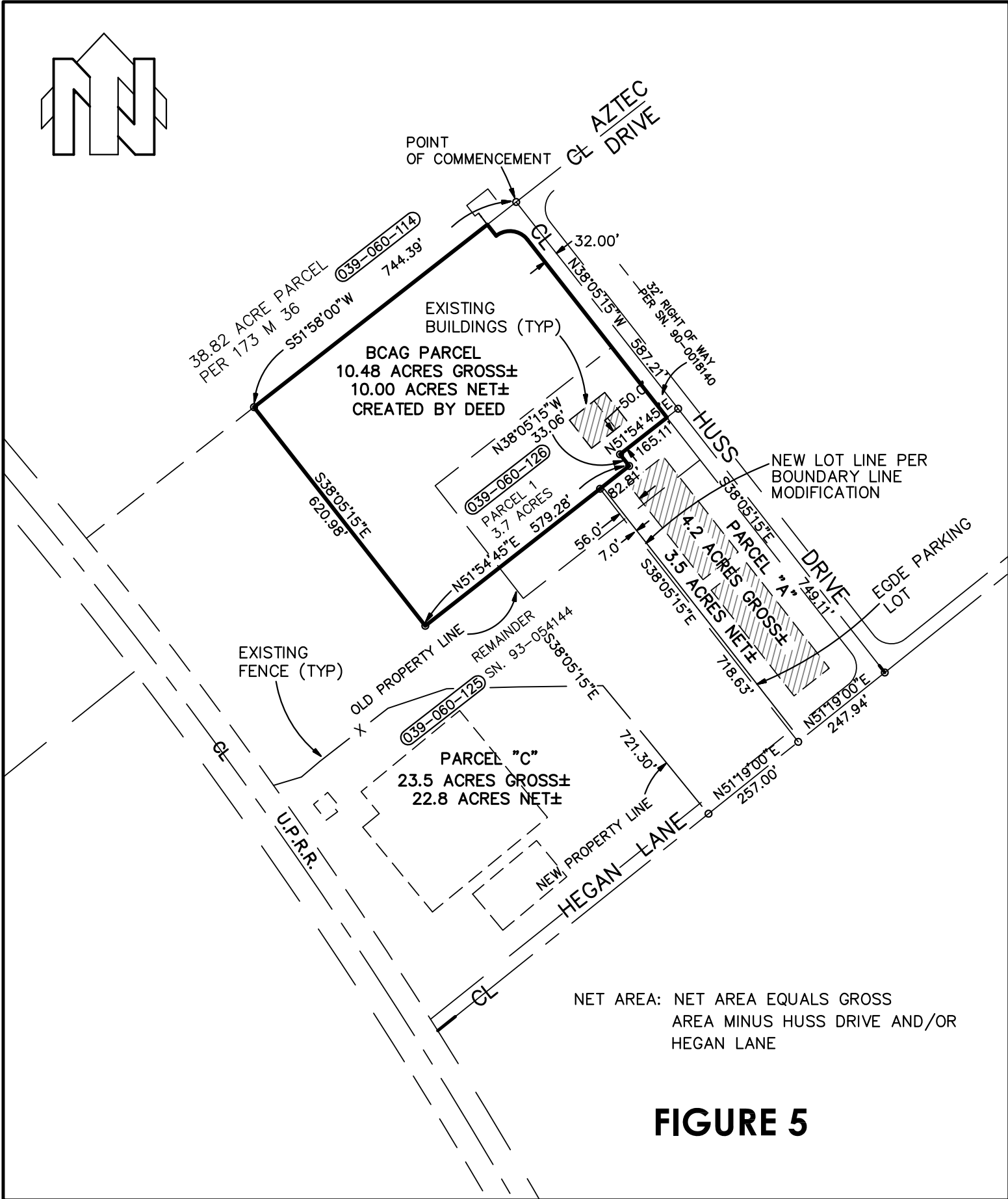
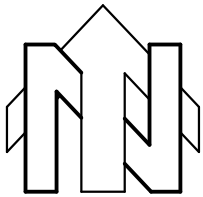


FIGURE 5

NorthStar ENGINEERING

111 Mission Ranch BLVD, STE 100
Chico, California 95926
Phone: (530) 893-1600 Fax: (530) 893-2113
www.northstareng.com

PREPARED FOR:

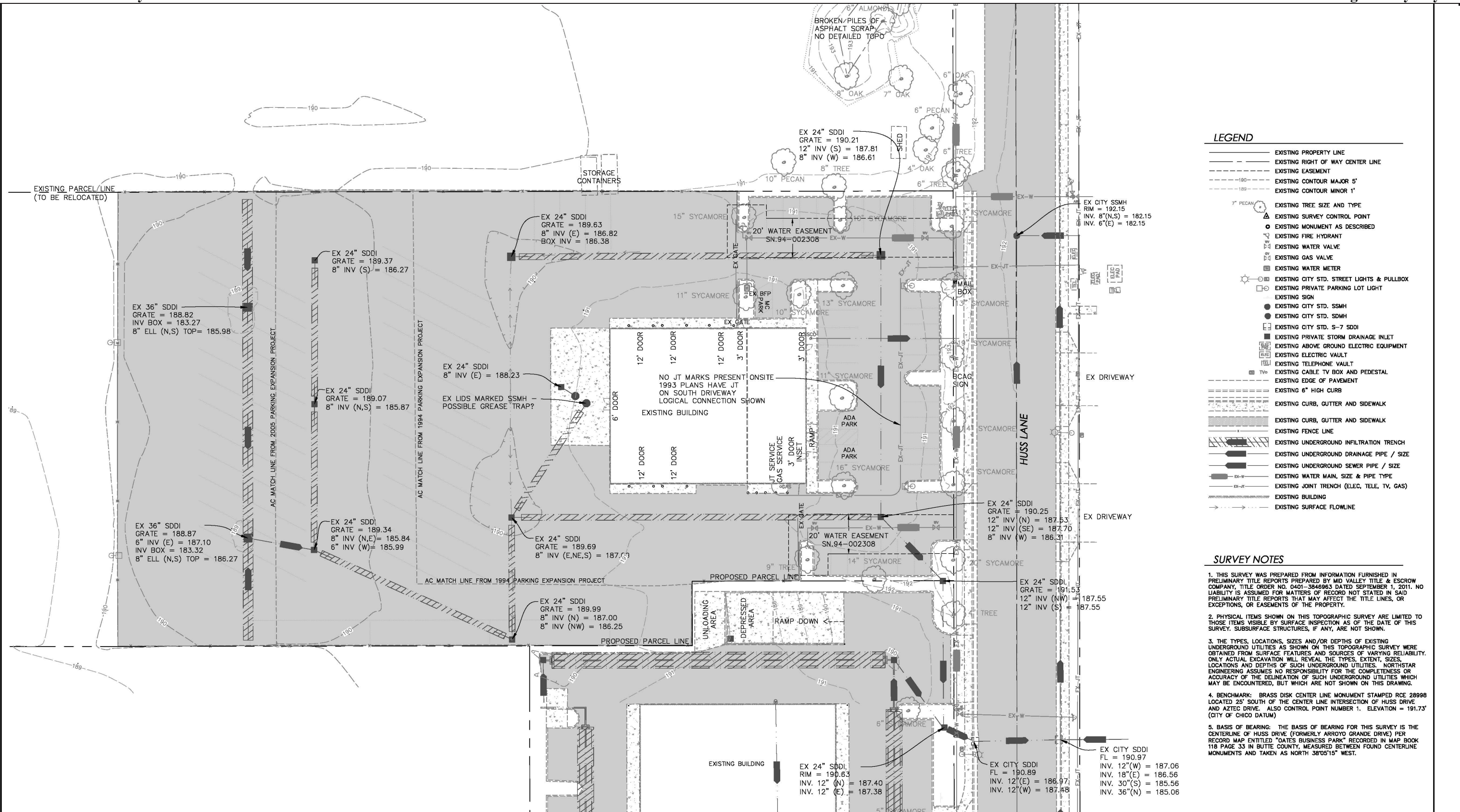
BUTTE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (BCAG)

JOB TITLE: **EXHIBIT D**

PLAT TO ACCOMPANY LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR MLD

HEGAN LANE PARTNERSHIP

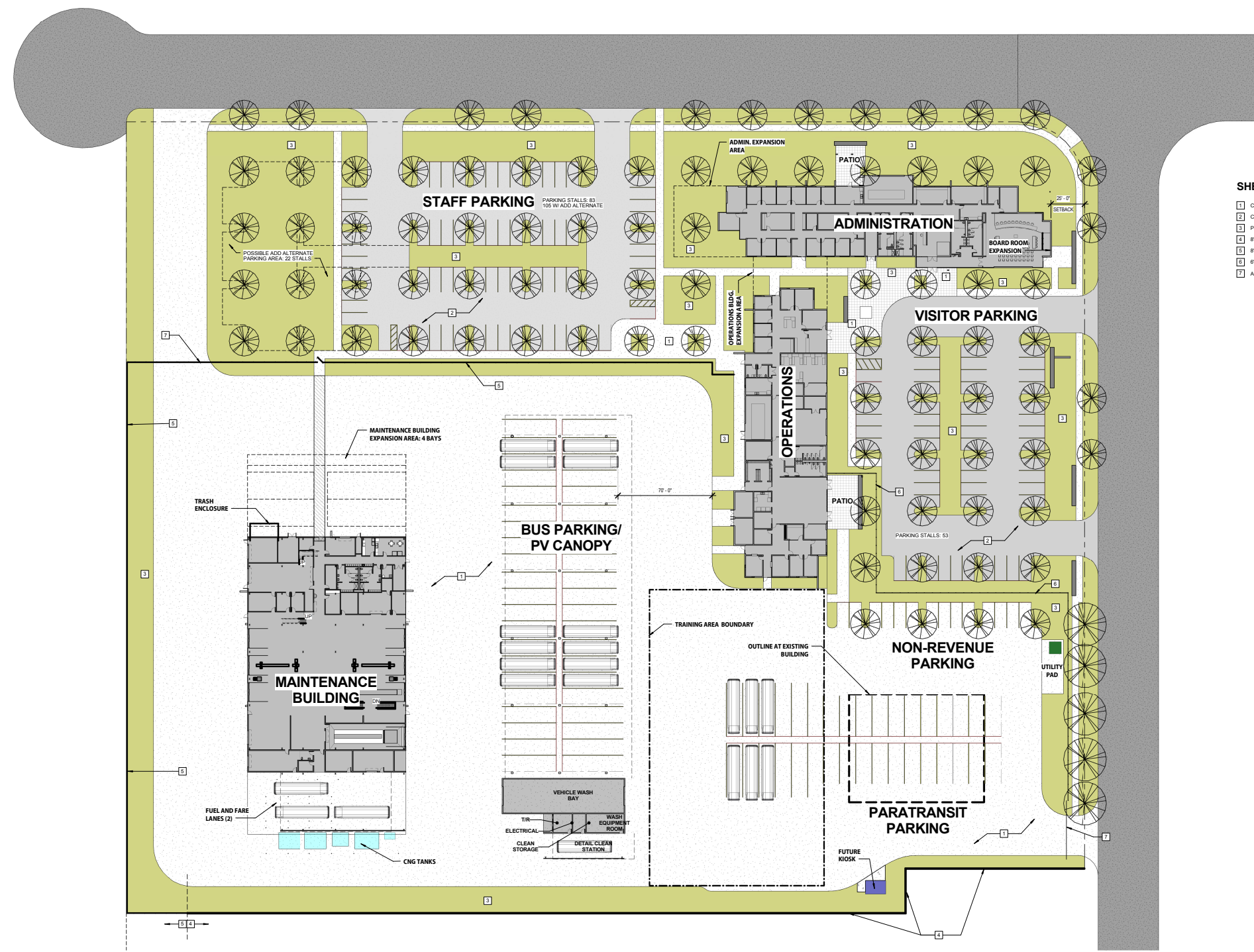
SHEET NO.:	2 OF 2
SCALE:	1" = 300'
JOB NO.:	11-231
DATE:	10-31-2011
DRAWN BY:	MH
CHECKED BY:	MLM



Existing layout provided by NorthStar Engineering
Map date: 10/16/12



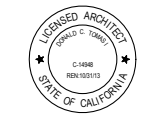
Figure 6



- SHEET NOTES**
- 1 CONCRETE PAVING TYP. U.O.N.
 - 2 CONCRETE PERVIOUS PAVING
 - 3 PLANTED AREA / BIOSWALE, S.L.D.
 - 4 8" C.M.U. FENCE
 - 5 8" NO-CLIMB STEEL PICKET FENCE
 - 6 6" OKO SKIN CLAD O/ STEEL FRAMING FENCE
 - 7 AUTOMATED ROLLING GATE

