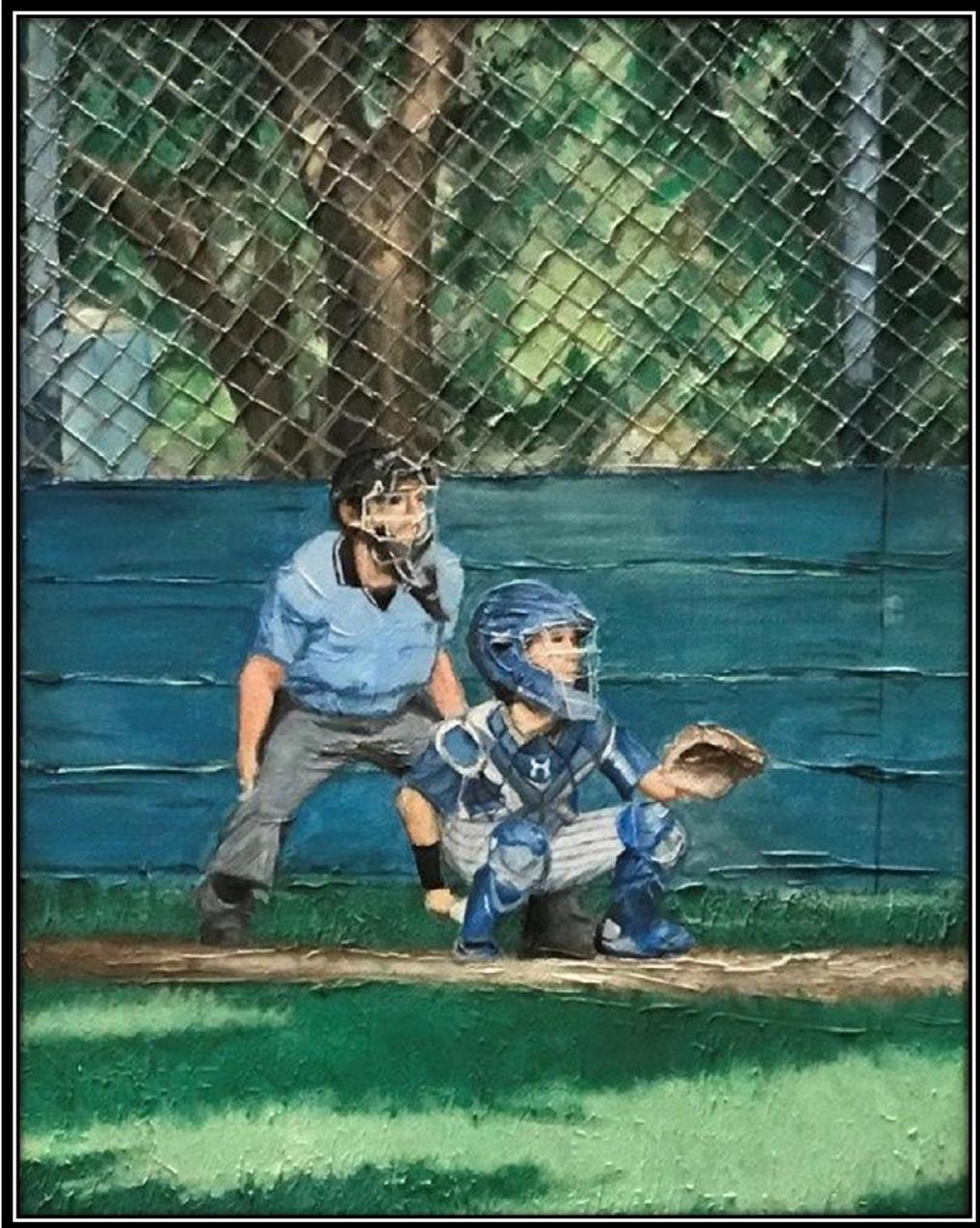


2016-2017
BUTTE COUNTY
GRAND JURY REPORT



Artist: Mailyynn Tran, Pleasant Valley High School

FILED Superior Court of California
County of Butte
JUN 06 2017
Kimberly Flener, Clerk
By [Signature] Deputy

2016-2017
BUTTE COUNTY
GRAND JURY REPORT



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P.O. Box 110
Oroville, CA 95965

Butte County GRAND JURY

The Honorable Robert A. Glusman
Presiding Judge, Superior Court of California, County of Butte

Dear Judge Glusman,

On behalf of the 2016-2017 Butte County Grand Jury, it is my honor and privilege to present the 2016-2017 Butte County Grand Jury Final Report for your review and consideration. The ten individual reports that follow, along with their findings and recommendations, have been approved by the Grand Jury.

