Post Camp Fire Regional Population and Transportation Study

Appendix C

Public Outreach

FEHR & PEERS

Fehr & Peers Project # RS19-3800

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Introduction

During November and December 2019, more than 80 people participated in a series of pop-up workshops as part of the Butte County Association of Governments Post Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study. The pop-up workshops provided an opportunity for the project team to engage with communities in Butte County and gather their input on how BCAG can improve their ability to walk, bike, and ride the bus throughout the area.

Project Overview

The Camp Fire created such a fundamental shift in the demographics of Butte County that current levels of population, housing, land use, and travel cannot be reasonably estimated. In addition, the existing long-term forecasts of these planning elements are likely no longer applicable to the region.

The Post-Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study will analyze regional population, housing, employment, and traffic data for pre-Camp Fire 2018, post Camp Fire 2019/20, and future 2030 Camp Fire time periods. The study will develop several scenarios for population and travel for the 2030 and/or 2040 time period(s) based on existing research, empirical data, and existing policies available at the time of study development. In addition, an update of the region's short and mid-term transit plan will be completed with the collected data.

The Study will inform the 2024 RTP/SCS and various land use, transportation, and housing plans and projects beyond the "best available" data used in development of the 2020 RTP/SCS.





Pop-up workshop participants at the Chico Christmas Preview.





Purpose & Format

The pop-up workshop series engaged Butte County residents about the issues they face when trying to get around their communities when walking, biking, or riding the bus. At each of the pop-up workshops the project team provided an opportunity for community members to learn about the study and provide their input through interactive boards. The interactive board questions are listed below:

- What issues do you experience while walking outdoors?
- What issues do you experience while biking outdoors?
- Which of these factors would encourage you to consider riding B-Line bus routes more often?

Community members placed a sticker dot next to their answers or underneath a spectrum of answers on the interactive boards.

Board #1: What issues do you experience while walking outdoors?

This board presented asked participants to share what issues they experience while walking outdoors. The board included five potential responses:

- Missing sidewalks
- Unsafe crossings
- Personal safety
- I don't walk
- No concerns



Board #2: What issues do you experience while biking outdoors?

This board presented asked participants to share what issues they experience while biking outdoors. The board included six potential responses:

- No bike paths/lanes
- No place to park bike at my destination
- High car traffic speed/volume
- I don't bike
- Limited space for bikes on B-line buses
- No concerns



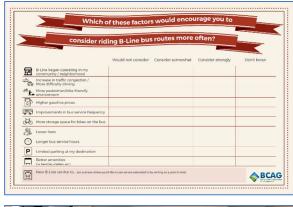




Board #3: Which of these factors would encourage you to consider riding B-Line bus routes more often?

This board asked participants to consider multiple factors relating to an increase in B-Line bus ridership. Participants were asked to place a dot next to the factors they would not consider, consider somewhat, or consider strongly. A "Don't know" option was also provided. The factor options are listed below:

- B-Line began operating in my neighborhood
- Increase in traffic congestion/more difficulty driving
- More pedestrian/bike friendly environment
- Higher gasoline prices
- Improvements in bus service frequency
- More storage for bikes on the bus
- Lower fares
- Longer bus service hours
- Limited parking at my destination
- Better amenities





Paradise Alliance Church Dinner attendees learning about the study and providing input.

Schedule

There were two pop-up workshops between the months of November and early December. The table below shows the dates and locations of each workshop:

November 24	Chico Christmas Preview, Chico, CA
December 5	Paradise Alliance Church Community Dinner, Paradise, CA

The project team received more than 80 responses from community members at the workshops. Below is a compilation of feedback the project team received.



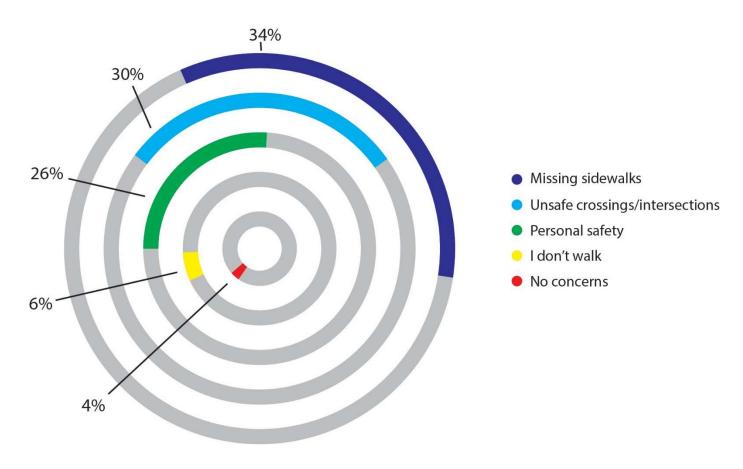


Compilation of Feedback

Community members submitted feedback by writing on post-it notes and placing dots on the interactive boards.