1 SITE PLAN
1" = 30' 0"

TLCD ARCHITECTURE
 111 SANTA ROSA AVENUE, #300
 SANTA ROSA, CA 95404
 TEL 707.525.5600
 FAX 707.525.5616
 WWW.TLCD.COM



SCHEMATIC
RE-DESIGN



B-Line
Butte Regional Transit

Butte Regional Transit Operations Center
 326 HUSS DRIVE,
 CHICO, CA 95928

BUTTE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

PROJECT NUMBER: 11054
 DATE: 12/20/12
 DRAWN BY: CDS
 CHECKED BY: -
 REVISIONS: -



Figure 7

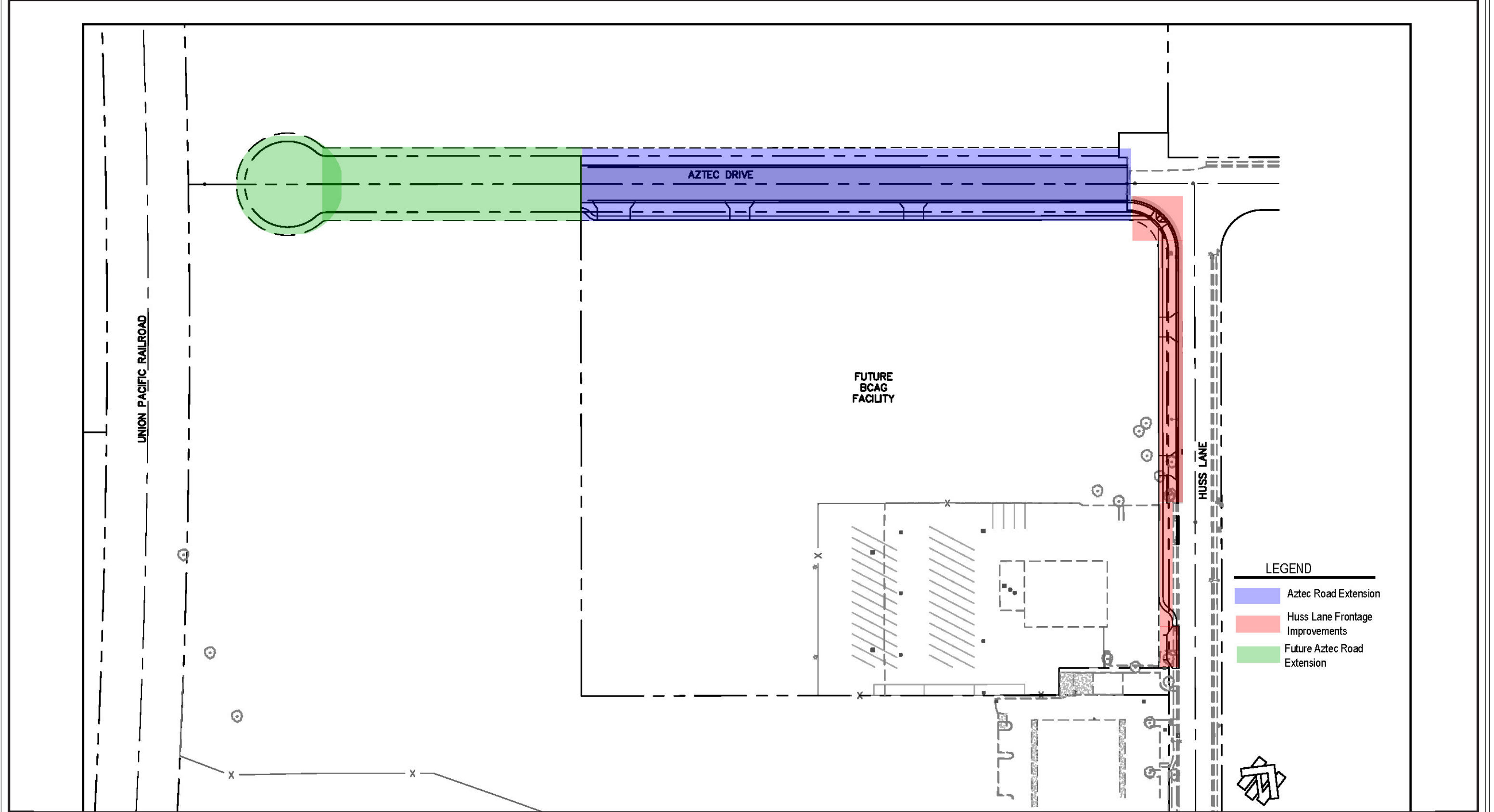
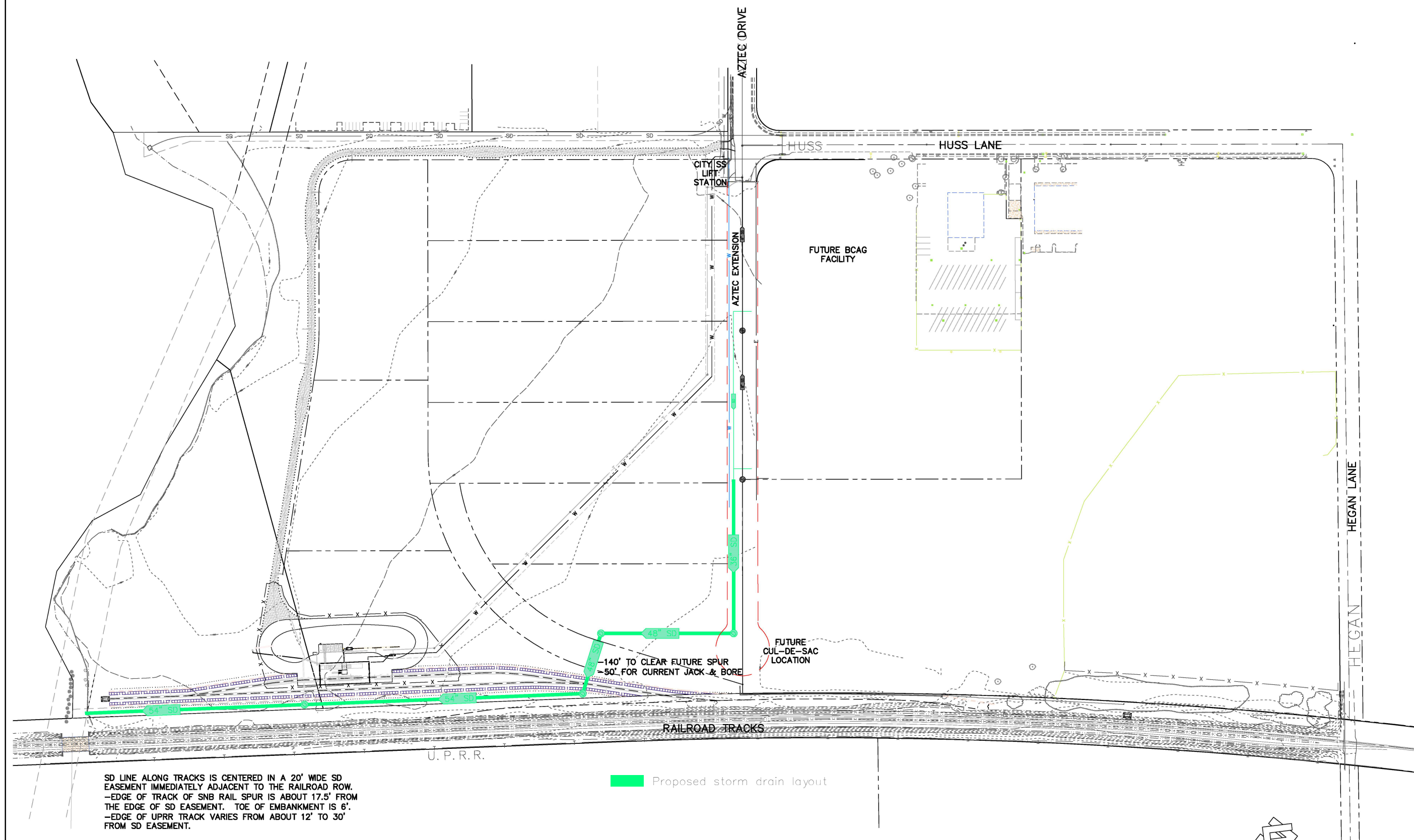


Figure 8



SD LINE ALONG TRACKS IS CENTERED IN A 20' WIDE SD EASEMENT IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE RAILROAD ROW.
 -EDGE OF TRACK OF SNB RAIL SPUR IS ABOUT 17.5' FROM THE EDGE OF SD EASEMENT. TOE OF EMBANKMENT IS 6'.
 -EDGE OF UPRR TRACK VARIES FROM ABOUT 12' TO 30' FROM SD EASEMENT.

Proposed storm drain layout



Storm drain layout provided by NorthStar Engineering
 Map date: 10/16/12



Figure 9

4.0 Environmental Checklist

4.1 Aesthetics

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, including scenic roadways as defined in the General Plan, or a Federal Wild and Scenic River (Big Chico Creek)?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) Affect lands preserved under a scenic easement or contract?				X
d) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings including the scenic quality of the foothills as discussed in the City of Chico General Plan?			X	
e) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

Setting

The project is located in the western portion of Butte County, which is within the northeastern Sacramento River Valley. This valley area, which constitutes about 45 percent of the total county area, consists of the Sacramento River Valley floor and associated alluvial fans. The flat topography of the site lies at an elevation of approximately 190 feet above mean sea level (msl). The level topography contributes to an open and uniform visual character, with fields, orchards and a strip of riparian vegetation along Comanche Creek to the north providing the most dominant natural landscape features (NorthStar Environmental, 2011).

The project is set in the southern portion of the City of Chico in a developing office and industrial park setting known as the Hegan Lane Business Park, and adjacent to an agricultural field. Views of the coast range are visible across the valley to the west, as well as views of the Sierra Nevada foothills to the east. Office and industrial development surrounds the project site to the south and east. Additionally, a UPRR line runs along the western edge of the property. SNBC owns the property to the north, which consists of an agricultural field containing a warehouse and railroad spur. Beyond that development, to the north of Comanche Creek, are orchards and agricultural crops.

Discussion

a-c) No Impact: The project is located in an existing industrially developed area and is zoned for industrial uses. There are no designated scenic vistas or scenic highways within the project area,

nor is there a federal wild and scenic river or a scenic easement or contract on the properties. Design of the project is consistent with surrounding industrial buildings and incorporates landscaping elements intended to tie in with the orchard landscape to the west and north. The project is not located within an area designated with scenic vistas; therefore, there will be no impact.

d-e) Less than significant: The project includes the conversion of approximately 7.4 acres of an agricultural field to develop the transit facility. Additionally, the project will result in demolition and repaving of the existing B-Line facility site (on approximately 2.6 acres) to accommodate the new facility layout including proposed buildings, circulation and parking facilities. The current facility, which is over capacity, consists of an approximately 13,000 square foot building and 73,570 square feet of paved parking and circulation areas.

The project is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park. Consequently, project design has incorporated elements of the regional agricultural landscape while maintaining consistency with the industrial development of the area. Additionally, the sidewalks have been located inward, away from the street, thereby increasing the width of the planting strip and allowing for the incorporation of bioswales.

Along the perimeter of the bus yard, bioswales will filter stormwater runoff that is not otherwise captured and drained to the City's wastewater treatment system. Plantings along this 20-foot perimeter area will screen the project and consist of native species. Additionally, design of the staff and visitor parking areas excludes perimeter curbs with the intent that stormwater runoff can flow directly to vegetated bioswales for maximum infiltration. Curbs will be included in the roadway frontage improvements along Huss Lane and the Aztec Drive extension.

City of Chico's Design Guidelines

Projects within the City of Chico are subject to review and approval by the City's Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board (ARHPB), who are tasked with ensuring that projects are consistent with the intent of the City's design guidelines. The design guidelines include varied criteria specific to residential, commercial and industrial development. The proposed project is industrial in nature and is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park; therefore, the project is subject to the design criteria for industrial development.

Goals for industrial development within the guidelines include objectives for the following project elements:

Site Design

- building placement and orientation
- circulation and parking
- public spaces and bicycle/pedestrian amenities
- landscaping, screening and buffering

Architecture

- massing, scale and form
- design concept, style and details

Building Placement and Orientation

The intent of this element of the guidelines is to promote a building placement and orientation such that it recognizes functional needs while screening unaesthetic uses or views (Chico, Design Guidelines Manual, 2009). The project site occupies a corner space, with frontages on Huss Lane and the proposed extension of Aztec Drive. Development of the site will be oriented primarily to the east, which fronts on Huss Lane. Design of the project places the operations and administration building near the corner of the intersection of Huss Lane and Aztec Drive, surrounded by landscaping and visitor and staff parking (Design Guideline [DG] 6.1.11, 6.1.12, 6.1.13). The public entrance is located on the Huss Lane frontage, with visitor parking and landscaping between the building and the street frontage. The bus maintenance building, parking, and support structures are located interior of the operations and administration building so as to be shielded from public views as much as possible (DG 6.1.14, 6.1.15, 6.1.16).

Circulation and Vehicle Parking

The design objective for circulation and parking is to promote efficient circulation of vehicle movements and convenient parking for employees and customers. The project design provides three driveways each on Huss Lane and Aztec Drive. Driveways for bus ingress/egress are located on each roadway with circulation design intending entrance and exit on separate roadways (DG 6.1.25). The staff parking lot is located on the north side of the development, with two ingress/egress driveways onto the Aztec Drive extension (DG 6.1.21). Similarly, the visitor parking lot is located on the east side of the project, with two ingress/egress driveways onto Huss Lane. As previously mentioned, bus maintenance facilities and parking are located interior of the project. Because the maintenance building is located interior of the project, views of the service bays, which are oriented on the east and west sides of the building, will be mostly screened from public view by street frontage development and landscaping (**Figure 7** - Site Plan) (DG 6.1.22, 6.1.23). Furthermore, to provide for safe and convenient public access, sidewalks will be constructed along both street frontages, providing continuous pedestrian access to adjacent development to the south (DG 6.1.27, 6.1.28).

Staff and visitor parking lots will be located convenient to entrances of the operations and administration building. Staff parking is located to the side of the administration building along the north side of the development (DG 6.1.29). Visitor parking is located on the east side of the project, oriented to Huss Lane. To screen parked vehicles from public view, mid-height landscaping will be planted between the parking lots and roadways (DG 6.1.30).

Public Spaces and Bicycle/Pedestrian Amenities

The objective of this design goal is to create appropriately scaled and visually appealing areas for employee or customer gathering, shelter, or rest (Chico, Design Guidelines Manual, 2009). Consistent with DG 6.1.3 and 6.1.32, outside public areas have been included in the site design. The design includes four defined patio areas within the landscaped area, three of which are along the street frontages. Two of the patios will include BBQ grills and seating (DG 6.1.32). Additionally, bicycle parking will be provided at visitor and staff entrances (DG 6.1.33–6.1.35)

Landscape, Screening and Buffering

Guidelines for landscaping, screening and buffering are intended to create attractive and functional landscape designs, which enhance architecture and buffer or screen unaesthetic views (Chico,

Design Guidelines Manual, 2009). Consistent with DG 6.1.41, the project includes the retention of five of the six mature sycamore trees located in front of the existing transit facility along Huss Lane. Landscaping has been designed to reflect the agricultural character of the region, which within the project vicinity consists primarily of walnut and almond orchards to the west and south. The project is designed around a grid of 91 trees at the Huss Lane and Aztec Drive extension frontages, which is intended to extend the “orchard feel” into the development and provide abundant shade over the parking areas (DG 6.1.42, 6.1.43).

Utility equipment is located interior to the project wherever possible (DG 6.1.47). An existing utility pad is located behind the mature sycamore trees along Huss Lane and will remain in place in the proposed design. Views of the utility pad from Huss Lane will be partially obscured by landscaping.

Massing, Scale and Form

As one-story structures, the massing and scale of the Operations and Administration buildings will be consistent with the existing context. Both buildings will relate to each other architecturally and will have gently sloping roof forms that will also fit into the existing architecture established within the business park. Because of its size, the maintenance building is intentionally placed to the back of the site to minimize views from the frontage street. It will be a one-story building with a mezzanine and will have a parapet roof. It will emphasize horizontal lines to accentuate a low profile appearance.

Design Concept, Style and Details

This design objective is to add architectural interest through façade details and rooflines (Chico, Design Guidelines Manual, 2009). The architecture draws its inspiration from agricultural and industrial structures from the Chico and greater Butte County areas. Materials will be selected to reinforce this agrarian connection and provide durability and longevity.

Consistent with the design guidelines, the project design includes low-profile LED light fixtures that will be unobtrusive and focus light downward (DG 6.2.23, 6.2.24).

The project is substantially consistent with the City’s Design Guidelines, and has been designed such that it will not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the site or surroundings; therefore, the impact will be less than significant.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.2 Air Quality

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

Setting

The City of Chico’s annual average temperature is 61 degrees Fahrenheit (F), with summer highs usually in the 90s and winter lows usually in the 30s. Rainfall in Chico averages about 26 inches per year, with about 55 percent of rainfall occurring in the winter and 2 percent during the summer. Prevailing winds are moderate in strength and vary from dry land flows from the north to moist ocean breezes from the south.

Butte County is located in the Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin (NSVAB), which includes the counties of Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Shasta, Sutter, Tehama, and Yuba. The NSVAB is bounded on the north by the Cascade Range, on the south by the Greater Sacramento Air Region and San Joaquin Valley Air Basin, on the east by the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and on the west by the Coast Range (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.6 Air Quality). Relative to state and federal ambient air quality standards, Butte County’s 2009 attainment status has been classified by the BCAQMD as follows (Table 5):

**Table 5
Butte County Attainment Status**

Pollutant	State	Federal
NO _x	Attainment	Attainment
SO ₂	Attainment	Attainment
CO	Attainment	Attainment
1-hour Ozone	<i>Non-Attainment</i>	--
8-hour Ozone	<i>Non-Attainment</i>	<i>Non-Attainment</i>
PM ₁₀	<i>Non-Attainment</i>	Attainment
PM _{2.5}	<i>Non-Attainment</i>	<i>Non-Attainment</i>

Source: NorthStar, 2012.

Ozone

Ground-level ozone (O₃), commonly referred to as smog, is greatest on warm, windless, sunny days. O₃ is not emitted directly into the air, but is formed through a complex series of chemical reactions between reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x). These reactions occur over time in the presence of sunlight. Formation of O₃ can occur in a matter of hours under ideal conditions.

The time required for O₃ formation allows the reacting compounds to spread over a large area, producing a regional pollution concern. Once formed, O₃ can remain in the atmosphere for one or two days. The principal sources of the O₃ precursors (ROG and NO_x) are the combustion of fuels and the evaporation of solvents, paints, and fuels (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.6 Air Quality).

Particulate Matter

Particulate matter (PM) can be divided into several size fractions. Coarse particles (PM₁₀) are between 2.5 and 10 microns in diameter and arise primarily from natural processes, such as wind-blown dust or soil. Fine particles (PM_{2.5}) are less than 2.5 microns in diameter and are produced mostly from combustion or burning activities. Fuel burned in cars and trucks produces fine particles (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.6 Air Quality).

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that is formed by the incomplete combustion of fuels. Motor vehicle emissions are the dominant source of CO in the NSVAB. CO emissions and ambient concentrations have decreased significantly in recent years. These improvements are due largely to the introduction of cleaner burning motor vehicles and motor vehicle fuels. Elevated CO concentrations are usually localized and are often the result of a combination of high traffic volumes and traffic congestion. Elevated CO levels develop primarily during winter periods of light winds or calm conditions combined with the formation of ground-level temperature inversions. Wintertime CO concentrations are higher because of reduced dispersion of vehicle emissions and because CO emission rates from motor vehicles increase as temperature decreases (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.6 Air Quality).