The Grand Jury would like to thank you, Judge Glusman, and the Court, for the use of a portion of the Butte County Law Library in Oroville to conduct our plenary and committee meetings. A larger meeting room for plenary meetings is needed to accommodate all 19 jurors. The installation of Wi/Fi at this location greatly aided the jurors' ability to access information.

The Grand Jury visited many county, city and government offices. A number of interviews and facility tours were conducted. I would like to thank the personnel at the county jail and Juvenile Hall who conducted our tour of these facilities. Also, I wish to thank the County Counsel's office for their advice and guidance throughout the year.

Nineteen people took the oath of office to serve on the Grand Jury last June. We comprised a diverse cross section of county residents in age, occupation and gender to mention only a few. I was encouraged by our younger jurors' commitment, enthusiasm and knowledge. The replacement of jurors during our service year proved challenging in regard to continuity throughout the Grand Jury process. I would recommend the court entertain running a Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign to gain citizen interest in serving on the Grand Jury.

In conclusion, the Grand Jury would like to thank our families, friends and employers for their support during our year of service.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert J. Talerico".

Robert J. Talerico, Foreperson
2016-2017 Butte County Grand Jury

2016-2017 MEMBERS OF THE GRAND JURY

Jeff Talerico	Chico	Foreperson
Loy Watkins	Chico	Foreperson Pro tempore
Jodi White	Chico	Recording Secretary
Judy McInturf	Oroville	Corresponding Secretary
Paul Coots	Chico	Sergeant-At-Arms
Theresa McDonald	Paradise	Treasurer
Michael Bowers	Paradise	
Elliott Dutro	Chico	
David Harwood	Chico	
Mark Larson	Oroville	
Cynthia McConnell	Paradise	
Paul Moore	Chico	
Edmund Ryan	Magalia	
Karin Smith	Chico	
Charles Stefanetti	Paradise	
Donna Stinchcomb	Magalia	
Moria Vinay	Chico	
Diane Williams	Chico	

We wish to acknowledge those Jurors who served briefly on the 2016-2017 Grand Jury, who due to unforeseen circumstances, were unable to complete their terms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2016-2017 Butte County Grand Jury wishes to acknowledge and thank the following individuals and organizations for their support, guidance, professional assistance and orientation, all of whom made the 2016-2017 Grand Jury Report possible:

- The Honorable Robert A. Glusman, presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California, County of Butte, and interim presiding Judge, the Honorable Kristen A. Lucena
- County Counsel Bruce Alpert and his staff
- District Attorney Michael Ramsey and his staff
- Butte County Board of Supervisors: William Connelly, Maureen Kirk, Steve Lambert, Doug Teeter and Larry Wahl
- Sheriff Kory Honea and staff for the guided tour of the Butte County Jail
- Butte County Chief Probation Officer, Steve Bordin; Chief Probation Officer, Wayne Barley; Manager of Juvenile Hall, Nino Pinocchio and staff for the guided tour of Juvenile Hall
- Deputy Chief Administration Officer Andy Pickett and staff
- Kim Dionne, Kelly Mortensen and all the Superior Court staff
- All those who agreed to be interviewed during investigations and visits
- The Butte County Office of Education and students for allowing the 2016-2017 Grand Jury to use student art work from their annual art show
- California Grand Jury Association for training seminars

THE ROLE OF THE GRAND JURY

Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time....

--Winston Churchill

In the 18th century, the greatest experiment in human governance began: a new nation founded on a system of citizen-led democracy. In a world dominated by monarchs and dictators, this radical idea of a citizen-run government was met with derision, skepticism and war. Citizen-led democracy, over 240 years, has proven to be the greatest form of government the world has ever known, creating opportunity for prosperity, peace and harmony for all who desire it.

The model of the citizen-run government elevates the requirements of a nation's occupant. Freedom comes with responsibility, and requires dedication of time and resources from every citizen. The Grand Jury serves as one of these responsibilities, crucial to the health and continuity of our society.

The Grand Jury serves as a structure for citizens to voluntarily engage with their local government in a position of authority and acting in secret. The Grand Jury has autonomy to investigate any area of county or city government, and the right to subpoena information if not satisfied with what is provided. Citizens can refer issues of government misconduct to the Grand Jury, who may proceed with an investigation if deemed appropriate. The subjects of investigations or departmental reviews are determined solely by the Grand Jury, and remain confidential until the end of the 1-year term.