What issues do you experience while walking outdoors?

When asked what issues they experience while walking outdoors, the most frequent response participants chose was the option "Missing sidewalks."

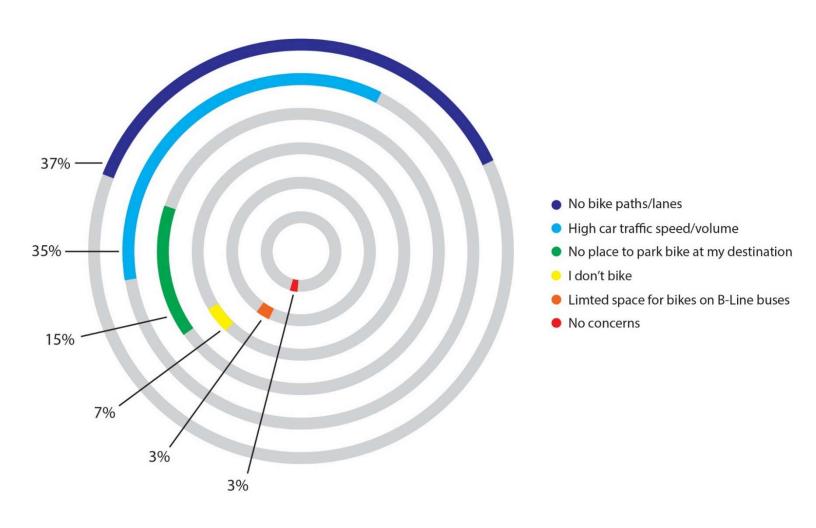






What issues do you experience while biking outdoors?

When asked what issues they experience while biking outdoors, the most frequent response participants chose was the option "No bike paths/lanes."

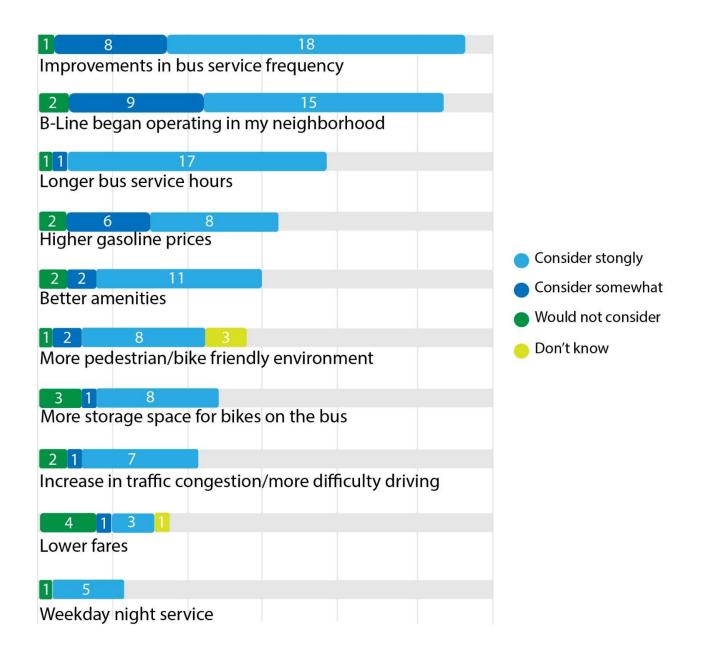






Which of these factors would encourage you to consider riding B-Line bus routes more often?

When asked which factors would encourage them to ride B-Line bus routes more often, the most frequent response participants chose was the option "Improvements in bus service frequency."







Comments

The following is a compilation of comments gathered at the pop-up workshops.

Chico Pop-up

- Board #1: What issues do you experience while walking outdoors?
 - o Road crossings that don't have ramps.
 - o Cars parked on the sidewalk.
 - Vagrant camps in park.
 - o Homeless people with nowhere to go (no affordable housing) are not a "problem" and should not be targeted. Not an issue.
- Board #2: What issues do you experience while biking outdoors?
 - o No lanes on Bruce Road.
 - o Bike theft/poor lighting.
 - o So many bikers on Keefer. So dangerous, no bike lanes or shoulders.
 - o No bike lanes on Mangrove & East Ave.
 - o Unsafe bike passage.
 - o Safety concerns while on the bike path.
 - o No bike path across (Chico State) campus. It's hard to get through.
 - o Chico is known as a bike town but there are hardly any bike lanes. Let's change this!
 - o The bike sensors at lights never work.
 - o Transient homeless population.