Nitrogen Dioxide

Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a brownish, highly reactive gas that is present in all urban environments. The major human-made sources of NO₂ are combustion devices such as boilers, gas turbines, and mobile and stationary reciprocating internal combustion engines. Construction devices emit primarily nitric oxide (NO), which reacts through oxidation in the atmosphere to form NO₂. The combined emissions of NO and NO₂ are referred to as NO_x. Because NO₂ is formed and depleted by reactions associated with O₃, the NO₂ concentration in a particular geographic area may not be representative of the local NO_x emission sources. NO₂ is a contributor to the development of O₃ (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.6 Air Quality).

Toxic Air Contaminants

Diesel exhaust is a Toxic Air Contaminant (TAC) of growing concern in California. According to the California Almanac of Emissions and Air Quality, the majority of the estimated health risk from TACs can be attributed to relatively few compounds, the most important being PM from diesel-fueled engines (diesel PM). In 1998, CARB identified diesel PM as a TAC. Diesel PM differs from other TACs in that it is not a single substance but rather a complex mixture of hundreds of substances. Mobile sources, such as trucks, buses, automobiles, trains, ships, and farm equipment, are by far the largest source of diesel emissions. Studies show that diesel particulate matter concentrations are much higher near heavily traveled highways and intersections. Unlike criteria pollutants like carbon monoxide, TACs do not have ambient air quality standards. Since no safe levels of TACs can be determined, there are no air quality standards for TACs (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.6 Air Quality).

All projects in Butte County and in the City of Chico are subject to applicable BCAQMD rules and regulations in effect at the time of construction. Descriptions of specific rules applicable to future construction resulting from implementation of the proposed General Plan Update may include, but are not limited to (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.6 Air Quality):

- Emissions must be prevented from creating a nuisance to surrounding properties as regulated under BCAQMD Rule 200 Nuisance.
- Visible emissions from stationary diesel-powered equipment are not allowed to exceed 40 percent opacity for more than three minutes in any one hour, as regulated under BCAQMD Rule 201 Visible Emissions.
- Fugitive dust emissions must be prevented from being airborne beyond the property line, as regulated under BCAQMD Rule 205 Fugitive Dust Emissions.
- Under BCAQMD Rule 300 General Prohibitions and Exemptions on Open Burning, certain materials are prohibited from open fires for the purpose of disposing petroleum waste, demolition debris, construction debris, tires or other rubber materials, materials containing tar, or for metal salvage or burning of vehicle bodies. Any open burning requires approval and issuance of a burn permit from BCAQMD and shall be performed in accordance with the BCAQMD Rule and Regulations.
- Portable equipment, other than vehicles, must be registered with either CARB Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) or with BCAQMD in accordance with BCAQMD Rule 440 Portable Equipment Registration.
- Architectural coatings and solvents used at the project shall be compliant with BCAQMD Rule 230 Architectural Coatings.
- Cutback and emulsified asphalt application shall be conducted in accordance with BCAQMD Rule 231 Cutback and Emulsified Asphalt.
- All stationary equipment, other than internal combustion engines less than 50 horsepower, emitting air pollutants controlled under BCAQMD rules and regulations require an Authority to Construct (ATC) and Permit to Operate (PTO) from the District.
- BCAQMD Rule 207 Residential Wood Combustion prohibits installation of any new traditional “open hearth” type fireplaces or non-USEPA-certified Phase II appliance.
- In the event that demolition, renovation, or removal of asbestos-containing materials is involved, CARB must be contacted.

Applicable rules are typically enforced through the City’s grading permit process, which include emission-reducing BMPs as conditions of the permits.

Discussion

a-b) Less than significant: Although no substantial changes to existing B-Line operations are proposed in the near future, administration is considering extending service after 9:30 PM. Further, the new facility will be sized to accommodate growth projected to 2032, including current and projected BCAG administrative needs. In total, staffing at the project site is expected to increase from 127 staff to 187 staff by 2032. To meet 2032 public transit needs, it is anticipated that an additional 14 buses will be added to the fleet. New buses will be required to meet the latest State and federal emission standards. Development of the site is consistent with the land uses anticipated in the City’s 2032 General Plan, which was analyzed in the associated EIR (certified in 2011). Further, an air quality analysis was prepared for the project, which identified two primary sources of emissions: construction and operational emissions.

Construction Emissions

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would include construction of administration and maintenance facilities, grading, and paving. Also included is the demolition of the existing transit facility at 326 Huss Lane, which will subsequently be paved for visitor parking areas. These construction activities would result in temporary emissions of fugitive dust (measured as PM₁₀), refer to **Table 6**.

The proposed project would also result in temporary emissions of NO_x and ROG from diesel fumes associated with operation of construction equipment during the construction phases. Because construction activities associated with the proposed project are below the BCAQMD's Level A daily emission threshold for NO_x, ROG and PM₁₀, construction associated with the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant air quality impact.

Table 6
2022 and 2032 Construction Emissions.

Analysis Scenario	Construction Emissions (pounds per day)					
	2022			2032		
	ROG	NO _x	PM ₁₀	ROG	NO _x	PM ₁₀
Unmitigated	11	19	1.8	13	24	2.5
Mitigated	11	19	1.3	13	24	1.9
Total Reduction	0	0	0.5	0	0	0.6

Source: NorthStar, 2012.

Acquisition of the applicable permits and approvals and implementation of all applicable construction activity BMPs and mitigation measures would ensure less than significant short-term emissions during all phases of construction activities.

Operational Emissions

Operational emissions include pollutants associated with diesel and gas engines, the proposed spray paint booth, and fuel storage and dispensing. **Table 7** depicts the proposed project's unmitigated and mitigated emissions including area source emissions, based on the annual estimates of ROG, NO_x and PM₁₀:

Table 7
2022 and 2032 Operational Emissions.

Analysis Scenario	Operational Emissions (pounds per day)					
	2022			2032		
	ROG	NO _x	PM ₁₀	ROG	NO _x	PM ₁₀
Unmitigated	12.11	26.30	14.35	11.89	26.52	18.08
Mitigated	10.46	22.68	10.85	10.30	23.39	14.03
Total Reduction	1.65	3.62	3.50	1.59	3.13	4.05

Source: NorthStar, 2012.

The operational and area source emissions of criteria pollutants will be mitigated through BMPs established and enforced through required permits (i.e., grading permits), and will ensure compliance with the BCQAMD 2009 Air Quality Attainment Plan and prevention of significant increases in criteria pollutant concentrations. Therefore, impacts associated with attainment plans and increases in criteria pollutant concentrations will be less than significant.

c) Less than significant: The proposed project would replace the existing transit facility with a larger facility at its current location, and is designed to accommodate anticipated growth associated with BCAG administration and B-Line needs. The existing site and adjacent land proposed for acquisition to accommodate the expansion is zoned ML (light industrial) and is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park. The proposed project would not conflict with the existing land use designations surrounding the project site; nor will the project result in amendments to the existing land use designations. Further, the proposal would not result in build-out potential that exceeds existing land uses. Thus, through the reduction of project-generated criteria pollutant emissions to less than significant levels, which will be ensured through project-related grading permits and conditions of approval, cumulative impacts to air quality will be less than significant.

d-e) Less than significant: The proposed project includes construction activities that would result in emissions of ozone precursors and particulate matter. Construction emissions may include ozone precursors generated by mobile sources, such as heavy equipment, and stationary sources, such as combustion-powered compressors and generators. The 2022 projected transit need includes five additional diesel buses, which is anticipated to increase to seven by 2032. The emissions associated with the increase in diesel buses at buildout is less than the BCAQMD Level A thresholds.

Respirable particulate matter is present in construction equipment exhaust, particularly older and poorly maintained diesel-powered equipment. Fugitive dust emissions are especially problematic during earth moving, clearing and grubbing activities. Construction-related criteria pollutant emissions will be mitigated to the maximum extent practicable, which will be enforced through required permits (i.e., grading permits). Ground disturbing activities, including paving and coating phases, will adhere to Butte County Grading Ordinance and grading standards. Through implementation of all applicable BMPs, BCAQMD standard mitigation measures and Butte County Grading Ordinance, the proposed construction activities is expected to result in short-term air quality impacts that are considered less than significant.

The proposed project includes the addition of a spray paint booth and fuel storage. The project applicant will be required to apply and receive Authority to Construct (ATC) permits for the spray paint booth and fuel storage from the BCAQMD prior to construction. The ATC permits for the spray paint booth and fuel storage will require compliance with all BCAQMD Rules and Regulations. Therefore, impacts to potentially sensitive receptors will be less than significant.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.3 Biological Resources

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species as listed and mapped in the City’s Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) or in other local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California		X		

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in the MEA or in other local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?		X		
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?		X		
e) Result in the fragmentation of existing wildlife habitat, such as blue oak woodland or riparian, and an increase in the amount of edge with adjacent habitats?				X
f) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
g) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X

Setting

For this project a Natural Environment Study (NES), Appendix C, and a Delineation of Waters of the U.S., Appendix D, were prepared.

The project site falls just within the western boundary of Northeastern Sacramento Valley Recovery Unit, a large regional area defined by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). However, all Vernal Pool Recovery Core Areas, and Vernal Pool Critical Habitats in the Chico area exist primarily on the eastern side of Highway 99, more than two miles east of the project site. No wetlands or vernal pools were identified in the project area, nor are there any Waters of the U.S. located on the transit facility site.

Transit Facility Site

The proposed transit site is composed of disturbed annual grassland habitat. Due to past grading activities, likely from historic agricultural land uses, the site has become dominated by weedy, non-

native, herbaceous plant species. No tree or shrub species occur within the project area, with the exception of six mature sycamore trees along Huss Lane. The dominant plant species within the project area include hedge parsley (*Torilis arvensis*), wild oats (*Avena barbata*), sharp-leaved fluellin (*Kickxia elatine*), yellow star-thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*), medusahead (*Taneatherum caput-medusae*), and rip-gut brome (*Bromus diandrus*). Little wildlife was present on the date surveyed (September 1, 2011); however, many fossorial mammal burrows were observed. The few wildlife species observed included jackrabbits (*Lepus californicus*) and turkey vultures (*Cathartes aura*) (NorthStar Environmental, 2012).

The proposed transit facility site is located approximately 1,150 feet south of Comanche Creek, which flows west to its confluence with the Sacramento River, from the Sierra Nevada foothills approximately five miles straight-line distance to the east. Directly north of the site, along the northern bank of Comanche Creek, the USFWS has defined a freshwater forested/shrub wetland. Comanche Creek shares connectivity with the Sacramento River, which is designated by the USFWS as critical habitat for both Steelhead and Chinook salmon. However, Comanche Creek itself does not provide suitable habitat for anadromous fish. Although the transit facility is not located immediately adjacent to Comanche Creek, the project will require resizing of the existing storm drain outfall that currently flows into the Creek.

Storm Drain Outfall

The storm drain will extend from the transit facility site, northwards to Comanche Creek, and terminate in an outfall on the south bank of the Creek. The line will be constructed parallel to the Aztec Drive extension, turn northward across an agricultural field, traverse under the rail spur, and extend parallel to the UPRR track to the south bank of Comanche Creek.

Special Status Plant Species

Based on the lack of wetland features, lack of slow moving water in Comanche Creek, past grading activities, and the dominance of non-native, weedy and agricultural plant species within the project area, no special-status plant species were determined to have potential to occur on the site. In addition, due to the dominance of weedy, non-native plants, care must be taken during any ground disturbing activities to prevent the spread of these non-natives to areas outside the project area (NorthStar Environmental, 2012).

Special Status Animal Species

No special-status fish or amphibian species were determined to have potential to occur within the proposed transit facility and storm drain outfall areas, based on lack of suitable habitat. One state and federally threatened reptile, the giant garter snake (GGS), was determined to have potential to utilize Comanche Creek as a travel corridor and for basking along the top of the banks. The state bird species of special concern, the western burrowing owl and other migratory bird and raptor species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act have potential to nest and forage within the disturbed annual grassland and area surrounding Comanche Creek on-site.

Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle

The VELB is federally listed as threatened and critical habitat has been designated by the USFWS. The beetle is endemic to riparian systems along the margins of rivers and streams, and in adjacent

grassy savannas in California's Central Valley. The VELB occurs in the Central Valley of California below 3,000 feet and is distributed primarily within riparian habitats from Shasta County to Kern County. No elderberry shrubs were observed within the project area; however, elderberry shrubs were observed on the north (opposite) bank of Comanche Creek within 100 feet of the proposed outfall location, and all of the shrubs observed had stems greater than one inch in size.

Giant Garter Snake

The GGS is a federal and state listed threatened species, which inhabits agricultural wetlands and other waterways such as irrigation and drainage canals, sloughs, ponds, small lakes, low gradient streams, and adjacent uplands in the Central Valley. Primary habitat requirements consist of; 1) adequate water during the snake's active season (early-spring through mid-fall) to provide food and cover; 2) emergent, herbaceous wetland vegetation, such as cattails and bulrushes, for escape cover and foraging habitat during the active season; 3) grassy banks and openings in waterside vegetation for basking; and 4) higher elevation uplands for cover and refuge from floodwaters during the snake's dormant season. Habitat loss and fragmentation, flood control activities, changes in agricultural and land management practices, predation from introduced species, parasites, water pollution and continuing threats are the main causes for the decline of this species. However, when abundant cover is available, GGS may be able to persist with numerous predators that share the same habitats.

Migratory Bird and Raptor Species

Migratory birds and raptors in the orders Falconiformes (hawks, eagles, and falcons) and Strigiforms (owls) are protected in varying degrees under California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), and CEQA. Direct take of active nests, eggs, or birds is prohibited by CDFG and measures must be taken to minimize disturbance. The project area currently provides suitable nesting and/or foraging habitat for several of these species.

Western Burrowing Owl

Western burrowing owls inhabit dry, open grasslands. Nests are usually in small burrows that have been constructed and abandoned by small mammals such as ground squirrels or badgers, however, they have also been known to use man-made structures including cement culverts; cement, asphalt or wood piles; and openings under pavement. They perch on top of the burrows and other low structures to forage and watch for other predators. Their diet consists of insects, small reptiles or amphibians and small mammals (NorthStar Environmental, 2011).

Swainson's Hawk

Swainson's hawks are listed by the state as threatened and are long-distance migrants with nesting grounds in western North America. Swainson's hawks are in the Central Valley between March and August, with breeding occurring from late March to late August, peaking in late May through July. Swainson's hawks often nest peripherally to riparian systems of the valley as well as utilizing lone trees or groves of trees in agricultural fields. Swainson's hawks require large, open grasslands with abundant prey in association with suitable nest trees. A Swainson's hawk nest is known to occur within 10 miles of the project area. Therefore, the project area was assessed for potential foraging habitat for Swainson's hawks. Due to the small size of the project area, the poor habitat present, and the amount of developed land and tree cover surrounding the site, the project area was determined not to contain suitable foraging habitat for Swainson's hawks (NorthStar Environmental, 2012).

Western Red Bat

The western red bat is found in California from Shasta County to the Mexican border, west of the Sierra Nevada/Cascade crest and deserts. Winter range includes western lowlands and coastal habitats south of San Francisco. The western red bat roosts primarily in trees within forests and woodlands in edge habitats from sea level to mixed conifer forests. However, the western red bat may have an association with riparian habitats with dense stands of cottonwood and sycamore, and orchards. Family groups are known to roost together, forming nursing colonies. They forage in open areas and feed on a variety of insects including moths, crickets, beetles, and cicadas. Migrations typically occur in the spring from March to May and in the autumn from September to October. The western red bat has been seen at temperatures as low as 44°F, however, in these cold climates the bat spends winter in hibernation. The western red bat has marginal potential to roost within trees along Comanche Creek.

HCP/NCCP

The Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP) is being coordinated by the BCAG on behalf of Butte County; the cities of Chico, Oroville, Biggs, and Gridley; Caltrans; Western Canal Water District; Richvale Irrigation District; Biggs West-Gridley Water District; and Butte Water District. The BRCP is both a federal Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and a state Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP). It is a voluntary plan that will provide streamlined endangered species act permitting for transportation projects, land development and other covered activities over the 30-50 year term of the permits. It will also provide comprehensive species, wetlands and ecosystem conservation and contribute to the recovery of endangered species within the Plan Area. The Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP) is currently in the first administrative draft form. Upon completion of the second administrative draft, a series of public workshops will be held and are currently scheduled for fall/winter 2012.