The 19 members of the 2016-2017 Grand Jury have now completed their final report. Thank you for doing part of your civic duty by reading it. Butte County and all citizen-led democracies will either thrive with an informed and engaged citizenry, or collapse without it.

The tyranny of a prince in an oligarchy is not so dangerous to the public welfare as the apathy of a citizen in a democracy.

--Charles de Montesquieu

PENAL CODE RELATED TO THE GRAND JURY

California Penal Code Sections

The Grand Jury Final Report has been filed on this date pursuant to California Penal Code §933. A copy of the report is enclosed. Penal Code §933. Report of findings and recommendations; Comment by governing board of agency and by mayor. (a) Each grand jury shall submit to the presiding judge of the superior court a final report of its findings and recommendations that pertain to county government matters during the fiscal or calendar year. Final reports on any appropriate subject may be submitted to the presiding judge of the superior court at any time during the term of service of a grand jury. A final report may be submitted for comment to responsible officers, agencies, or departments, including the county board of supervisors, when applicable, upon finding of the presiding judge that the report is in compliance with this title. For 45 days after the end of the term, the foreperson and his or her designees shall, upon reasonable notice, be available to clarify the recommendations of the report. (b) One copy of each final report, together with the responses thereto, found to be in compliance with this title shall be placed on file with the clerk of the court and remain on file in the office of the clerk. The clerk shall immediately forward a true copy of the report and the responses to the State Archivist who shall retain that report and all responses in perpetuity. (c) No later than 90 days after the grand jury submits a final report on the operations of any public agency subject to its reviewing authority, the governing body of the public agency shall comment to the presiding judge of the superior court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the governing body, and every elected county officer or agency head for which the grand jury has responsibility pursuant to Section 914.1 shall comment within 60 days to the presiding judge of the superior court, with an information copy sent to the board of supervisors, on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of that county officer or agency head and any agency or agencies which that officer or agency head supervises or controls. In any city and xv county, the mayor shall also comment on the findings and recommendations. All of these comments and reports shall forthwith be submitted to the presiding judge of the superior court who impaneled the grand jury. A copy of all responses to grand jury reports shall be placed on file with the clerk of the public agency and the office of the county clerk, or the mayor when applicable, and shall remain on file in those offices. One copy shall be placed on file with the applicable grand jury final report by, and in the control of the currently impaneled grand jury, where it shall be maintained for a minimum of five years. (d) As used in this section "agency" includes a department. Penal Code §933.05 (a) For purposes of subdivision (B) of Section 933, as to each grand jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following: (1) The respondent agrees with the finding. (2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefore. (b) For purposes of subdivision (B) Section 933, as to each grand jury finding, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions: (1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action. (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation. (3) The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report. (4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefore. (c) However, if a finding or recommendation of the grand jury addresses budgetary or personnel matters of a county agency or department headed by an elected officer, both the agency or department head and the board of supervisors shall respond if requested by the grand jury, but the response of the board of supervisors shall address only those budgetary or personnel xvi matters over which it has some decision making authority. The response of the elected agency or department head shall address all aspects of the findings or recommendations affecting his or her agency or department. (d) A grand jury may request a subject person or entity to come before the grand jury for the purpose of reading and discussing the findings of the grand jury report that relates to that person or entity in order to verify the accuracy of the findings prior to their release. (e) During an investigation, the grand jury shall meet with the subject of that investigation regarding the investigation, unless the court, either on its own determination or upon request of the foreperson of the grand jury, determines that such a meeting would be detrimental. (f) A grand jury shall provide to the affected agency a copy of the portion of the grand jury report relating to that person or entity two working days prior to its public release and after the approval of the presiding judge. No officer, agency, department, or governing body of a public agency shall disclose any contents of the report prior to the public release of the final report.

2016-2017
BUTTE COUNTY
GRAND JURY REPORTS



Artist: Nick Baker, Fair View High School

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Artist: Savannah Wahl, Chico High School

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BUTTE COUNTY AUDIT REPORT

BACKGROUND

California state law requires the Grand Jury to look at the independent audit of the Butte County's financial report.

APPROACH

The 2016-2017 Grand Jury conducted its review in the following ways:

- Reviewed the County of Butte Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2016, prepared under the supervision of David A. Houser, County Auditor-Controller
- Reviewed the County of Butte Single Audit Report for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2016 prepared by the accounting firm, Gallina LLP

CONCLUSION

The independent auditor found the county's financial report was in compliance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. The independent auditor recommended that the auditor-controller implement a review process to ensure that the required annual redeterminations for the Medi-Cal Assistance Program are conducted. That recommendation has been implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations by the Grand Jury.