Paradise. CA

- Board #1: What issues do you experience while walking outdoors?
 - o I can't see the stripes in the road.
 - o Paradise needs more sidewalks. It's too dangerous to walk.
 - o Pavement conditions are not good.
 - o More well-lit pedestrian crossings.
 - Safe crossings are needed; cars don't stop.
 - Loose/off-leash dogs are bad while walking.
 - o County roads are not paved. They have a lot of holes.
 - Don't need a paved sidewalk as long as it's flat/walkable.
 - o Pence Road has no sidewalks or paved roads.
 - Need more lit "walk" signs at crossings.
- Board #2: What issues do you experience while biking outdoors?
 - o Bike lanes are non-existent in most places throughout Paradise and cars travel too close.





Butte County Association of Governments Post Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study Pop-up Workshops | Winter 2019

Appendix

- Workshop Board Displays
- Survey Cards
- Notification Flier



Post Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study

Virtual Community Engagement Summary | November – December 2020

Introduction

The Camp Fire created such a fundamental shift in the demographics of Butte County that current levels of population, housing, land use, and travel cannot be reasonably estimated. In addition, the existing long-term forecasts of these planning elements are likely no longer applicable to the region.

The Post Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study will analyze regional population, housing, employment, and traffic data for pre-Camp Fire 2018, post Camp Fire 2019/20, and future 2030 Camp Fire time periods. The study will develop several scenarios for population and travel for the 2030 and/or 2040 time period(s) based on existing research, empirical data, and existing policies available at the time of study development. In addition, BCAG is also updating the region's short- and long-range transit plan, also known as the Transit & Non-Motorized Plan. This Plan covers transportation improvements for people who walk, bike, or take transit in Butte County.

In early 2020, the project team held two in-person pop-up workshops to engage community members at local events and gather their input on how BCAG can improve their ability to walk, bike, and ride the bus throughout the region. The team planned to hold in-person community workshops later in the year to discuss potential mobility options.

However, with the continued COVID-19 pandemic and its subsequent health protocols, the project team revised the original outreach approach to instead provide a Virtual Community Workshop for Butte County residents. The workshop was hosted on its own domain (www.ButteTransit.com) in English, Spanish, and Hmong, so community members could participate online at their own convenience.





From top to bottom: The virtual community workshop page, a screenshot from the informational video.

Workshop Purpose and Format

Virtual Community Workshop

The purpose of the virtual community workshop was to build awareness about the study and share proposed mobility options that could be implemented in the Butte County region. These options include: bus system changes such as more service on the weekends or weekdays, more frequent service, and fewer transfers; bicycle and pedestrian improvements; on-demand rideshare; a vanpool program; and an electric vehicle carshare program. The workshop then focused on obtaining community input on participants' travel pattern changes since the COVID-19 pandemic and their thoughts on the proposed mobility options.

Post Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study

Virtual Community Engagement Summary | November – December 2020

The virtual workshop was open from November 19 – December 10. Community members watched a **short, informational video** which introduced the study and provided an overview of the proposed mobility options, along with key community input obtained from the previous outreach effort.

The workshop included fifteen questions focused on:

- Preferred methods of transportation
- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements
- Bus system changes
- Electric Carshare Program
- Vanpool Program
- On-demand Service

Approximately 174 community members participated in the English workshop, and one participated in the Spanish workshop.

Online Community Meeting

To kick-off the virtual community workshop, the project team held a live online community meeting to provide community members with an opportunity to receive an update on the study, learn about the potential mobility options presented in the virtual workshop, and provide their input. The online meeting took place on November 18 from 4:30 – 6:00pm with 36 attendees.





From top to bottom: Part of the informational video, a photo of the online community meeting.

Specific Community Engagement to Disadvantaged Communities

To address barriers to virtual engagement for disadvantaged communities, the project team implemented a targeted outreach and notification plan to community-based organizations that provide services to disadvantaged and historically underserved neighborhoods. Additionally, the project team translated the virtual workshop into Spanish and Hmong, and developed translated closed captions for the informational video.