Discussion

a, d) Less than significant with mitigation: Although no individuals were observed during the field survey, the potential exists for impacts to the following threatened and/or endangered species.

Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle

Although no elderberry shrubs were observed within the storm drain outfall area; elderberry shrubs were observed on the north (opposite) bank of Comanche Creek within a 100-foot buffer of the proposed outfall location, and all of the shrubs observed had stems greater than 1 inch in size. According to the 1999 USFWS Conservation Guidelines for Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (Guidelines), complete avoidance (i.e., no adverse effects) may be assumed when a 100-foot buffer is established and maintained around elderberry plants containing stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level. The nearest elderberry shrubs occur less than 50 feet away from the edge of the proposed outfall construction site, but are located on privately owned land on the opposite (north) side of Comanche Creek. Since the shrubs were located on privately owned land and access to this property was not granted, the elderberry shrubs were not surveyed for VELB exit holes. As the proposed construction activities will not encroach within the root zone or canopy of the elderberry shrubs located off-site to the north, no impacts to VELB are anticipated. The implementation of the identified avoidance and minimization efforts set forth in **MM Biological 1** will further ensure no impacts will occur to the elderberry shrubs or potentially occurring VELB.

Giant Garter Snake

Temporary impacts to GGS aquatic and upland habitat may occur from the placement of a small cofferdam to divert creek flows away from the construction zone and the installation of a cemented stormwater outfall into Comanche Creek. GGS upland habitat extends 200 feet from the bank of Comanche Creek. The pipe will be buried underground, the trench filled and re-graded to pre-construction conditions, and the cofferdam will be removed following the installation; hence, any potential impacts will be temporary. During the construction activities, the movement of the snake though the water in the creek will not be impeded. A total of 0.02 acre of temporary direct impacts to GGS upland habitat is anticipated. Project construction within GGS habitat is expected to be completed within one season. Implementation of **MM Biological 2** and **MM Biological 3** will ensure potential impacts to GGS habitat will be less than significant.

Red Bat

No bats or bat roosts were observed within the project area during the field surveys. However, bats are not typically active during the daytime hours when the field surveys were conducted. The valley oak trees present along the banks of Comanche Creek provide potential roosting habitat for the western red bat, though, due to the narrow strip of trees present, the roosting habitat is only marginal on the site. Due to the preservation of all trees within the project area, no impacts to the western red bat are expected as a result of the proposed project. However, **MM Biological 4** is recommended to ensure no impacts occur.

Western Burrowing Owl

Although no burrowing owls were observed within the project area, the field survey was not conducted during the breeding season, which is from late March through May. There were multiple fossorial animal burrows present throughout the project area, and an area of piled dirt was located adjacent to the project property, which could be utilized by burrowing owls (NorthStar Environmental, 2011). In order to reduce potential impacts to western burrowing owls to a level less than significant, mitigation measure **MM Biological 5** is recommended.

Swainson's Hawk

Although no suitable nesting habitat occurs within the project area and no Swainson's hawks were observed foraging in the area, the project site is located within 10 miles of documented Swainson's hawk nests and, thus, was assessed for potential Swainson's hawk foraging habitat. The determination of suitable foraging habitat occurs when there is a documented nest that has been active within the previous five years within a distance of ten miles from the project site. According to the CNDDDB, there are 11 documented Swainson's hawk nests within 10 miles, with the closest occurrence located approximately 2 miles from the project site. However, the closest nest, occurrence number 699, was destroyed in recent years by a storm and no new nests have been observed at that site. Nine of the remaining nest locations were documented between 1988 and 1998 and have not been re-verified as being active in the most updated version of Rarefind. Only one documented occurrence within 10 miles of the project site, occurrence number 1724 was reported as being active within the past 5 years. However, this occurrence is approximately 9.5 miles away from the project site. Additionally, Swainson's hawk habitat has been assessed in the draft Butte Regional Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP). This HCP/NCCP has been developed by BCAG in conjunction with California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and includes a map depicting Swainson's hawk nesting and foraging habitat

in Butte County. The area in which the project is located has not been mapped as being Swainson's hawk nesting or foraging habitat. This is likely due to the poor habitat present within the project site and adjacent areas. Only one small parcel located immediately northwest of the project site, which consists of irrigated row crops, could have a low potential for foraging habitat. However, the remaining land is dominated by industrial buildings and orchards which hold no habitat for Swainson's hawks (NorthStar Environmental, 2011).

Project-related activities that convert the open land within the project area to developed uses would not impact Swainson's hawk foraging habitat since the open land present is not considered suitable foraging habitat. Additionally, with the incorporation of raptor nest surveys prior to construction activities and the avoidance measures identified in **MM Biological 6**, potential impacts are reduced to less than significant.

Migratory Bird and Raptor Species

Though very few bird species were observed during the field survey, the survey was not conducted during the breeding season for migratory birds. The disturbed annual grassland present on the site and the few trees present along Huss Lane provide suitable nesting and foraging habitat for multiple migratory bird species, particularly ground nesting bird species.

Migratory birds and raptors in the orders Falconiformes (hawks, eagles, and falcons) and Strigiforms (owls) are protected in varying degrees under California Fish and Game Code, Section 3503.5, the MBTA, and CEQA. The project area currently provides suitable nesting and/or foraging habitat for several of these species. Direct take of active nests, eggs, or birds is prohibited by CDFG and measures must be taken to minimize disturbance. Therefore, a qualified biologist should conduct a preconstruction migratory bird survey during April–May, or no more than 30 days prior to construction activities, to determine the presence/absence of nesting birds in the project area. Should nesting migratory birds be observed, appropriate spatial and temporal buffers will be required by MBTA and/or CDFG. With the implementation of **MM Biological 7**, potential impacts to migratory birds and raptors will be less than significant.

With the implementation of identified mitigation measures, impacts to special status species will be less than significant.

b) Less than significant with mitigation: The development of the BCAG facilities will require installation of new regional storm drainage infrastructure and outfall. A storm drain extension will be necessary to drain excess on-site surface storm water and will be sized to accommodate future adjacent development to the north and west. The proposed storm drainage alignment would run westward along the north side of the proposed Aztec Road extension, continue between the existing railroad spur and the UPRR tracks, and then run parallel with the tracks in a northward direction to Comanche Creek. The pipe will be buried and the trench backfilled and re-graded to pre-construction conditions. Additionally, the temporary cofferdam, which will be installed to dewater the creek during construction activities, will be removed following the installation of the outfall. Therefore, the impacts associated with installation of the storm drain pipeline and outfall will be temporary. Potential impacts associated with construction of the storm drain infrastructure and outfall within the riparian area include vegetation removal, erosion, and siltation entering Comanche Creek. Mitigation has been included that will reduce potential impacts to riparian habitat to less than significant (see **MM Biological 2** and **MM Water Quality 1**).

c) No Impact: No wetlands or vernal pools were identified on the project site; therefore, there will be no impact.

e) No Impact: The proposed transit facility site is within the City limits, east of the established Greenline, which denotes urban from agricultural land uses. Lands to the west and north of the project are agricultural, primarily orchards, while properties to the east and south are developed with industrial uses. The project will be located over a portion of an undeveloped agricultural field with no riparian or wetland areas located on the site, and the development of the site will be a continuation of existing industrial development within the Hegan Lane Business Park. Furthermore, wildlife habitat on the site was determined to be marginal, with no sensitive species observed during the field surveys. Therefore, no impacts associated with fragmentation of existing habitat is anticipated.

f) Less than significant: The only trees on the project site are six mature sycamore trees along Huss Lane in front of the existing facility, five of which will be retained as part of the design for the new facility. There are no trees located within the 7.4 acres identified for acquisition. Landscaping designs for the new facility include 91 trees planted in a grid pattern throughout the parking areas and street frontages along Huss Lane and the Aztec Drive extension. Landscaping requirements for the ML zoning include five percent of interior development be landscaped. The proposed plantings exceed City of Chico landscaping standards by approximately 20 percent. Additionally, trees must be planted throughout parking areas such that at 15 years of age, the trees provide 50 percent shade coverage. The project achieves this requirement as designed. Further, avoidance measures have been included in the design to ensure policies and ordinances protecting biological resources have been included as mitigation. Therefore, there will be no impact associated with biological resources and tree preservation policies and ordinances.

g) No Impact: The BRCP is in the development phase. Because no HCP/NCCP is adopted as of yet, there are no conflicts and no impacts.

Mitigation

MM Biological 1 – Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (Storm Drain Outfall). Though the elderberry shrubs are located less than 50 feet from proposed storm drain outfall construction activities, the shrubs are located on the opposite bank of Comanche Creek from where the construction will be. Thus, the root system of the elderberry shrubs will not be impacted and the crown of the shrubs are located outside of the construction zone and will not be impacted. No pesticides or herbicides should be used within the vicinity of any elderberry bushes and dust control measures will be necessary during construction to prevent harm to Valley elderberry longhorn beetles. To further ensure that no impacts to these elderberry shrubs occur, dust abatement measures (as identified in by the Butte County Air Quality Management District’s Rule 205 for Fugitive Dust Emissions and MM Water Quality 1), will be implemented during the construction activities within 100 feet of the elderberry shrubs and workers will not be allowed to access the north bank of Comanche Creek.

MM Biological 2 – Giant Garter Snake (Storm Drain Outfall). The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented within the storm drain outfall project area per the 1997 Programmatic Formal Consultation for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permitted Projects with Relatively Small Effects on the GGS within Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Fresno, Merced, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter and Yolo Counties, California (GGS Programmatic).

- a) Construction activities within 200 feet of Comanche Creek must be conducted during the active season for GGS (between May 1 and October 1) to minimize any direct impacts to the species.
- b) Dewatered habitat must remain dry for at least 15 consecutive days after April 15 and prior to excavation or filling of the dewatered habitat.
- c) Construction personnel will participate in a USFWS worker environmental awareness training program. During the training, workers will be informed of the potential for this species to be present and the associated habitat for GGS and that it is unlawful to take harm or harass GGS.
- d) The site will be inspected by a USFWS approved biologist within 24 hours prior to the commencement of the construction activities. If GGS are found within the project area, the USFWS will be notified immediately and the qualified biologist has the authority to stop all construction work on the site until the appropriate corrective measures have been conducted and it is determined that the snake will not be harmed.
- e) The clearing of wetland vegetation will be confined to the minimal area necessary to excavate the toe of bank for the outfall and riprap placement. Excavation equipment will be located and operated from the top of the bank.
- f) Movement of heavy equipment to and from the site will be restricted to established roadways to minimize habitat disturbance and no staging or storing of equipment will occur within 200 feet of Comanche Creek.
- g) Adjacent GGS habitat will be designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas and will be flagged or fenced off using orange barrier fencing to avoid inadvertent impacts from the construction personnel.
- h) After completion of the construction activities, any temporary water diversion structures and debris will be removed and the disturbed bank will be restored to pre-construction height and slope and revegetated with an appropriate native seed mix.

MM Biological 3 – Giant Garter Snake (Storm Drain Outfall). Actual mitigation is dependent on the level and amount of impact the project causes to potential GGS habitats and determined per GGS Programmatic. Due to the temporary nature of the impacts, compensation will be completed at Level 1 for the temporary direct impacts to 0.02 acre of GGS upland habitat.

Compensation for Level 1 temporary impacts per the GGS Programmatic requires restoration of affected snake habitat to pre-project conditions within the same season or, at most, the same calendar year. It also includes one calendar year of monitoring of the restored habitat and Project site with photo documentation and letter report documenting pre and post construction conditions due one year from the date restoration occurred (USFWS 2005).

MM Biological 4 – Red Bats (Storm Drain Outfall). As the western red bat typically roosts in trees, to avoid and minimize any potential impacts to the bat, no trees will be removed within the storm drain outfall area. Furthermore, a pre-construction bat survey will be conducted in combination with the pre-construction migratory bird and raptor survey (see **MM Biological 7**) to determine if any bat roosts occur within the project area.

MM Biological 5 – Western Burrowing Owls (Transit Facility Site). Vegetation removal or ground disturbance in areas where nests of western burrowing owls potentially occur must be conducted between September 1 and February 28 (during the non-breeding season). If vegetation removal or ground disturbance occurs during the breeding season (i.e., March 1 to August 31) then a qualified biologist will conduct pre-construction surveys for western burrowing owls nests. If a potential nest is observed on the site, the area must either be monitored to determine if the nest is active or that area will be avoided. If an active nest is observed, a no-disturbance buffer will be established and no ground disturbance in that area will be allowed until the young have fledged.

MM Biological 6 – Swainson's hawks (Transit Facility Site and Storm Drain Outfall). Though no active nests have been recorded in close proximity to the project area, old nests could be re-used by Swainson's hawks in the future or new nests could be constructed in close proximity to the project site. Therefore, to ensure no indirect impacts to active nests occur due to any future construction activities, a pre-construction survey for raptor nests per the *Recommended Timing and Methodology for Swainson's Hawk Nesting Surveys in California's Central Valley* (CDFG 2000b) will be conducted if construction occurs during the breeding season (March-August). The area to be surveyed should include a ½ mile radius area including and surrounding the project area and a qualified biologist should conduct the surveys. If active nests are found, mitigation measures consistent with the *Staff Report Regarding Mitigation for Impacts to Swainson's Hawk (Buteo swainsoni) in the Central Valley of California* (Staff Report, CDFG 1994) should be incorporated in the following manner:

- No intensive new disturbances (e.g., heavy equipment operation associated with construction, use of cranes or draglines, new rock crushing activities) or other project-related activities that may cause nest abandonment or forced fledging, should be initiated within ¼ mile (buffer zone) of an active nest between March 1 and September 15.
- If construction or other project-related activities that may cause nest abandonment or forced fledging are necessary within the buffer zone, monitoring of the nest site (funded by the project proponent) by a qualified biologist (to determine if the nest is abandoned) will be required. If it is abandoned and if the nestlings are still alive, the project proponent shall fund the recovery and hacking (controlled release of captive reared young) of the nestling(s).

MM Biological 7 – Migratory birds and raptors (Transit Facility Site and Storm Drain Outfall). Vegetation removal or ground disturbance in areas where nests of birds protected by the MBTA (16 USC §703) and the CFGC (§3503) potentially occur must be conducted between September 1 and February 28 (i.e. the non-breeding season). If vegetation removal or ground disturbance occurs during the breeding season (i.e. March 1 to August 31) then a qualified biologist shall:

- Conduct a survey for all birds protected by the MBTA and map all nests located within 500 feet of construction areas;
- Develop buffer zones around active nests in coordination with CDFG. Construction activity shall be prohibited within the buffer zones until the young have fledged or the nest fails. Nests shall be monitored at least twice per week and a report submitted to CDFG monthly.

4.4 Cultural Resources

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5?		X		
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CA Code of Regulations, §15064.5?		X		
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		X		
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?		X		

Setting

In the Central Valley of California and adjacent foothills of the Sierra Nevada around Oroville, aboriginal populations continued to expand between 6,500 and 4,500 years ago, with the possibility that arriving Macro-Penutian-speaking people (including Miwok, Yokuts and Nisenan to the south, and Maidu at Oroville) introduced more extensive use of bulbs and other plant foods, animal and fishing products more intensively processed with mortars and pestles, and perhaps the bow and arrow and associated small stemmed- and corner-notched projectile points (Sean Michael Jensen, 2011).

The project area is located within territory occupied by the Northwestern Maidu, or Konkow Indians. The basic social unit for the Maidu and other northern Sacramento Valley and foothill Indian groups was the family, although the village may also be considered a social, political and economic unit. As with all northern California Indian groups, economic life for the Maidu revolved around hunting, fishing and the collecting of plant foods, with deer, acorns, and salmon representing primary staples. The collection and processing of these various food resources was accomplished with the use of a wide variety of wooden, bone and stone artifacts. Moreover, these people were very sophisticated in terms of their knowledge of the uses of local animals and plants, and of the availability of raw material sources that could be used in manufacturing an immense array of primary and secondary tools and implements. However, only fragmentary evidence of their material culture remains, due in part to perishability, and in part to the impacts to archaeological sites resulting from later (historic) land uses (Sean Michael Jensen, 2011).