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Artist: Hailey Woolery, Gridley High School

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VECTOR CONTROL

SUMMARY

The Grand Jury has reviewed the countywide mosquito abatement and vector control districts to provide oversight, analysis and recommend improvements for the safety and comfort of all Butte County citizens.

The three districts that cover Butte County are:

Oroville Mosquito Abatement District (OMAD)

District area: 12 square miles

Durham Mosquito Abatement District (DMAD)

District area: 64 square miles

Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District (BCMVCD)

District area: 1601 square miles

The mission of these agencies is:

- 1) To monitor and effectively control mosquitos and other disease-carrying insects in order to prevent the spread of disease.
- 2) To reduce the nuisance of mosquitos in the county.

Grand Jury members determined that the Durham and Oroville districts, due to limitations of size and budget, are ill-equipped to perform the primary mission of vector control. Particular limitations of these two districts include an absence of

insect and disease surveillance, overreliance on adult insecticide, inadequate spray exclusion policies and policy risk. The Grand Jury recommends consolidating the two smaller districts under the Butte district.

GLOSSARY

OMAD – Oroville Mosquito Abatement District

DMAD – Durham Mosquito Abatement District

BCMVCD – Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District

Vector - An organism, typically a biting insect such as a mosquito or tick that transmits a disease or parasite from one animal or plant to another.

Adulticide – Pesticide used to target adult mosquitos.

Larvacide – Pesticide used to target mosquitos in their larval stage.

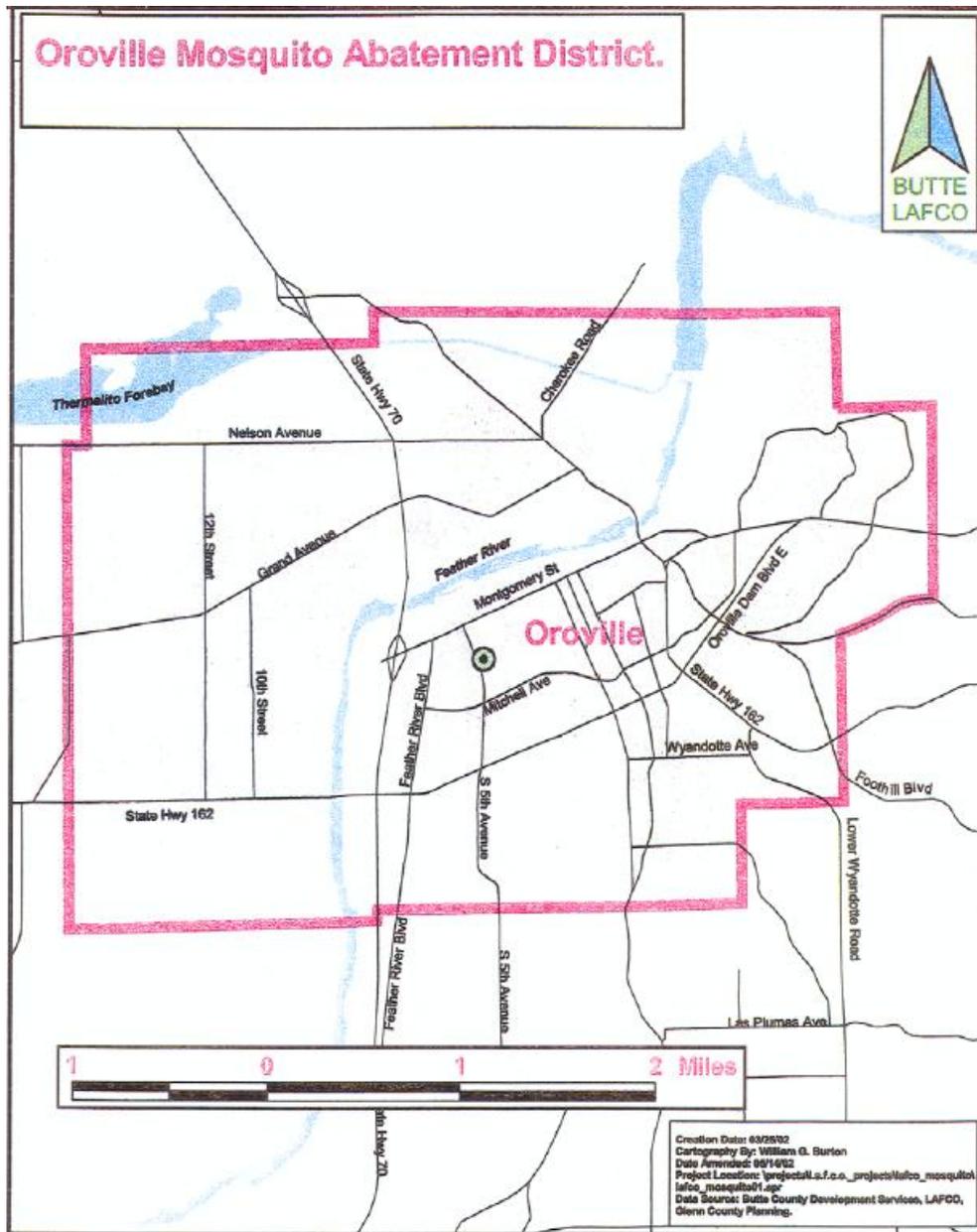
IVM – Integrated Vector Management. IVM is a rational decision-making process for the optimal use of resources for vector control. The approach seeks to improve the efficacy, cost-effectiveness, ecological soundness and sustainability of disease-vector control.