Results

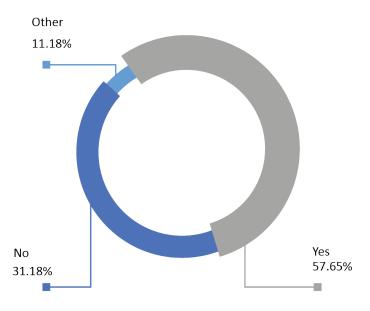
Virtual Community Workshop

Throughout this virtual community workshop, the project team collected feedback from community members in various locations, and age groups. The majority of respondents who took this questionnaire are age 45 – 64. Based on the findings, 52.66% of the respondents are from Chico, 13.6% from Oroville, 17.66% stated other, 8.28% from Paradise, 4.73% from Biggs and 3.55% from Gridley. Below is a summary of key findings from community responses to the virtual workshop. A full list of all comments is available in this document's Appendix.



Question 1: B-Line Ridership

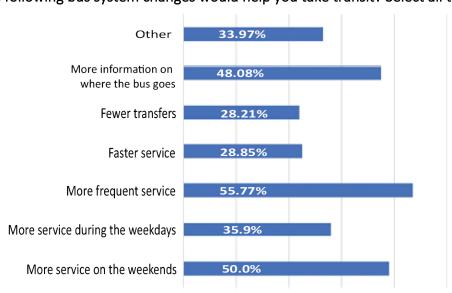
Do you see yourself taking the B-line post-COVID-19?



More than half of the workshop respondents (57.65%) said they do see themselves riding the B-Line post-COVID-19, while almost a third (31.18%) expressed they do not.

Question 2: Bus System Changes

Would any of the following bus system changes would help you take transit? Select all that apply.

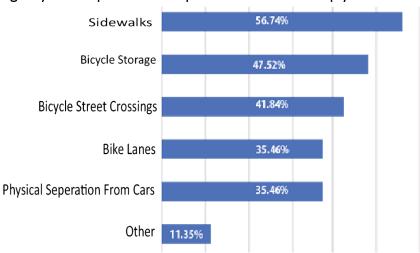


Responses to this question show that participants are interested in a variety of bus system changes, and all the proposed ideas could help them take transit. The top three improvements identified include more frequent bus service (55.77%), more service on the weekends (50%), and more information on where the bus goes (48.08%)



Question 3: Bicycle and Pedestrian Changes

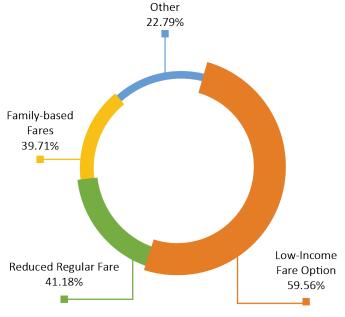
Which of the following bicycle and pedestrian improvements would help you take transit?



Overall, participants shared support for all of the proposed bicycle and pedestrian improvements listed. Notably, more than half of respondents (56.74%) said that sidewalks on their walk to and from bus stops would help. Additionally, approximately 47% stated that bicycle storage facilities at bus stop and transit centers would help them bike to the bus, and approximately 41% said that better street crossings would help them walk to the bus

Question 4: Bus Fare Changes

Which of the following bus fare changes would help you take transit? Select all that apply.

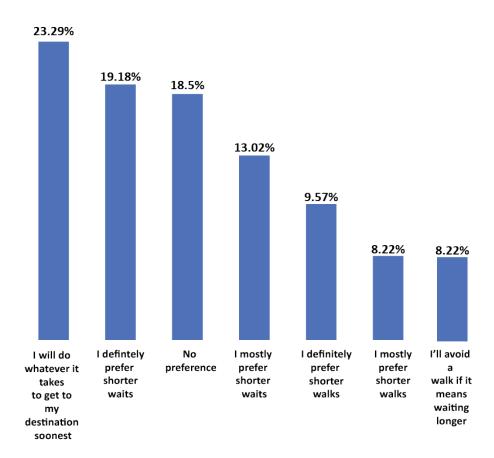


While participants showed similar support for all proposed bus fare changes, nearly 60% said that a low-income fare option for the B-Line would help them take transit.



Question 5: Walking vs. Waiting

Would you rather walk farther, but have a short wait for your bus or walk a short distance, but wait longer for your bus?