As early as 1804, early Spanish expeditions arrived in the Great Central Valley of California from the Bay Area missions. By the mid-1820's, literally hundreds of fur trappers were annually traversing the Valley on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company, some with devastating consequences for the local Maidu and other Valley populations. By the late 1830's and early 1840's, several small permanent European American settlements had emerged in the Valley and adjacent foothill lands, including ranchos in what are now Shasta, Tehama and Butte Counties. One of these was eventually acquired by Chico's founder, General John Bidwell (Sean Michael Jensen, 2011).

An Archaeological Resources Survey was prepared in 2011 by Sean Michael Jensen of Genesis Society in Paradise, CA. Additionally, an updated report was prepared in June 2012 to include the area of the storm drain alignment and outfall Appendix E. This analysis was prepared in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Representatives of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) were both contacted in regards to this project – no records of historic resources were identified.

Discussion

a, b, d) Less than significant with mitigation: Neither the pedestrian survey, records search, consultation with tribal representatives, nor consultation with the NAHC yielded any information concerning prehistoric sites or features, traditional use areas or Sacred Land listings within or adjacent to the project site. Neither did they yield any information concerning historic-era sites or features. Based on the findings of the archaeological inventory, no historic properties will be affected by the project. However, despite these negative findings, the mitigation measures (**MM Cultural 1**) are considered appropriate in the event that unknown resources are inadvertently encountered during construction, and will ensure that impacts to historical and archaeological resources will be less than significant.

c) Less than significant with mitigation: The proposed project site includes the existing transit facility and adjacent flat agricultural fields in the area of expansion. No paleontological or unique geologic features were identified on the project site. However, construction activities include extensive grading and leveling as part of site preparation for the facility and Aztec Drive extension. Furthermore, trenching and boring will be required for installation of water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure. There is the remote possibility that paleontological artifacts could be unearthed during these activities; therefore, mitigation has been included to address any such findings. Therefore, impacts to paleontological resources and/or unique geologic features will be less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation measure **MM Cultural 1**.

Mitigation

MM Cultural 1 – A note shall be placed on all grading and construction plans which informs the construction contractor that if any cultural materials (e.g. bones, pottery fragments or other potential cultural resources) are encountered or unearthed during construction, all work within 100 feet of the discovered site shall cease. Further, the developer shall immediately notify the Butte County Coroner pursuant to Section 7050.5 of California’s Health and Safety Code, and contact the Planning Services Department at 879-6800 as soon as possible. The developer shall then retain an archeologist from the City’s list of qualified archaeologists to evaluate the significance of the site. If the archaeologist determines that the materials represent a potentially significant resource, the project proponent, archaeologist, City Planning Director, and local tribal coordinator shall begin a consultation process to determine a plan of action either for 1) total data recovery, as a mitigation, 2) tribal cultural resource monitoring, 3) displacement protocol, or 4) total avoidance of the resource.

4.5 Geology and Soils

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i.) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?				X
ii.) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii.) Seismic-related ground failure/liquefaction?			X	
iv.) Landslides?				X
b) Substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?		X		
c) Located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				X
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?				X
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water, or is otherwise not consistent with the Chico Nitrate Action Plan or policies for sewer service control?				X

Setting

The Central Valley and surrounding area is the product of a complex series of geologic events. The Sacramento Valley is a late Mesozoic forearc basin that formed contemporaneously with, and between the accretionary trench deposits of the Franciscan Complex to the west, and an eastern magnetic arc complex, the roots of which are exposed in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The region has experienced orogenic uplift, faulting, and subsequent erosion as the valley was inundated by the ancestral Pacific Ocean (Hanover Environmental Services, Inc., 2012).

In the Chico area, sediments of the Modesto formation onlap the Sierra Nevada mountains to the west, and are overlain by younger quaternary alluvial and lacustrine deposits locally. The sediments have a regional dip to the west, and are generally thickening west toward the center of the Sacramento Valley (Hanover Environmental Services, Inc., 2012).

The general topography of the area is relatively flat, with a surface gradient to the southwest at approximately 75 feet per 0.5 mile. The project site sits within a large area of soil defined by the NRCS as Chico loam, 0-1 percent slopes. This soil series is found on all sides of the project site for many miles. Beyond the immediate vicinity, the landscape maintains a similar grade while

containing both sandy and clay soils, as well as other varieties of loam. The erosion rating for the soil type found onsite is slight.

An “active” fault, as defined by the 1994 Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, is one that shows displacement within the last 11,000 years and therefore is considered more likely to generate a future earthquake and surface rupture than a fault that shows no sign of recent rupture. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act requires the California State Geologist to establish regulatory zones (known as Earthquake Fault Zones) around the surface traces of active faults and to issue appropriate maps in order to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. No Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones exist within the Planning Area (DOC, 2009). The only known active fault in Butte County is the Cleveland Hills fault south of Oroville, the site of the August 1975 Oroville earthquake. This earthquake was felt in Chico, but there was no recorded damage. The Cleveland Hills fault is within an Earthquake Fault Zone as mapped by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. Although there are no active faults in the Planning Area, the Sierra foothills contain hundreds of mapped faults, dozens of which are located in Butte County. Most of these faults are not considered active. Furthermore, most of these faults are very short and thus are probably not capable of producing severely damaging earthquakes.

Discussion

a) Less than significant: The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone and therefore would not be subject to hazards associated with fault rupture (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.8 Geology and Soils). The project area has a low to moderate potential risk for liquefaction (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.8 Geology and Soils). Therefore, impacts associated with faults or seismic shaking would be less than significant.

Although Butte County is located in a seismic hazard zone and could experience strong seismic ground shaking and seismic-related ground failure (i.e., liquefaction, settlement, and landslides) from earthquakes on faults both within and outside of the County. However, the City of Chico adopted the California Building Code (CBC) in Chapter 16R.02 of the City of Chico Municipal Code. The project development is required to comply with the codes through the building permit process with the City. Additionally, the project site has no potential to low potential for landslides due to the flat topography (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.8 Geology and Soils); therefore, the impact will be less than significant.

b) Less than significant with mitigation: The project will result in the construction of a road extension (Aztec Drive) and infrastructure (water, wastewater, etc.) in addition to the development of the proposed transit facilities and storm drain outfall. The development will involve clearing, grading, and excavation that will cause soil disturbance of approximately 13 acres. Consequently, the project is subject to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) State General Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ) provisions. As part of that permit, the applicant will be required to prepare and comply with an approved stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) that provides a schedule for the implementation and maintenance of erosion control measures and a description of the erosion control practices, including appropriate design details and a time schedule. The SWPPP would consider the full range of erosion control best management practices, including any additional site-specific and seasonal conditions. The State General Permit also requires that those implementing SWPPPs meet prerequisite qualifications that would demonstrate the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to implement SWPPPs. NPDES requirements would significantly reduce the potential for substantial erosion or topsoil loss to occur in association with new development.

In addition, the City's grading standards (Chapter 16R.22 of the City of Chico Municipal Code) specify that the maximum permanent rate of sediment loss after completion of the project should not exceed the natural erosion rate that occurred prior to the grading project. If excessive erosion occurs from the project, erosion and sediment control measures are required to be immediately implemented to reduce erosion to allowable levels. The standards also require revegetation and slope stabilization to prevent erosion of slopes. The City's Grading Ordinance requires a valid grading permit for any grading work in the City and provides for inspection and enforcement to ensure compliance with grading regulations. Compliance with the City's grading regulations will further ensure that the project will include the necessary control measures for erosion and sediment control, as well as permanent features to minimize stormwater pollution from the project. The City's current development review process also ensures that construction projects have the necessary permits and that on-site regional control measures are considered for new development projects.

Compliance with adopted City grading regulations and NPDES and SWPPP requirements would ensure that soil erosion and related impacts would be less than significant, and no further mitigation is required. Further, any impacts associated with construction of the storm drain outfall on the south bank of Comanche Creek will be reduced to a level less than significant with the implementation of **MM Water Quality 1**.

c) No Impact: No land subsidence has been recorded in Butte County. Engineering and design of project facilities and layout will be in compliance with the California Uniform Building Code, which will ensure there will be no impacts associated with potentially unstable soils or geologic units.

d) No Impact: Soils of high expansion potential general occur in the level areas in the Chico area. However, soils along streams tend to have no to low expansion potential (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.8 Geology and Soils), and there will be no impact.

e) No Impact: The project will include the extension of a wastewater truck line sufficiently sized to accommodate all development off the Aztec Drive extension. The project will be connected to the existing wastewater system for the City and will not utilize septic systems onsite; therefore, there will be no impact.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	

Setting

In 2005, the Governor of California signed Executive Order S-3-05, which establishes statewide emissions reductions targets for greenhouse gasses to be achieved by the years 2010 and 2020. In 2007, following a series of notable lawsuits, Senate Bill 97 established broad standards for evaluating greenhouse gas emissions during the environmental review process required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Air Resources Board developed draft guidelines in 2009, which were published in the CEQA Guidelines in January 2010.

The implementation of SB 375 involves setting GHG reduction goals for regions throughout the state. These regions are to be defined by the borders of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). CARB is currently coordinating a Regional Targets Advisory Committee (RTAC) to develop the GHG reduction goals, and they provided recommendations to CARB in 2009 that address methodologies, procedures and policies to establish the GHG goals. CARB adopted goals on September 23, 2010. The goals included a target for Butte County of a zero percent increase in GHG emissions by 2020 and a one percent reduction by 2035.

Currently, there are no specific guidelines or significance thresholds at the state or county level, although the significant criteria for GHG must be considered during CEQA reviews. The BCAQMD does not currently have any regulations or thresholds related to GHG's emissions or mitigation. At this time, the BCAQMD recommends that project-specific analyses use the methodology established by other Districts to evaluate GHG emissions and impacts on global climate change. Other Air Quality Management Districts have begun processes to establish thresholds of significance for GHG emissions. These Districts include the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD), the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), the Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD), and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). To analyze potential impacts resulting from this project, the procedures outlined by the SMAQMD were used.

The SMAQMD recommends using a threshold that is 1) related to AB 32's GHG reduction goals, or 2) determine whether a project is consistent with the State's strategy to achieve the 2020 GHG emissions limit. AB 32's reduction of statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 would require an approximately 30 percent reduction in comparison to projected "Business as Usual" 2020 emissions. While the intent is to reduce criteria pollutant emissions, many of the mitigation measures ultimately implemented as part of the project approval process would also result in decreased greenhouse gas emissions through reduced vehicle trips, increased efficiency and so forth. The proposed project would implement project-specific measures to reduce criteria pollutant emissions, which would also reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Butte County Emissions

A 2006 GHG inventory for Butte County was prepared as part of the Butte County General Plan. In 2006, GHG emissions in Butte County totaled 601,266 MTCO₂e (Butte County, 2010). On-road vehicles contributed 295,750 MTCO₂e, or 49.2 percent, and off-road equipment contributed an additional 6.8 percent, or 40,939 MTCO₂e (Butte County, 2010). Approximately 28.1 percent of the 2006 GHG emissions can be attributed to electricity and natural gas used to power or heat residences, homes, and industries (Butte County, 2010). Industrial sources (stationary sources) related to the burning of other fuels or fugitive emissions accounted for 4,093 MTCO₂e, or 0.7 percent (Butte County, 2010). Waste generated by Butte County residents in 2006 will produce 17,873 metric tons of GHGs (due to landfill methane) over the next 30 years, roughly the

decompositional lifetime of the landfilled waste (Butte County, 2010). Waste currently in place at the Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility will result in 14,247 MTCO_{2e} in the form of landfill methane that year; this amount is 2.4 percent of the 2006 total. The burning of fuel to power agricultural equipment in 2006 contributed 77,019 MTCO_{2e}, roughly 10 percent of the on-road vehicle emissions and 12.8 percent of the county total for 2006 (Butte County, 2010).

City of Chico Emissions

In 2006, Chico's Mayor signed the U.S. Conference of Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, adding Chico to a group of over 600 cities united in pledging to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This milestone led to the creation of the Sustainability Task Force, a committee that provides input to the City Council on sustainability issues. An early effort of the Task Force was to conduct an inventory of greenhouse gases. In April 2008, the City of Chico completed a GHG inventory for calendar year 2005 titled *City of Chico Greenhouse Gas & Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory*. The inventory analyzed carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from fuel use, electricity use, and waste. The community-scale GHG inventory included the CO₂ generated from all residences and businesses in the city and all traffic that drives on roads in the city. The largest source of CO₂ was transportation (54 percent), followed by the commercial sector (23 percent), the residential sector (19 percent), the waste sector (4 percent), and the industrial sector (less than 1 percent). The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory measured the amount of heat-trapping gases that the community released to the atmosphere in the baseline year 2005. By quantifying emissions, this inventory established a benchmark against which emissions reductions can be measured. The inventory will be updated to measure emission changes over time, which helps guide the management of reduction strategies and policies. Also in 2008, the City Council approved a specific greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 25 percent below 2005 levels by the year 2020.

In 2009/10, the BCAG conducted a Market Based Transit Study of the Butte Regional Transit System (B-Line) to determine user needs and to improve transit productivity. Based on the study's recommendations, regional and Chico routes were adjusted to improve on-time performance and to establish an express bus route providing service to Chico from the south end of the town, through the major points of destination every 15 minutes. Changes in hours of route operations, and identification of additional transfer locations were also achieved. Comparing ridership in a calendar month before and after the improvements (November 2009 to November 2011) reveals that B-Line ridership in Chico has increased approximately 9 percent and that the increasing ridership trend is continuing. It was estimated that this increase in bus ridership decreased annual GHG emissions by 4,846 MtCO_{2e} (Chico, 2012).

Design and construction of new buildings, or major renovation of existing ones, is the easiest time to implement energy saving measures that reduce GHG emissions. Green building practices recognize the relationship between natural and built environments and seek to minimize the use of energy, water, and other natural resources and provide a healthy productive indoor environment. Two actions identified include California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), which includes LEED standards, and installation of reflective or "cool roofs."

As of September 2010, approximately 78 percent of the reduction needed to meet the Phase I goal had been achieved, and the remainder is expected to be met through a combination of efforts including measures by City government operations, residential energy efficiency programs, alternative transportation programs, waste reduction programs, and community outreach and education.

Discussion

a-b) Less than significant: The proposed project is not expected to result in significant increases in GHG emissions. However, development of the project would result in short-term GHG emissions from the combustion of fuel during construction. The project will also generate emissions of GHGs primarily in the form of vehicle exhaust. Because the proposed project would replace the existing facility with a new transit facility, long-term GHG emissions from local traffic increases (mobile sources) would be minimal as there would be no substantial changes to the mobile sources, such as would be linked to the number of bus trips, trip length, or idling time. The proposed project is intended to reduce regional commuter trips by increasing mass transit use. While the total reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has not been quantified, this reduction in VMT would contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions.

The table below summarizes the total operational emissions at buildout in metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (MTCO_{2e}) per year for the 2005 BAU Scenario and the 2013/14–2022 mitigated scenario. **Table 8** also includes a summary of the comparison and percent change between 2005 BAU and 2013/14–2022 mitigated GHG emissions.

Table 8
2005 BAU and 2022 Operational Emissions.

	Operational Emissions
Analysis Scenario	<u>MTCO_{2e}/Year</u>
Unmitigated BAU 2005	3,177.55
Mitigated 2022	1,974.25
Total Reduction	1,203.30
Percent Reduction	38

Source: (NorthStar, 2012)

As shown in **Table 8** the operation of the project under 2005 BAU conditions would generate approximately 3,177.55 MTCO_{2e}/year emissions from all operational sources. In order to meet the State's 30 percent reduction targets per AB 32, and the City of Chico's 25 percent reduction targets, project emissions would need to be reduced by 953.27 MTCO_{2e}. Under the 2013/14–2022 mitigated scenario, the proposed project would meet the 30 percent reduction target and would result in 1,974.25 MTCO_{2e}/year, a reduction of 38 percent.