MSR – Municipal Services Review

LAFCo – Local Agency Formation Commission

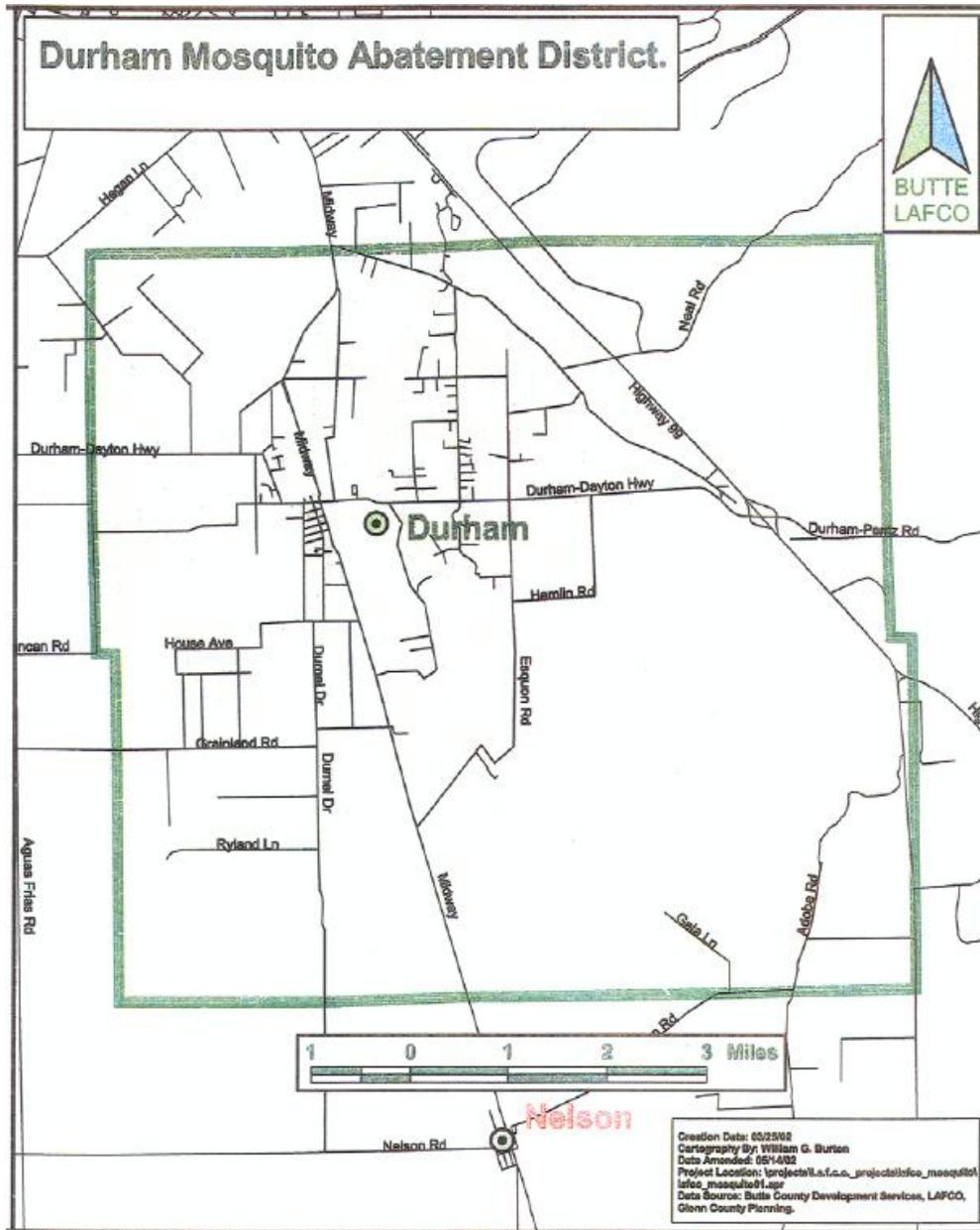
BACKGROUND

OMAD, the smallest of the three districts, was started in 1915. The district operates out of a small facility in the city of Oroville and covers a mostly urban area. The manager directs the operations of the district with the oversight of a community board. OMAD ceases operations during the winter with a typical season lasting from March or April until October. The district 2015-2016 budget was \$182,200. OMAD has one full-time employee. The 2015-2016 salary and benefits budget was \$108,500, which does not include wages for seasonal workers. Residents in the OMAD pay an average tax of \$12.46 per parcel.