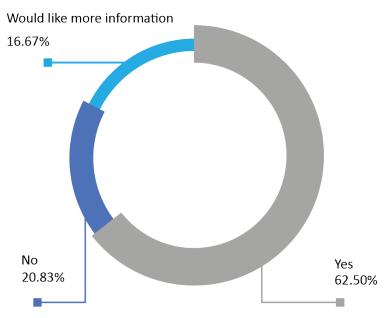


More than a third of respondents (34%) expressed that they would do whatever it takes to get to their destination soonest, while 47% said they mostly or definitely prefer shorter waits.



Question 6: On-Demand Service

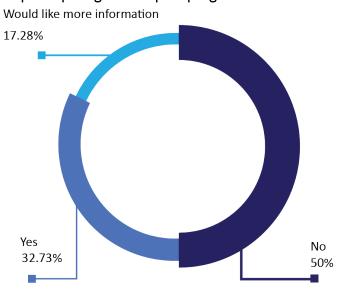
Would you be interested in using an on-demand rideshare service?



Key Findings: 62.50% of the respondents who took this questionnaire stated they would use the ondemand rideshare service, 20.83% would not use the service, and 16.67% would like more information.

Question 7: Vanpool Program

Would you be interested in participating in a vanpool program?

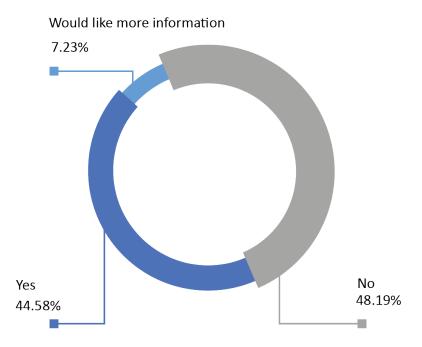


Approximately half (50%) of respondents stated they would not be interested in a vanpool program, while almost a third (32.73%) would be interested and 17.28% would like more information.



Question 8: Electric Vehicle Carshare Program

Would you be interested in participating in a electric vehicle carshare program?



Key Findings: 44.58% of the respondents are interested in participating in an electric vehicle carshare program, and 48.19% are not interested, 7.23% would like more information.

Question 9: Other Feedback

Please let us know of any other ideas, comments, or questions about transit, walking, and biking in Butte County.

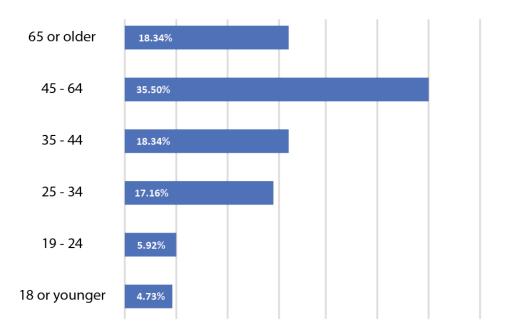
A common theme from this questions' responses include: a desire and need for more security at bus stops; the addition of emergency phones and sanitation areas at bus stops; more protected bus shelters; a smart phone application or text message system to provide information about the bus schedule and real-time travel.

Additionally, participants shared that they would be interested in a scooter / bicycle rental program, express routes, and more rail service.

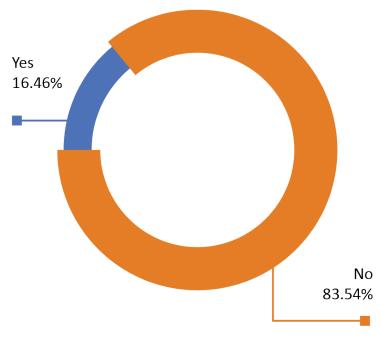


Demographics

What is your age?

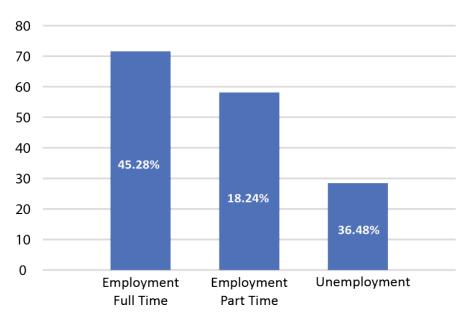


Are you a student?

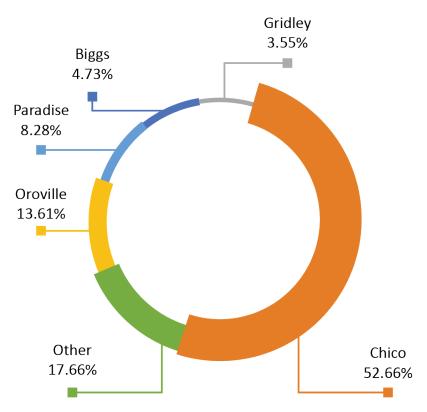




How would you describe your current employment status?