The GHG emissions for the proposed project meets the State's 30 percent reduction targets per AB 32 and the City of Chico's 25 percent reduction targets and exceed this by 8 percent. Further, the proposed project is intended to reduce regional commuter trips by increasing mass transit use and thus reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT). While the total reduction in VMT has not been quantified, this reduction in VMT would also contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions. Therefore, the project's incremental increases in emissions associated with increased traffic in the project vicinity would not contribute to regional and global GHG emissions. The proposed project would not generate GHG, either directly or indirectly, nor conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions. These impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			X	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				X

Setting

A Phase 1-Initial Site Assessment (ISA) and a Phase 2-Environmental Site Investigation (Phase 2) were conducted on approximately 16 acres of the undeveloped parcel contiguous to the existing BCAG transit facility site. A Limited Phase 2-Site Investigation (Limited Phase 2) was conducted on the existing BCAG transit facility site to evaluate potential impacts to the shallow soils from a leach system connected to an existing oil/water separator. Refer to Appendices F, G, and H.

Phase 1 – Initial Site Assessment

The Phase 1-ISA determined that no site contamination was noted, although the governmental record search indicated that two plumes of contaminated groundwater may exist to the east of the subject site; one from the Kinder Morgan tank farm and one from JM Smuckers. The contaminants of concern include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), methyl-tertiary-butyl-ether (MTBE), benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene (BTEX), perchloroethylene (PCE), trichloroethylene (TCE), 1,1-Dichloroethene (1,1-DCE) and cis-1,2DCE, 1,2-dichloropropane (1,2-DCP) and 1,2,3-trichloropropane (1,2,3-TCP). Additionally, Chico Environmental contacted Eric Rapport of the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Mr. Rapport informed Chico Environmental that the monitoring well located on the corner of Huss Lane and Aztec Drive had been installed by the Department of Toxic Substances Control for the purpose of monitoring the two groundwater plumes (Chico Environmental Science and Planning, 2011).

Phase 2 – Environmental Site Investigation

The purpose of the Phase 2 was to evaluate the recognized environmental conditions (RECs) identified in an Initial Site Assessment (ISA) issued by Chico Environmental, dated 9 September 2011. The recognized onsite environmental concerns assessed as part of this Phase II were potential presence of soil contamination in association with the subject property's historical use as a railroad spur in the early 1900's and the historic use of the property as agricultural fields. The most commonly reported contamination along rail lines includes metals, herbicides, and constituents of oil or fuel (petroleum products). The most commonly reported contamination in agricultural fields is from pesticide application.

The assessments performed to evaluate the recognized onsite environmental conditions consisted of four (4) borings along the railroad right-of-way and two (2) four-point composite samples dispersed in the former agricultural field. All sample locations were hand augured. The four (4) soil samples collected within the railroad right-of-way were analyzed for CAM-17 metals by EPA Method 6010B, herbicides by EPA Method 8151, and total recoverable petroleum hydrocarbons (TRPH) by EPA Method 418.1. The two (2) four-point composite samples collected in the former agricultural field were analyzed for common pesticides by EPA Method 8081A.

The results of these assessments revealed measured background concentrations of metals below laboratory reporting limits (RLs) for Herbicides and TRPH. Pesticides 4,4'DDE, 4,4'DDT and Toxaphene were found in concentrations two orders of magnitude below published California Preliminary Remedial Goals (PRG).

With respect to the RECs assessed (CAM-17 metals, herbicides, TRPH, and common pesticides), analytical data suggest that these compounds are not present on the property at concentrations that pose a risk to human health or the environment; nor do they exceed regulatory standards. Based upon the results of the assessment no further investigation was recommended.

Limited Phase 2 – Site Investigation

Limited Phase 2-Site Investigation (Limited Phase 2) was conducted on the existing BCAG transit facility site to evaluate potential impacts to the shallow soils from a leach system connected to an existing oil/water separator. The assessment performed consisted of collection of discreet soil samples from four locations. Eight soil samples were collected and analyzed for Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons as Oil & Grease (TPH-o&g), fuel fractions benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene, and

xylene (BTEX), and five Priority Metals (CAM-5). The findings and conclusions of that study concluded that no further evaluation was necessary.

Discussion

a-b) Less than significant: The transport, use, and storage of hazardous materials by any development associated with the General Plan Update would be required to comply with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations during project construction and operation. Facilities that use hazardous materials are required to obtain permits and comply with appropriate regulatory agency standards designed to avoid hazardous waste releases.

The Butte County Environmental Health Department is the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for Butte County and is responsible for consolidating, coordinating, and making consistent the administrative requirements, permits, inspections, and enforcement activities of six state programs regarding the transportation, use, and disposal of hazardous materials in Butte County and the Planning Area. As CUPA, the Environmental Health Department inspects businesses or facilities that handle or store hazardous materials; generate and/or treat hazardous waste; own or operate underground storage tanks; store petroleum in above-ground tanks over State thresholds; and store Federal regulated hazardous materials over State thresholds. These inspections determine compliance with the California Health and Safety Code (HSC), the California Code Regulations (CCR), and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and focus on site inspections, review of Hazardous Material Business Plans, documentation of employee training programs, disposal documentation for hazardous waste generated onsite, and Underground Storage Tank (UST) monitoring records. All development or redevelopment under the General Plan Update that handle or store hazardous materials would be subject to these inspections, which would ensure compliance with state and federal law intended to prevent potential hazards to the public and the environment.

Therefore, even though the proposed project could result in an increase in storage, use, and transportation of hazardous materials and a slight increased exposure of the public to hazardous materials, there are federal, state, and local regulations regarding hazardous material transport, use, and disposal that are currently enforced and would continue to be enforced as discussed above. These regulations provide a comprehensive regulatory system for handling, using, and transporting hazardous materials in a manner that protects human health and the environment. Therefore, potential hazards to the public and the environment would be less than significant.

c) No Impact: There are no existing schools within a ¼ mile of the project site; therefore, there will be no impact.

d) No Impact: A Phase I and limited Phase II assessment were conducted for the project site, which researched the hazardous materials sites database and found that the site is not listed on the registry. Two plumes located east of the project site are listed. However, monitoring wells at Huss Lane and Aztec Drive indicate that the plumes have not intruded on the project site; therefore, there is no impact.

e-f) No Impact: The project is not located within an airport land use zone, nor is it located in the vicinity of any public or private air strips; therefore, there is no impact.

g-h) No Impact: Development of the project includes an extension of Aztec Drive, both to better serve the circulation needs of the project and to provide access for future development to the north and west of the project. Further, infrastructure for water, including fire hydrants, will be extended

along the road extension, increasing access to critical pressurized water sources for emergency fire suppression efforts. The project will enhance fire suppression water supply, emergency access and planning efforts, rather than result in interference; therefore, there will be no impact.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.8 Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?		X		
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			X	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?		X		
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	
e) Create or contribute runoff water, which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			X	
f) Otherwise degrade water quality?				X
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X

Setting

Comanche Creek is located 1,150 feet north of the transit facility site and is the location of the storm drain outfall. Comanche Creek is a tributary to Little Chico Creek and Butte Creek, and flows year-round due to the diversion of waters from Butte Creek for conveyance to agricultural users to the west of the City. (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.9 Hydrology and Water Quality). The proposed project sits within an area classified as flood zone X, as designated by FEMA. This designation is typically found between the 100 and 500 year floodzones and is used to designate base floodplains of lesser hazards.

The aquifer system underlying Chico supplies the municipal and agricultural water demands of the city. Approximately 60 percent of the groundwater pumped for the city and most of the stormwater runoff from impervious development returns to either the groundwater system as recharge or the surface water system as discharge. Another 16 percent returns through septic systems. The portion of water that does not return to the aquifer is consumed by landscape plants, lost through evapotranspiration, or discharged as treated wastewater to the Sacramento River. In addition, the groundwater system is largely sustained by recharge in the foothills located east of Chico, streamflow infiltration from Big Chico and Little Chico Creeks and Lindo Channel, and to a lesser degree by direct infiltration of precipitation. The Lower Tuscan Formation is the primary groundwater-producing aquifer in the region (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.9 Hydrology and Water Quality).

The proposed project is the acquisition of adjacent land and the expansion and construction of a transit and maintenance facility. Phase II of the project will result in approximately 129,971 square feet of impervious surfaces, which include the structures and non-porous concrete paving over the bus maintenance areas and parking. Phase III will add an additional 16,755 square feet of impervious surfacing, should it be implemented. Design of the project incorporates bioswales around the perimeter, which will be designed to capture and filter the majority of stormwater runoff from the yard. Staff and visitor parking areas will be surfaced with pervious paving that will allow stormwater infiltration, and covers 53,046 square feet of the site in Phase II, and an additional 4,200 square feet in Phase III. Site circulation and landscaping, including the bioswales will cover approximately 43 percent of the site, refer to **Table 9**.

**Table 9
Summary of Proposed Project's Surfacing.**

Surfacing	Phase II (2022)		Phase III (2032)	
	Area (sq. ft.)	Percentage of Site	Area (sq. ft.)	Percentage of Site
Impervious (i.e., concrete paving, buildings, etc.)	129,971	40	146,726	41
Pervious Paving (staff and visitor parking areas)	53,046	17	57,246	16
Site circulation/landscape/setback/easements (i.e., landscaping, bioswales, etc.)	137,262	43	152,992	43
Total Site Requirements	320,279	100	356,982	100

A storm drain extension will be necessary to drain on-site surface storm water that does not infiltrate onsite, and will be installed running westward along the north side of the Aztec Drive Extension and across a portion of an agricultural field north to the UPRR. At the existing railroad spur, the storm pipe will be jacked and bored under the spur to lie between the spur and the UPRR tracks, where the storm drain will run parallel with the tracks in a northward direction to an existing outfall on the south bank of Comanche Creek. Discharge will be similar to existing levels due to the use of onsite bioswales and pervious paving; however, the storm drain and outfall will be designed to accommodate existing and future development of adjacent parcels to the north and west of the project site.

There are existing storm drainage facilities to the east of the new drainage area. These facilities include a storm drain main in Huss Drive that flows north to an outfall at Comanche Creek. This storm drain was built in 1989 for the Oates Business Park and sized to accept runoff solely from that project. Some development has occurred in the new drainage area including a small transit facility, business incubator, old Knudsen facility, and Sierra Nevada Brewery rail spur. Both the transit center and business incubator have storm drainage infiltration trenches with temporary overflow connections to the Oates Business Park storm drain line. Ultimately these properties will need to connect to the BCAG outfall and plug or remove the connections into the existing Huss Drive SD line. Both the old Knudsen facility and Sierra Nevada rail spur are constructed with overland drainage with eventual outfall to Comanche Creek. Provisions for future connections to a storm drain main have been included in the plans for the future development of the Sierra Nevada Brewery site (not a part of this project), to the north of the project site.

The Chico Storm Water Management Program is a comprehensive program developed and administered by the Engineering Division as a requirement of Phase II of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program. The program comprises various elements and activities designed to reduce stormwater pollution to the maximum extent practicable (MEP) and eliminate prohibited non-stormwater discharges in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.

The Chico Storm Drainage Master Plan provides a conceptual blueprint for development of the City's storm runoff management infrastructure as Chico grows and expands and areas within the

Sphere of Influence become more urbanized. The document includes storm drain facility design standards and descriptions of mitigation measures to convey runoff, attenuate peak flows, and stabilize stream channels, as well as best management practices for water quality enhancement at construction sites and new developments.

The Chico Municipal Code prohibits discharges of storm runoff to sanitary sewers (Title 15: Water and Sewers), regulates development in floodplains and alteration of watercourses (Title 16: Buildings and Construction), provides for preservation and enhancement of riparian habitat (Title 18: Subdivisions), and establishes design criteria and improvement standards for storm drain management and facilities (Title 18R: Design Criteria and Improvements Standards), development standards in floodplains (Title 16R.37: Floodplain Standards), and development and use standards for creek-side areas (Title 19: Land Use and Development).

Discussion

a, c) Less than significant with mitigation: The project site is an agricultural field that contains no drainages or wetland features. Grading and vegetation removal activities would result in the exposure of soil materials to the natural elements (wind, rain, etc.). During precipitation events, soil erosion can impact the surface runoff by increasing the amount of silt and debris carried by runoff. In addition, refueling and parking of construction equipment and other vehicles on-site during construction may result in spills of oil, grease, or related pollutants that may discharge from the site. Improper handling, storage, or disposal of fuels and hazardous materials or improper cleaning of machinery could leave the construction site and cause water quality degradation.

In the long-term operation of the transit facility, motor vehicle operation and maintenance typically introduces oil, antifreeze, and other petroleum-based products, heavy metals such as copper from brake linings, and surfactants from cleaners and waxes into runoff. However, stormwater runoff in the bus yard and maintenance areas will drain to the City's wastewater system and will adhere to City requirements for the stormwater drainage (oil/grease separators, etc.). No significant impacts to water quality are expected as a result of the daily operations of the transit facility.

Impacts from this project are expected to result primarily from potential construction-related site runoff. Construction activities associated with development of the transit facility site and storm drain installation will result in the exposure of soils to the weather elements. A grading permit from the City of Chico and an NPDES permit will be required for the project, which will set forth additional BMPs related to construction-related mitigation, including dust control.

A storm drain outfall will be constructed on the south bank of Comanche Creek to accommodate the proposed transit facility and anticipated growth along Aztec Drive, which will require the temporary installment of a coffer dam to dewater the creek during construction of the outfall. However, the construction will not result in the permanent alteration of the course of the Creek. Because construction of the new outfall will be located within the stream bank, a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) from the Department of Fish and Game will be required, as well as Nationwide Permit (NWP) 404 and 401. Further, both temporary and permanent measures will need to be in place to ensure erosion and siltation will not enter Comanche Creek either during or after construction activities. Mitigation Measure **MM Water Quality 1** will ensure impacts relating to erosion and siltation during construction of the outfall will be less than significant.

b) Less than significant: Although water infrastructure for industrial and fire suppression purposes will be extended throughout the site and along the Aztec Drive extension, actual water use

associated with the project is expected to be similar to the existing transit facility's usage. Further, development of the site is consistent with that anticipated in the City's 2030 General Plan and was considered in the associated EIR, which was certified in 2011. Because the proposed facility is expected to be similar to the existing facility, the impact will be less than significant.

d-e) Less than significant: Approximately 40 percent of the project development will consist of impervious surfacing, primarily a result of buildings and concrete pavement for the bus yard. The maintenance yard's polluted runoff is designed to drain to the City's wastewater system. The remaining impervious areas will drain to bioswales located at the perimeter of the site. The bioswales will capture and filter the majority of the storm runoff, and allow the water to infiltrate as much as possible. Staff and visitor parking areas (approximately 16 percent of the site) will be covered with pervious paving without curbs, which will allow any stormwater unable to infiltrate through the pervious paving to run off into the landscaped/planted areas and bioswales. Any overrun of stormwater will then enter the storm drainage system, which drains to Comanche Creek.

The stormwater drainage system will be constructed to accommodate runoff associated with the project, as well as anticipated growth along the Aztec Drive extension. Construction of the stormwater drain will require laying pipe adjacent to Aztec Drive extension on the north side, across a portion of an agricultural field, under the existing railroad spur, parallel to the UPRR track to a proposed outfall into Comanche Creek. A concrete outfall on the south bank of Comanche Creek will be installed.

In summary, the site design intends for the majority of site stormwater runoff to infiltrate onsite through the construction of bioswales, pervious surfacing and landscaped areas. Furthermore, the existing stormdrain infrastructure will be upgraded to accommodate projected development of the portion of the Hegan lane Business Park, south of Huss Lane. Therefore, impacts from alteration of drainage or runoff patterns will be less than significant.

f) No Impact: No additional impacts to water quality are anticipated that have not already been discussed [see discussion under item (a), above]. Therefore, there will be no additional impacts to water quality.

g-j) No Impact: The project is not located within a floodzone or flood hazard area, nor is it located in a dam inundation area. Therefore, there will be no impacts from flooding or inundation.

Mitigation

MM Water Quality 1 – To minimize potential erosion and siltation entering Comanche Creek during construction activities associated with the storm drain infrastructure and outfall replacement, the following BMPs shall be required and incorporated into the all Contract Documents and Construction Plans for the project and implemented by the contractor to protect water quality:

- a) Construction crews shall be instructed in preventing and minimizing pollution on the job.
- b) Interim erosion control measures may be needed and shall be installed during construction to assure adequate erosion control facilities are in place at all times.