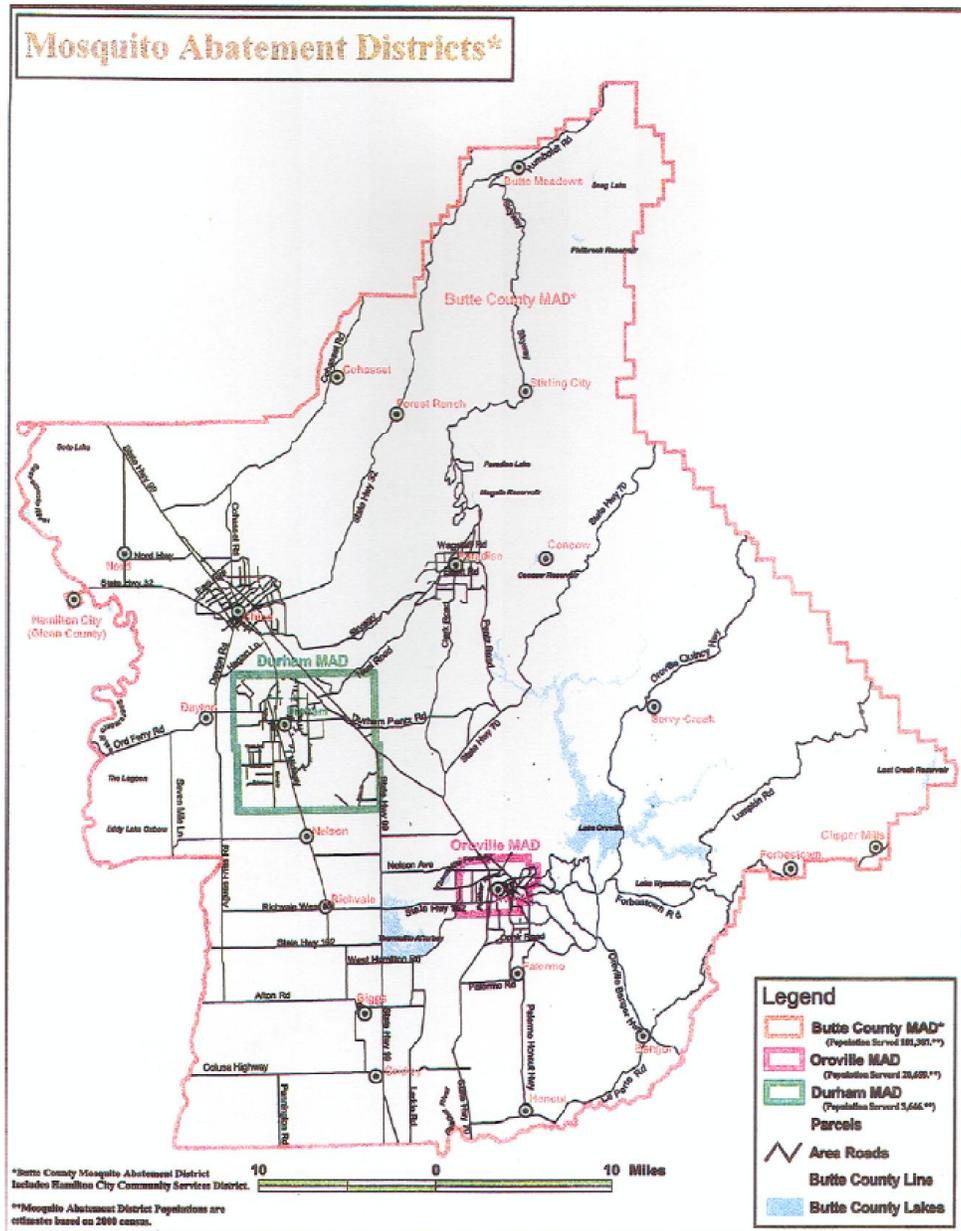
DMAD was started in 1918. The district operates out of a small facility in the outskirts of Durham and covers a mostly agricultural territory. The manager directs the operations of the district with the oversight of a community board. DMAD ceases operations during the winter with a typical season lasting from March or April until October. The district 2015-2016 budget was \$135,150. DMAD has one full-time employee. The 2015-2016 salary and benefits budget

was \$100,000 which does not include wages for seasonal workers. Residents in the DMAD pay an average tax of \$27.51 per parcel.