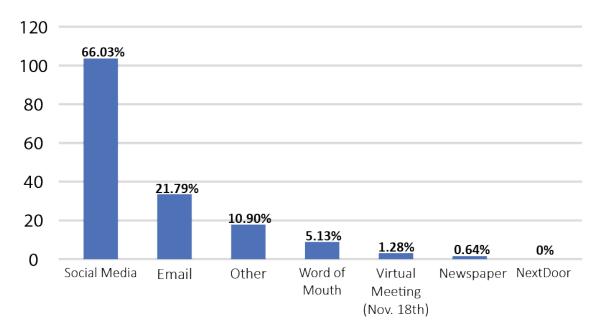


Where do you live?





How did you hear about this online workshop?



Online Community Meeting

Meeting attendees represented the communities of Biggs, Chico, Gridley, Oroville, Paradise and other surrounding communities. Participants commented and voiced opinions around future implementation of bus system changes, bicycle and pedestrian access, and monthly B-Line passes.

Live Polling

At the beginning of the meeting, participants provided their input in a series of short live polling questions about their bus ridership preferences, interest in the project, residency, and preferred improvements.

In response to the prompt, "Would you rather walk farther, but have a short wait for your bus or walk a short distance, but wait longer for your bus?" 85% said they mostly or definitely prefer shorter waits for the bus, while one participant said they did not have a preference. Regarding the question, "Which improvements would allow you to ride transit more often?" almost all agreed that bike lanes and street crossings on the way to and from bus stops were critical, and some also noted a need for bike storage near bus facilities.

Key Themes from the Q&A Session

During the meeting, participants discussed the following topics:

- Can B-Line can sell monthly passes?
- Which age groups are riding transit in the Downtown Chico area?
- Can the County widen the roadway where there is a Class III bike route going towards Magalia?
- A need for increasing bike and pedestrian access and routes throughout Butte County, in addition to bike parking and bike racks in more urban areas such as Chico.



Post Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study

Virtual Community Engagement Summary | November – December 2020

- Can this study incorporate components of the City of Chico's Climate Action Plan?
- How can this study include information about sustainability?
- Will this study be adopted by local jurisdictions in Butte County?
- The importance of disseminating information about this study and future bus system changes to the community-at-large.
- The importance of engaging large employers when implementing transit pass incentives and/or corporate purchase deals.
- The benefits of discounted bus passes for CSU Chico students.

Building Awareness & Education

The overall virtual workshop effort included a public information campaign to build awareness about the project and BCAG's goal to improve transportation options for communities. The project team implemented a variety of strategies to reach the community at large and inform them about the virtual workshop. The project team reached **1,055 community members** in the Butte County region through the strategies described below.

Community Partnerships

Sixty-three stakeholders received personal calls and emails asking them to share information about the virtual workshop and project with their organization through their existing communication links, including e-newsletters and social media. The following organizations shared information:

- B-Line
- Butte County Historical Society
- Butte County
- Butte Hope
- Chico Avenues Neighborhood Association
- City of Biggs, City Administrator
- City of Chico, Deputy Director of Community Development
- City of Chico, Public Works Director
- Downtown Chico
- Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria
- Oroville Chamber of Commerce
- Paradise Ridge Chamber of Commerce
- Town of Paradise
- We are Paradise Strong

We want to hear from you! Take five minutes to learn about how B-Line is planning for transit and share your thoughts. BICK AND PERSONNAIRE PERSONNAIRE ON-DEMAND TRANSIT ON-DEMAND TRANSIT ON-DEMAND TRANSIT ELECTRIC VENICLE CARBHARE LECTRIC VENICLE CARBHARE Questions? Contact Romi Pal at 916-442-1168 or sromipal@aimconsultingco.com

Digital Content Distribution

Email notification and reminders were sent to a database of more than 782 community members with information about the virtual workshop and a call to action to participate. The emails received a 20.9% open rate and 24.5% click rate.

Additionally, a media release about the virtual workshop was developed and distributed to local and regional media outlets.