- c) All slopes greater than 10% and less than 50% that are free of vegetation shall have earthguard applied, mulch spread and tacked down or plastic sheeting prior to a 30% chance of rain.
- d) Ensure all SWPPP measures are in place prior to a 30% chance of rain.
- e) Dust control measures in the form of water application to all exposed soil surfaces to prevent the transport of soil from exposed surfaces on construction sites in the form of airborne particulates watering of exposed soil surfaces shall occur at least twice daily, preferably in the late morning and after work is done for the day. All clearing, grading, earth moving or excavation activities shall cease when winds exceed 20 mph.
- f) If the construction site is to remain inactive longer than 3 months the site shall be stabilized by applying "earth guard" or seeded and watered until grass cover is grown or other approved method.
- g) Inspect sediment control devices after each storm and remove sediment.
- h) During long periods of rain and high intensity rainfall SWPPP measures may become clogged. Extreme care should be taken to clean SWPPP measures to reduce fugitive discharge and potential flooding.
- i) Be prepared for rain and have the necessary materials onsite before the rainy season.
- j) Inspect all BMP's before and after each storm event. Maintain BMP's on regular basis and replace as necessary, through the entire course of construction.
- k) For additional storm water pollution prevention measures see approved SWPPP drawing and verbiage.

4.9 Land Use and Planning

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Be consistent with General Plan or Specific Plan policies or zoning regulations?				X
b) Physically divide an established community?				X
c) Conflict with any Resource Management or Resource Conservation Plan?				X
d) Result in a substantial conflict with the established character, aesthetics, or functioning of the surrounding community?				X
e) Result in a project that is part of a larger project involving a series of cumulative actions?			X	
f) Result in the displacement of people or business activity?				X

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
g) Conversion of viable prime agricultural land and/or land under agricultural contract to non-agricultural use, or substantial conflicts with existing agricultural operations? (Viable agricultural land is defined as land on Class I or Class II agricultural soils or 5 acres or greater, adjacent on no more than one side to existing urban development.			X	

Setting

General Plan Designation and Zoning

The project site is zoned Light Manufacturing/Industrial (ML) by the City of Chico. The western and southern boundary coincide with the City of Chico’s city limits. Adjacent County zoning designations include Agriculture – 20 acre minimum to the west, and zoned Agriculture – 5 acre minimum to the south (**Figure 4**). County General Plan designations in these same areas are consistent with zoning, and designated for Agriculture.

Much of the surrounding landscape has historically been agricultural in nature, primarily orchards, and light residential development since the 19th century. A portion of the project site and the region to the west of the project site, beyond the UPRR tracks, is considered prime farmland under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.2 Agricultural Resources, Figure 4.2-1). Other areas in the immediate vicinity are identified as “Urban and Built-Up Land.”

The project is located within the City limits of Chico and is bordered by industrial development to the south and east (**Figure 3**). The subject property is designated Manufacturing and Warehousing in the City’s 2030 General Plan, and zoned Light Manufacturing/Industrial (ML) (**Figure 4**). The transit facility is an allowed use under current zoning. The existing land use of a portion of the project site (7.4 acres) proposed for acquisition is currently underutilized agricultural. The remaining project site (2.6 acres) is the location of the existing transit facility, which will be demolished as part of the proposed project.

The proposed project is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park. The project is consistent with the industrial zoning and land use designation that has been established since the Park was founded in 1989. The industrial uses within the Park were also identified and analyzed in the recently adopted 2030 General Plan and associated EIR.

The City has designated a firm boundary between urban and rural uses on the community’s western edge, known as the Greenline, for over thirty years. The Greenline is located along the City’s western City limit and is an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) that is coordinated by both the City of Chico and Butte County (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.2 Agricultural Resources) (**Figure 2**). Land to the west of the City and the Greenline is almost exclusively agricultural, while much of the land to the north and east of the City is used for grazing (City of Chico, 2011; Open Space and Environment Element). In the project area, the Greenline follows Hagen Lane on the south side, the

UPRR track on the west side and Comanche Creek on the north. The project properties are located east of the Greenline, inside the area indicated for development.

Discussion

a, b, d) No Impact: The proposed transit facility project is an expansion of the existing B-Line facility, which is located in the Hegan Lane Business Park. The facility will increase in size from 2.6 acres to 10.0 acres with the acquisition of 7.4 acres of land located to the west that is currently utilized as an agricultural field. The area proposed for acquisition lies between the existing facility and the UPRR railroad tracks, which forms the Greenline and separates lands intended for urban development from agricultural land uses. The properties are zoned for light industrial uses and the project is consistent with both the zoning and the existing development in the area. Further, the project will not divide an established community; therefore, there will be no impact.

c) No Impact: The BRCP is in the development phase. Because no HCP/NCCP is adopted as of yet, there are no conflicts and no impacts.

e) Less than significant: This project is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park, which is a planned industrial development founded in 1989. Further, the Park itself, and potential impacts resulting from the full buildout of the remaining parcels, has been included and analyzed in the City's 2030 General Plan and associated EIR. Additionally, the proposed facility is consistent with existing the existing land use and designation. Therefore, cumulative development of the project site is expected to have a less than significant impact.

f) No Impact: The project is the expansion of an existing use; no people or businesses will be displaced by the project. Therefore, there will be no impact.

g) Less than significant: Although a portion of the project site is identified as prime agricultural lands under the FMMP, the site is located within the City limits, east of the Greenline, as established in the City's 2030 General Plan and as analyzed in the General Plan's EIR. The EIR found the impact resulting from the conversion of farmlands of significance within the City and east of the Greenline to be significant and unavoidable (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.2 Agricultural Resources, page 4.2-18). Further, a statement of overriding consideration was adopted by the City Council for certification of the Final EIR and adoption of the City's 2030 General Plan. The industrial development proposed with this project, including its location within the Hegan Lane Business Park, is consistent with the Policies, Goals, and Objectives within the City's General Plan. Additionally, as part of the Hegan Lane Business Park, which was founded in 1989, the project is consistent with the long-range planning for the site.

The statement of overriding consideration relating directly to agricultural lands that was adopted by the City Council is as follows (Chico, Chico City Council Meeting Minutes, 2011):

“The General Plan Update would result in compact walkable, infill and mixed-use development and redevelopment along transit corridors and at other key locations. The compact growth inherent in the General Plan update Land Use Diagram would reduce the potential for urban sprawl and the demand to convert other open spaces at the community's edges to urban development that would impact agricultural lands, foothills, and sensitive biological habitat.”

In certifying the 2030 General Plan EIR and adopting the General Plan Update, the City Council made the following finding (Chico, Chico City Council Meeting Minutes, 2011):

“The Plan is a comprehensive update of the City’s 1994 General Plan and provides the necessary framework for the long-range development of the City. The Plan establishes allowable uses of land and benefits the public welfare by providing housing and employment to accommodate anticipated future growth. The Plan balances growth and conservation in a manner that will result in reduced impacts on the environment, reduced contributions to global climate change, reduced reliance on oil and other fossil-fuel sources, and decreased consumption.”

For this project, it is noted that the impact has been analyzed in the City’s 2030 General Plan EIR and a statement of overriding consideration adopted; therefore, the impact for this project is considered less than significant.

The project site is not located in an agricultural preserve, nor is the subject property under Williamson Act contract. Further the project is designated MW in the City’s 2030 General Plan, and zoned ML, both of which are for industrial land uses. The subject properties are part of the Hegan Lane Business Park, which was established in 1989, and consist of industrial development (existing transit facility) and an agricultural field – no forest resources exist onsite. Therefore, there will be no conflict with agricultural zoning or Williamson Act contracts.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.10 Noise

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Exposure of residents in new hotels, motels, apartment houses and dwellings (other than single-family dwellings) to interior noise levels (CNEL) higher than 45 dBA in any habitable room with windows closed?				X
b) Exposure of sensitive receptors (residential, parks, hospitals, schools) to exterior noise levels of 60 dBA Ldn or higher?			X	
c) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				X
d) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
e) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
f) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
g) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

Setting

The project is located within a light industrial park and is the replacement and expansion of an existing transit facility. The new facility will accommodate existing and anticipated growth for the B-Line operations, as well as all BCAG administrative functions be consolidated at the transit facility location. Upon completion of the facility, operations will transition to the new facility and the existing facility will be fully demolished for parking areas.

Other noise sources in the area include adjacent industrial land uses and the railroad tracks, which will remain a primary source of noise within the area. Approximately 17 freight trains (at speeds of up to 70 mph) and two Amtrak passenger trains travel along this rail line on a daily basis. Noise levels generated by trains can vary depending on speed, number of engines, track conditions, condition of train wheels, and shielding provided by intervening terrain. Additional factors, such as the sounding of the train horns and the operation of roadside signaling devices can also contribute to overall noise levels. Noise levels associated with train passages can reach levels ranging from 96 to 110 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet from the track centerline. The project is located within the 60 dBA noise contour from the UPRR track (City of Chico, 2011; Section 13 Noise).

The nearest residential noise receptors to the project are located approximately 1,000 feet south of the project site, and on the south side of Hegan Lane. A 250-foot wide strip of undeveloped field lies between two industrial developments and extends from the project site to Hegan Lane (**Figure 2**). Federal guidelines for bus facilities establish limits for vibration screening to a minimum of 100 feet from sensitive receptors (i.e., residences, hotels, etc.).

Discussion

a, b, e) Less than significant: Increases in project-related noise will be temporary as a result of construction activities. The City of Chico requires construction-related activities conform to noise standards, which are as follows (Chico, City of Chico Municipal , 2009; Chapter 9.38):

- Construction hours limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday – Saturday; 10:00 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday and holidays
- Individual devices and equipment limited to 83 dBA at 25 feet from the source
- Noise levels at any point limited to 86 dBA at the property plane

Noise levels associated with transit facility operations will remain relatively consistent with existing operations. Bus operations will increase incrementally from the current capacity to future buildout, with an ultimate projected increase of 14 buses by the year 2032. The Programming Report also identified the potential for adding additional services past the current 9:30 PM time. However, the Hegan Lane area is recognized in the City’s General Plan Noise Element as an industrial area with related noise sources and ambient noise levels (City of Chico, 2011; Section 13).

Further, the project is the expansion of an existing use and facility, is located in an industrial zoned area, and is consistent with surrounding land uses.

With adherence to the City's noise ordinance standards, identified above, impacts from noise will be less than significant.

c) No Impact: Potential sources of groundborne vibration or noise include grading, trenching and boring activities associated with site preparation for construction of the facility; infrastructure for water, wastewater, power, and stormwater drainage; and the Aztec Drive extension. Additionally, upon completion of the new transit facility, B-Line operations will vacate the existing facility, which will be subsequently demolished and paved for parking areas. Although these activities will result in some localized groundborne vibration and noise, the site is surrounded by light industrial development and uses, as well as the UPRR that borders the site to the west, and will be a continuation of an existing use. Potential sensitive receptors would include residences, which are not close enough to be impacted by this temporary source of noise. Because there will be no substantial permanent increase in existing ambient noise levels, there will be no impact.

d) Less than significant: Once project-related construction is complete, the transit facility will operate at levels consistent with existing B-Line operations. The exception being that upon relocation of BCAG administrative offices, passenger vehicle traffic will initially increase to accommodate 12 additional staff onsite. The new facility will be sized to accommodate anticipated growth, including the B-Line administration and operations and BCAG administration. The Programming Report prepared for the project identified a need for an additional 14 buses and 65 staff by 2032 for B-Line operations, and an additional 8 BCAG staff. Although the future expansion of the bus fleet and staffing will result in an incremental increase in ambient noise levels, it is consistent with surrounding industrial land uses. Further, the rail traffic on the UPRR will continue to be the major source of noise in the project vicinity.

Furthermore, design of the project reduces the impact of permanent ambient noise levels by locating bus maintenance facilities interior of the project (towards the UPRR tracks and behind the operations and administration building (**Figure 7**)). Bus maintenance activities, which typically require the use of noise producing tools (air compressors, power tools, etc.) will be located within the maintenance building. Additionally, 91 trees will be planted onsite, primarily throughout the staff and employee parking areas and street frontages, which will help soften noise related to maintenance activities occurring within the development.

Because the project is replacement of an existing use, and design of the new facilities includes placing noise-producing maintenance activities interior of the project, increases in ambient noise levels is expected to be less than significant.

f-g) No Impact: The project is not located within an airport land use zone, nor is it located in the vicinity of any public or private air strips; therefore, there is no impact.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.11 Population and Housing

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
d) Conflict with General Plan population growth rates for its planning areas in conjunction with other recently approved development?				X

Setting

The project site is zoned for industrial development and is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park, in the southwestern portion of the City (**Figure 4**). Light industrial land uses are located to the south and east, the UPRR tracks to the west, and agricultural land to the north. The project would not inhibit or encourage substantial growth outside of what is already anticipated by the City of Chico and Butte County.

Discussion

a-d) No Impact: The project site is zoned for light manufacturing and development. Current site conditions include an agricultural field and the existing transit facility. The project will not induce population growth into the area, or displace housing or people through its construction. Additionally, the project is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park, which was founded in 1989. The project is consistent with the surrounding land uses and zoning: therefore, there will be no impact.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.12 Public Services

Would the project: result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Fire protection?				X
b) Police protection?				X
c) Schools?				X
d) Parks? (See Section 4.15 Open Space/Recreation)				X
e) Maintenance of public facilities, including roads, canals, etc.?				X
f) Other government facilities?				X

Setting

The project is located within the Hegan Lane Business Park and is served by City of Chico services. The proposed project is the acquisition of land and the expansion and construction of a transit and maintenance facility in support of a public service. Upon occupancy of the new transit and maintenance facility, the existing facility will be demolished and the site repaved for employee and visitor parking.

The Chico Fire Department, the Butte County Fire Department, and Cal Fire provide protection in Chico and the unincorporated areas immediately surrounding the City. The Chico Fire Department operates six fire stations within the City; the nearest stations (Stations No. 1 and 4) are located at West 9th and Salem Streets, and Notre Dame Boulevard and Forest Avenue.

Discussion

a-f) No Impact: Expansion of the transit facility to provide adequate facilities for the B-Line public transportation fleet and system, and inclusion of BCAG administration into the site will provide consolidated operations, with the intent of a more efficient and comprehensive operating and maintenance facility. The project will have no impact on emergency response routes or limiting factors associated with access. Appropriate emergency access will be integrated into the design of the project, including buildings, parking areas, and street extensions through the adherence to the California UBC and City of Chico regulations. The site design includes six driveways for ingress/egress; three each on Huss Lane and the Aztec Drive extension. Further, fire hydrants will be extended along the Aztec Drive extension, increasing access to critical pressurized water sources for emergency fire suppression efforts. The project will enhance and improve fire suppression water supply, and emergency access. The project is the expansion of an existing facility to accommodate existing needs and projected buildout. The project is not growth inducing and will not impact schools, parks, or public facilities; therefore, there will be no impact.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.13 Open Space/Recreation

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Affect lands preserved under an open space contract or easement?				X
b) Affect an existing or potential community recreation area?				X
c) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
d) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X

Setting

The City of Chico maintains a substantial amount of parklands, open space, and recreational facilities that meet the needs of residents within the City and regional area. The proposed project is the acquisition of land and construction of a transit and maintenance facility in support of a public service. Upon occupancy of the new transit and maintenance facility, the existing facility will be demolished and the site repaved for employee and visitor parking. The project site is located in the Hegan Land Business Park. The City of Chico only requires dedication of parkland for residential projects. The proposed project includes landscape improvements and building setbacks that would allow for public use.