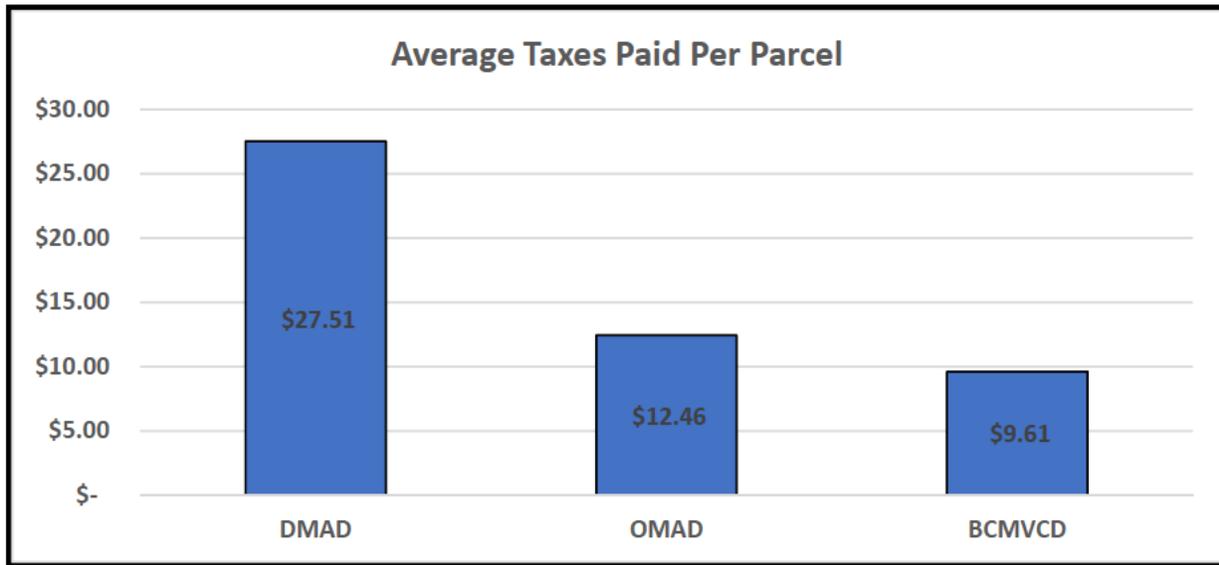


BCMVC was started in 1948. The district operates from a large and modern facility adjacent to the Oroville Airport and covers all the territory in Butte County outside of the OMAD and DMAD districts. The manager directs the operations of the district with the oversight of a community board. BCMVC reduces staff

seasonally but continues to operate during the winter. The district 2015-2016 budget was \$3,303,209. BCMVCD has 16 full-time employees. The 2015-2016 salary and benefits budget was \$2,081,900 which does not include wages for seasonal workers. Residents in the BCMVCD pay an average tax of \$9.61.



These districts are funded by a specific line item on the property tax bill of every landowner in each district. The amount of the taxes paid per parcel range from an average of \$9.61 for residents of the Butte County district, up to an average of \$27.51 for residents of the Durham district.



There are 26 species of mosquito in Butte County. Diseases such as West Nile Virus are not carried by all species. Some species have a lifetime range of a ¼ mile, while others may travel up to 20 miles in a single night. With such varying characteristics, surveillance and identification is important for effective control.

The approach and capabilities between the three districts vary widely. Methods of control in each district have the potential to impact the entire county.

In 2004, the Butte County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) completed a Municipal Services Review (MSR) for all three districts. The recommendation of that report was to consolidate the three districts for improved vector control and to provide more services to county residents.

METHODOLOGY

Members of the Grand Jury visited each of the district headquarters, conducted interviews and researched 3rd party information, including statewide vector control policies, past grand jury reports, previous MSRs and relevant literature.