Social Media Targeted Advertisements

The following social media analytics include reach, post engagement, and link clicks. Reach refers to the total number of people who have viewed the social media advertisement. Post engagement includes all actions that people take involving ads while they are running. Post engagements can include actions such as reacting to, commenting on or sharing the ad, claiming an offer, viewing a photo or video, or clicking on a link.

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By Geographic Location

Post #1: Biggs (11/19 – 11/25)

Reach: 515

Post engagement: 20

Post #2: Gridley (11/19 – 11/25)

Reach: 537

Post engagement: 40

Post #3: Chico (11/19 – 11/25)

Reach: 342

Post engagement: 45

Post #4: Paradise (11/19 – 11/25)

Reach: 456

Post engagement: 37

Post #5: Oroville (11/19 – 11/25)

Reach: 690

Post engagement: 46













Virtual Community Meeting Summary | February 25, 2021 | 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Introduction

On February 25 from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m., the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) held an online community meeting to provide an update on the Post Camp Fire Study's Transit & Non-Motorized Transportation and obtain community feedback on the plan's draft framework. Approximately 30 community members participated in the meeting and shared their thoughts.

Prior to the meeting, the project team shared a <u>short</u> <u>informational video</u> to provide an overview of the topics presented.



Scene from an informational video the project team shared with community members prior to the meeting.

Background

The Camp Fire created such a fundamental shift in the demographics of Butte County that current levels of population, housing, land use, and travel cannot be reasonably estimated. In addition, the existing long-term forecasts of these planning elements are likely no longer applicable to the region.

The Post Camp Fire Regional Population & Transportation Study is analyzing regional population, housing, employment, and traffic data before and after the Camp Fire. As part of this study, BCAG is looking to update regional travel data and develop population, housing, and employment forecasts with associated travel patterns. This will help inform the 2024 Regional Transit Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. This effort also includes an update to the Transit and Non-Motorized Plan, which was last updated in 2015. This plan will identify efficiencies in urban and rural transit service needed to manage the region's recent population shifts, increased traffic congestion, as well as service to temporary housing for Camp Fire evacuees.

Meeting Purpose & Format

Due to the continued COVID-19 pandemic and its subsequent health protocols, the project team implemented an online community meeting experience in place of a previously planned series of in-person public workshops.

The meeting included live polling activities, a presentation, and facilitated question and answer discussion.



Community members attending the online community workshop.





Virtual Community Meeting Summary | February 25, 2021 | 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Presentation

BCAG and the project team shared key findings from the existing conditions analysis and community feedback from a previous pop-up workshop series, virtual community workshop, and online questionnaire. Community input and technical analysis helped inform the draft transit and non-motorized plan system improvements, which are outlined below. A full list of proposed improvements are described in the presentation available in this document's Appendix.

Near-term transit improvements – planned to take effect between 2021 through 2025

- Improve reliability and service levels
- Make transit easier to use
- Consider increasing transit service levels to the Ridge
- Introduce on-demand rideshare and vanpool services

Long-term transit improvements – planned for the next 25 years through 2045

- Connect key destinations with frequent and reliable transit service
- Extend transit service into new development areas throughout the County
- Provide new intercity bus service to Sacramento
- Expand on-demand rideshare and vanpool services

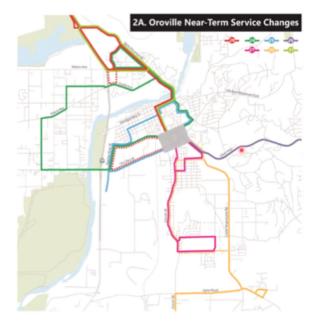
Non-motorized improvements

- Bicycle lanes and paths
- Sidewalks and crosswalks
- Bicycle parking and storage facilities



Recent Community Engagement Activities

- November 2020 Virtual Community Workshop
 - Existing transit and non-motorized conditions
- Planning framework
- November/December 2020 Online Survey
- Solicited input regarding preferred transit/non-motorized improvements
- 175 respondents
- February 2021 Virtual Community Workshop
- Proposed transit and non-motorized improvements







Virtual Community Meeting Summary | February 25, 2021 | 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Community Discussion

Meeting attendees represented the communities of Chico, Gridley, Oroville and other surrounding communities. Participants commented and voiced opinions around future implementation of bus system changes, bicycle and pedestrian access, and monthly B-Line passes.

Key Themes

During the meeting, participants asked questions and shared feedback related to bus service, costs to riders, and the recommendation implementation process.