Discussion

a) No Impact: Neither the existing site of the facility development, nor the area proposed for acquisition are preserved under an open space contract or easement. Therefore, there will be no impact.

b-d) No Impact: The City of Chico does not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities for industrial projects. Construction of the proposed project includes streetscape improvements consisting of shade trees, wider public street areas, picnic benches, and outdoor grill area. These public areas will likely be utilized primarily by employees of the BCAG facilities, but may also include employees of adjacent industrial development. The inclusion of these areas in the site design provide outdoor space and facilities for the expanded transit facility and BCAG administrative employees. The proposed project would not induce population growth directly or indirectly, nor would it increase demand for or use of existing neighborhood and/or regional parks; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.14 Traffic and Transportation

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?				X

Setting

The proposed project is the acquisition of adjacent land and the expansion and construction of a transit and maintenance facility in support of a public transportation service. Upon occupancy of the new transit and maintenance facility, the existing facility will be demolished and the site repaved for employee and visitor parking. The City of Chico strives to maintain Level of Service (LOS) C on residential streets and LOS D or better on arterial streets and collector streets, at all intersections and on principal arterials. LOS E is allowed on arterials that are served by transit.

Hegan Lane is a 2-lane arterial road, which feeds into East Park Avenue and Midway. Park Avenue is a four-lane arterial road, undivided, and operates at a PM Peak LOS C. Midway currently operates at PM Peak LOS D from the intersection of East Park Avenue to the Hegan Lane (1,400 peak hour traffic), and a PM Peak LOS C from Hegan Lane to Sandrill Court (900 peak hour traffic). The signal at Midway and Hegan Lane operates at a PM Peak LOS B. The signal at Park Avenue and Midway operates at a PM Peak LOS C. BCAG's Regional Transportation Plan includes a plan to widen Midway to four lanes between Park Avenue and Hegan Lane (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.5 Traffic Circulation).

The B-Line offers 20 fixed-route bus lines in the County, including service in and between the communities of Chico, Oroville, and Paradise. Thirteen of the 20 routes stop in the City of Chico. Annually, the B-Line serves approximately 850,000 riders on its fixed routes in Chico (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.5 Traffic Circulation).

BCAG is responsible for developing the County's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and participates in the state/federal effort known as the Traffic Implementation Plan (TIP), which was last updated in 2012. The Butte County RTP was last updated in 2008 (BCAG, 2008) and the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) was recently adopted on September 27, 2012. The FTIP identifies funding for the Transit Facility (FTIP page 72, CTIPS ID #2002-000-0106).

Discussion

a) Less than significant: This public transportation related project is intended to make the existing B-Line operations more efficient and accommodate anticipated growth within the County through the year 2032. In general, public transportation projects are intended to help relieve congestion and provide alternative means of travel to the individual vehicle. Collector and arterial roadways in the vicinity of the Huss Lane facility operate at acceptable levels as indicated in the City's 2032 General Plan. Further, the project is the replacement of an existing facility, the operations of which will not change substantially within the next 5-10 years. It is anticipated that the operation of the facility will expand by 14 buses and 66 staff by the year 2032. The project will not conflict with applicable plans, ordinances or policies. There will be a slight incremental increase in traffic on area roads with full buildout; however, the impact will be less than significant.

b) Less than significant: A significant impact may occur if the traffic associated with the proposed project exceeds the capacity of the existing circulation system, based on an applicable measure of effectiveness. It is anticipated that the operation of the facility will expand by 14 buses and 66 staff by 2032. However, the proposed project will have a minimal increase in peak hour traffic, primarily related to arrival and departure of staff. The purpose of the project is to expand the existing B-Line facility to accommodate existing and projected growth, and is intended to create efficiencies for public transportation operations and maintenance. The project will not conflict with any congestion management programs. There will be a slight incremental increase in traffic on area roads with full buildout; however, due to the limited increase in staffing over the next 20 years, the impact will be less than significant

c) No Impact: The project is not located within an airport land use zone, nor is it located in the vicinity of any public or private air strips. Therefore, there is no impact.

d-e) No Impact: Appropriate emergency access will be integrated into the design of the project, including buildings, parking areas, and street extensions through the adherence to the California UBC and City of Chico regulations. Development of the project includes an extension of Aztec Drive,

both to better serve the circulation needs of the project and to provide access for future development to the north and west. Further, infrastructure for water, including fire hydrants, will be extended along the road extension, increasing access to critical pressurized water sources for emergency fire suppression efforts. The project will enhance and improve fire suppression water supply, emergency access and planning efforts. Therefore, there will be no impact.

f-g) No Impact: Expansion of the transit facility to provide adequate facilities for the B-Line public transportation fleet and system, and inclusion of BCAG administration into the site, will provide consolidated operations with the intent of a more efficient and comprehensive operations and maintenance facility. The project will accommodate anticipated needs identified in its B-Line Transit Facility Needs (Appendix A), and enhance BCAG’s ability to provide this public transportation service. There will be no decrease in public transportation performance or safety, therefore there will be no impact.

Mitigation

None Required.

4.15 Utilities and Service Systems

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Water for domestic use and fire protection?			X	
b) Natural gas, electricity, telephone or other communications?			X	
c) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Water Quality Control Board?			X	
d) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
e) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
f) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			X	
g) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves/may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project’s projected demand in addition to the provider’s existing commitments?			X	

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
h) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				X
i) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

Setting

The sole source of water supply for the customers of the Chico District is groundwater extracted from subbasins of the Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin (SVGB). Since the SBGB is unadjudicated, the water provider, Cal Water, considers the theoretical supply for the Chico District to be the total design capacity of all the active wells, which is 99,200 acre feet per year (af/yr). Further, historical data indicates that water level decreases in the groundwater basin are seasonal and that the groundwater basin typically recharges during the winter months (City of Chico, 2010; Section 4.2 Public Services and Utilities).

The proposed project is the acquisition of adjacent land, construction of a new transit and maintenance facility, and demolition of the existing transit facility. A revised storm drain infrastructure and outfall is included in the project to accommodate runoff from existing and future development, and will be installed running westward along the north side of the Aztec Drive extension. At the existing Sierra Nevada Brewery-owned railroad spur, the storm drain pipe will be jacked and bored under the spur to lie between the spur and the Union Pacific railroad tracks, where the storm drain line will run parallel with the tracks in a northward direction to an outfall into Comanche Creek. Discharge from the project site is expected to be similar to existing levels due to pervious pavement over the employee and visitor parking areas, and the installation of bioswales around the perimeter of the project.

Discussion

a-d, f-g) Less than significant: This project is the replacement and expansion of an existing transit facility and will include administrative offices for BCAG which is currently located at 2580 Sierra Sunrise Terrace, Suite 100, on the east side of Chico. Relocating the current BCAG staff to the proposed transit facility, will result in an initial staff increase of 12 employees. At full buildout (2032), B-Line and BCAG staffing at the site is projected to increase by 66 employees. Landscaping plans for the project will comply with City ordinances regarding water-efficient landscaping and irrigation. Water lines will be extended along the Aztec Drive extension (included in this project) to serve the project site and adjacent parcels as they develop, and for installation of a fire hydrant system. Electricity, natural gas, and communications associated with the proposed facility are expected to remain consistent with existing facility use. Although the project will result in incremental growth, it will not require the expansion of existing water or wastewater facilities that would result in significant environmental effects; therefore, impacts will be less than significant.

e) Less than significant: The majority of site stormwater runoff will be accommodated onsite through the construction of bioswales, pervious surfacing and landscaped areas. Furthermore, the existing stormdrain infrastructure will be resized to accommodate additional capacity associated with future development to the north and west. The project will result in approximately 146,726

square feet of impervious surfaces, which include the structures and non-porous concrete paving over the bus maintenance areas and parking. Design of the project incorporates bioswales around the perimeter, which will be designed to capture and filter the majority of stormwater runoff from the yard. Staff and visitor parking areas will be surfaced with pervious paving that will allow stormwater infiltration, and consists of 57,264 square feet of the site. Planted areas, including the bioswales will cover 152,992 square feet (see **Table 4**).

A storm drain pipeline and outfall will be installed from the project, north to Comanche Creek, as described above. Environmental impacts associated with the construction of the line and outfall have been discussed in previous sections. No additional impacts that have not already been discussed and addressed will occur; therefore, impacts will be less than significant.

h-i) No Impact: Solid waste generated in the City is disposed of primarily at the Neal Road Sanitary Landfill, which is located at 1023 Neal Road in unincorporated Butte County, approximately seven miles southeast of Chico. The landfill is expected to operate until 2033 accommodating a 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent annual increase in waste due to anticipated growth in Chico and Butte County (City of Chico, 2011; Section 4.12 Public Services and Utilities). The landfill has sufficient capacity to accommodate project growth within the City, with which this project is consistent, and will comply with federal, state and local statutes for operations; therefore, there will be no impact as a result of this project.

Mitigation

None Required.

5. Mandatory Findings of Significance

Mandatory Findings of Significance	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?			X	
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

Setting

Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the circumstances under which a lead agency must prepare an EIR. The Mandatory Findings of Significance must present the proposed project within the context of §15065. The Mandatory Findings must be rooted in “substantial evidence, in light of the whole record.”

Discussion

a) Less than significant: Although no individuals were identified, potential impacts associated with nesting and foraging habitat of the western burrowing owl, Swainson’s hawks, and migratory birds and raptors were identified. Additionally, there is the remote possibility of unearthing historic or prehistoric artifacts during ground disturbing activities. However, mitigation (**MM Biological 1-7**) has been identified for each of these potential impacts, which will ensure that impacts are reduced to levels of less than significant (see Section 4.3 Biological Resources).

b-c) Less than significant: The proposed project is consistent with existing land uses within the project area, which is zoned for light industrial uses. Potential cumulative impacts resulting from the project would most likely be related to air quality contaminants or greenhouse gases

(GHGs). The City's CAP states that no single land use project could generate enough GHG emissions to noticeably change the global average temperature (Chico, Climate Action Plan, 2012). B-Line operations will continue to operate at existing levels for the near future. However, by the year 2032 it is anticipated they will need to expand their fleet by 14 buses. These needs were anticipated in part through the City's CAP process, which identified a number of objectives involving public transportation to reduce GHG emissions within the City (Chico, Climate Action Plan, 2012; Objectives 1.3, 1.8).

The City and BCAG, who administers the B-Line, established a program to subsidize transit passes for employers and employees who work or live within the Central Business District of Chico. Bus passes are also provided to City of Chico employees and CSU, Chico staff and students. As a result of this program, an estimated 4,308 MtCO₂e of GHG emissions will be reduced over the next 20 years (Chico, Climate Action Plan, 2012).

In 2009/10, the Butte County Association of Governments conducted a Market Based Transit Study of the Butte Regional Transit System (B-Line) to determine user needs and to improve transit productivity. Based on the study's recommendations, regional and Chico routes were adjusted to improve on-time performance and to establish an express bus route providing service to Chico from the south end of the town, through the major points of destination every 15 minutes. Changes in hours of route operations, and identification of additional transfer locations were also achieved. Comparing ridership in a calendar month before and after the improvements (November 2009 to November 2011) reveals that B-Line ridership in Chico has increased approximately 9 percent and that the increasing ridership trend is continuing. It was estimated that this increase bus ridership decreased annual GHG emissions by 4,846 MtCO₂e (Chico, Climate Action Plan, 2012).

Natural gas is a clean-burning alternative to gasoline or diesel for municipal and private fleet vehicles. While natural gas is a fossil fuel, it has lower carbon emissions per unit of energy than gasoline or diesel. Since the 2005 base year, the Butte Regional Transit System (B-Line) has been converting its regional and local buses to use CNG. The City will also consider the purchase of CNG vehicles and equipment where feasible. This action is estimated to reduce annual GHG emissions by 187 MtCO₂e (Chico, City of Chico Climate Action Plan, 2012).

While the construction and operational activities and addition of 14 buses will result in an incremental increase in GHG emissions, the increases are expected to be offset through the correlating reduction in private vehicle travel by use of public transportation. The GHG emissions for the proposed project meet the state's 30 percent reduction targets per AB 32 and the City of Chico's 25 percent reduction targets and exceed this by 8 percent. Further the proposed project is intended to reduce regional commuter trips by increasing mass transit use and thus reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT). While the total reduction in VMT has not been quantified, this reduction in VMT would also contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions. Therefore, the project's incremental increase associated with increased traffic in the project vicinity would not contribute to regional and global GHG emissions. The proposed project would not generate GHG, either directly or indirectly, nor conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions. This impact would be less than significant.

6. Determination

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below could be potentially affected by this project; however, with the incorporation of mitigation measures, potentially significant impacts are reduced to less than significant level by the project" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15382).

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural/Forestry Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards/Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population & Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

CEQA Determination:

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Kamie Loeser

Signature

12-19-12

Date

Kamie Loeser

Printed Name

BCAG

For

7. Preparers and References

Report Preparation

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8. Acronyms and Abbreviations

Agencies, Boards, Commissions, Districts:

AQMD	Air Quality Management District
BCAG	Butte County Council of Governments
BCAQMD	Butte County Air Quality Management District
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CATS	Chico Area Transit System
CFD	Chico Fire Department
CSU	California State University
CUPA	Certified Unified Program Agency
DFG	(California) Department of Fish and Game
DWR	(California) Department of Water Resources
DTSC	(California) Department of Toxic Substances Control
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FRAQMD	Feather River Air Quality Management District
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
HSC	Health and Safety Code
ISZ	Industrial Service Zone
JPA	Joint Powers Authority
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NAHC	Native American Historic Commission
NOAA	National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration
NRDC	Natural Resources Defense Council
NSVAB	Northern Sacramento Valley Air Board
RTPA	Regional Transportation Authority
RTAC	Regional Targets Advisory Committee
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SJVAPCD	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
SMAQMD	Sacramento Air Quality Management District
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Guidelines, Policies, Programs, Regulations:

AB	Assembly Bill
A-P EFZ	Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act
BCGP	Butte County General Plan
BMP	Best Management Practice
BRCP	Butte Regional Conservation Plan
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CE	Categorical Exclusion
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality

CEQA.....	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA.....	California Endangered Species Act
CFR.....	Code of Federal Regulations
CFGC.....	California Fish and Game Code
CWA.....	Clean Water Act
DG.....	Design Guidelines (City of Chico)
EIR.....	Environmental Impact Report
ESA.....	Endangered Species Act
FMMP.....	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
GP.....	General Plan
HCP.....	Habitat Conservation Plan
IWRP.....	Integrated Water Resources Plan
MBTA.....	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MEA.....	Master Environmental Assessment
NCCP.....	Natural Community Conservation Plan
NEPA.....	National Environmental Policy Act
NPDES.....	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NWP.....	Nationwide Permit
PRC.....	Public Resources Code
RTP.....	Regional Transportation Plan
SAA.....	Streambed Alteration Agreement
SVGB.....	Sacramento Groundwater Basin
SWPPP.....	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program
TIP.....	Transportation Improvement Program

Miscellaneous:

AF.....	Acre-feet
AF/YR.....	Acre-feet per Year
ATC.....	Authority to Construct
BAU.....	Business as Usual
CNDDB.....	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL.....	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNG.....	Compressed Natural Gas
CO.....	Carbon Monoxide
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
CSC.....	California Species of Special Concern
dB.....	Decibel(s)
F.....	Fahrenheit
FIRM.....	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FT.....	Foot
GGG.....	Giant Garter Snake
GHG.....	Greenhouse Gases
HDPE.....	High Density Polyethylene
kWh.....	Kilowatt hours
LOS.....	Level of Service
ML.....	Light Manufacturing
MM.....	Mitigation Measure

MTCO ₂ e.....	Metric Tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalents
NO _x	Nitrogen Oxide
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
O ₃	Ozone
PERP	Portable Equipment Registration Program
PM _{10 / 2.5}	Particulate Matter less than 10 / 2.5 Microns
PTO.....	Permit to Operate
ROG	Reactive Organic Gases
R/W.....	Right of Way
SNBC	Sierra Nevada Brewing Company
SD	Storm Drain
SO ₂	Sulfur Dioxide
TAC	Toxic Air Contaminants
UGB	Urban Growth Boundary
UST	Underground Storage Tank
VELB	Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VOC.....	Volatile Organic Compounds

Appendices

Appendix A
Transit Facility Needs

Appendix B

Project Level Air Quality and Greenhouse Gasses Emissions Analysis

Appendix C
Natural Environment Study

Appendix D
Delineation of Waters of the U.S.

Appendix E
Archaeological Inventory Survey

Appendix F
Phase 1-Initial Site Assessment

Appendix G
Phase 2-Environmental Site Investigation

Appendix H
Limited Phase 2-Site Investigation