- <u>Bus service</u>: Some attendees shared an interest in intercity and interregional transit options that could connect residents from the Butte County region to other cities in Northern California including Redding and Sacramento, including the airport. Others asked if BCAG had any plans to add service to rural areas such as Concow and Berry Creek. Several participants mentioned that nighttime service would be beneficial to riders, while others asked if BCAG anticipated an increase in intercity transit demand during the next 25 years.
- <u>Costs to riders:</u> One attendee asked if the cost for door-to-door services such as microtransit would be more expensive than the regular B-Line fare.
- <u>Implementation process:</u> Participants asked how BCAG plans to implement future transit improvements, which could include more frequent service but fewer bus stops, in relation to neighborhood demographics and need for transit. Additionally, one attendee asked which agencies would be responsible for funding and implementing new bicycle infrastructure projects.

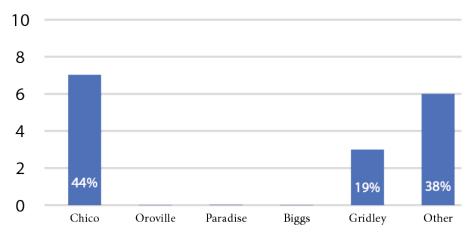




Virtual Community Meeting Summary | February 25, 2021 | 4:30pm – 6:00pm

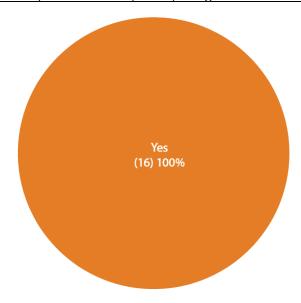
Live Poll Results

Let us know where you're joining us from.



Approximately 44% of participants were from Chico, while 19% reside in Gridley. Thirty-eight percent (38%) responded "Other," and some respondents mentioned they were from Oroville through the meeting chat box.

Is this your first time participating in the Post Camp Fire Study?



All meeting attendees (100%) shared that this meeting was their first time participating in the study.





Virtual Community Meeting Summary | February 25, 2021 | 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Building Awareness & Education

The online community meeting effort included a public information campaign to build awareness about the study and encourage participation in the meeting. Through a variety of notification strategies described below, the project team reached more than 1,000 community members in the Butte County region.

Community Partnerships

The project team reached out to more than 100 stakeholder representatives to notify them about the meeting and ask them to share information through their organization / agency's communication channels such as e-mail, social media, and meetings. Nineteen groups agreed to share information:

- Alliance for Workforce Development, Chico
- Butte College
- Butte County
- Butte County Child Abuse Prevention Council
- Butte Environmental Council
- City of Chico
- CSU Chico
- Hispanic Resource Council of Northern California
- Lao Family Community Development
- Mains'l
- North State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Oroville Hmong Seventh Day Adventist Church
- Paradise Bikes
- Paradise Ridge Chamber of Commerce
- Paradise Zone Captains (Zone 2)
- Paradise Zone Captains (Zone 3)
- Paradise Zone Captains (Zone 6)
- Paradise Zone Captains (Zone 9)
- Passages (Area 4 Agency on Aging)



Digital Content Distribution

Email notification and reminders were sent to a database of approximately 397 community members with information about the online meeting and a call to action to participate. The emails received a 17.3% open rate and 11.4% click rate.

Social Media Targeted Advertisements

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Virtual Community Meeting Summary | February 25, 2021 | 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Post #1 (English): 2/8 – 2/15

- 2,223 impressions
- 24 engagements
- 22 link clicks

Post #2 (Spanish): 2/8 - 2/15

- 2,259 impressions
- 26 engagements
- 24 link clicks

Post (Hmong): 2/8 – 2/15

- 1,756 impressions
- 15 engagements
- 14 link clicks

By Geographic Location

- **Post #1**: Biggs (2/16 2/25) Reach: 892 Post engagement: 1 share, 22 clicks
- Post #2: Gridley (2/16 2/25) Reach: 1253
 Post engagement: 1 comment, 4 shares, 79 clicks
- Post #3: Chico (2/16 2/25) Reach: 828
 Post engagement: 2 comments, 3 shares, 29 clicks
- Post #4: Paradise (2/16 2/25) Reach: 993
 Post engagement: 6 comments, 3 shares, 37 clicks
- Post #5: Oroville (2/16 2/25) Reach: 1048 Post engagement: 3 comments, 22 clicks





Appendix

- Comprehensive List of Questions & Answers from the Online Community Meeting
- Online Community Meeting Presentation
- Notification Fliers for Online Community Meeting (English, Spanish, Hmong)