DISCUSSION

There is growing concern regarding limited access to effective insecticides. An excerpt from a Wall Street Journal article written 01/05/2017 stated: “The effort to eliminate the mosquitos that carry Zika and other diseases is facing new challenges as the pests become more resistant to a thinning arsenal of insecticides.” This same concern was cited in our interview with BCMVCD.

With an increasingly connected globe, diseases from all corners of the world have the potential to spread quickly and vectors such as ticks and mosquitos are among the most prolific carriers. The most effective defense against the spread of disease is local vector control utilizing Integrated Vector Management (IVM) practices. These districts play a very important role in protecting the public health of the county.

After visiting OMAD, DMAD, and BCMVCD, members of the Grand Jury noted considerable differences in the capabilities and practices of each:

Services	Butte	Oroville	Durham
Aerial Spray	•		
Ground Spray	•	•	•
Surveillance	•		
Trapping	•		
Mosquito Fish Offered	•	•	•
Mosquito Fish Breeding	•		
Laboratory	•		
Staff Entomologist	•		
Public Outreach	•	•	•
Follows IVM	•		
Spray Notifications	Every spray	Annually	Annually
Website	•		
Automated Exclusion	•		

Aerial Spray: BCMVCD owns and maintains two aircraft, which are important for effective control of rural and agricultural areas, especially rice fields that are flooded for extended periods of time. OMAD and DMAD do not perform aerial spraying.

Ground Spray: All districts maintain trucks capable of treating with adulticide and larvicide as well as respond to calls and perform public outreach. BCMVCD sprays adulticide, as needed, in specific areas where populations have not been able to be effectively controlled using their IVM process. OMAD and DMAD spray their districts every 2-4 weeks for the duration of the mosquito season.

Surveillance: BCMVCD maintains an updated map of Butte County tracking the occurrence of vector-borne diseases. The district requests notifications of dead birds and collects them for disease testing. BCMVCD also maintains “sentinel chickens” in coops across the county. Under this program, chicken coops are built and maintained by BCMVCD staff on private property throughout the county. BCMVCD staff periodically perform blood tests on these chickens to test for the presence of vector borne diseases. OMAD and DMAD perform no surveillance.

Trapping: BCMVCD performs trapping across the county to determine the movement of the more dangerous mosquito species. These numbers are then reported to the California State Department of Public Health. With the knowledge of where certain species are breeding, control becomes more effective and efficient. OMAD and DMAD perform no trapping.

Mosquito Fish: All three districts offer mosquito fish free of charge to county residents. Mosquito fish are very effective at eating larval mosquitos. BCMVCD maintains 6 large ponds and breeds them in a modern indoor facility. By doing this, a reliable and steady supply is assured. OMAD and DMAD source mosquito fish mostly from wild ponds or buy them from retailers.

Laboratory and Entomologist: BCMVCD maintains a laboratory and staff Entomologist. In addition to testing birds and mosquitos for diseases, the lab and scientists are tasked with testing the effectiveness of various control methods. OMAD and DMAD do not have a laboratory or retain an Entomologist.

Public Outreach: All three districts perform public outreach. Staffing levels of the BCMVCD allow for adherence to IVM policies. Seasonal workers for OMAD and DMAD work primarily at night. The managers perform daytime outreach and prevention.

IVM: Integrated Vector Management is a set of policies and procedures developed for the most effective and efficient control of vectors. The steps are:

- 1) Surveillance
- 2) Source reduction/elimination
- 3) Public education
- 4) Biological control
- 5) Chemical control

BCMVCD follows recommended IVM procedures, OMAD and DMAD do not.

Spray Notifications: OMAD and DMAD publish notifications in the paper at the beginning of the season and spray the duration of the season throughout their districts. BCMVCD publishes notifications within 24-72 hours of each planned spray.

Website: BCMVCD maintains an extensive website. OMAD and DMAD do not have a website.

Automated Exclusions: Each of the pesticide applicators with BCMVCD has GPS technology in their vehicle maintaining an up-to-date list of people who have requested to be excluded for reasons such as medical, voluntary or organic gardening. OMAD and DMAD have no such system. OMAD and DMAD make an effort to honor resident requests to be excluded from treatment, however, the lack of funding prevents a consistent and reliable system from being implemented.

In place of a surveillance policy by OMAD and DMAD, both districts practice routine and frequent adulticide spraying. This overreliance on adulticide carries

risk of developing pesticide resistances in adult mosquitos. Other risks exist as well, such as the public's general aversion to airborne chemicals, risk of applications disrupted by weather, and the limited coverage of ground sprays over agricultural areas. The reason for the ordered steps of IVM is because controlling the breeding grounds, preventing mosquito larva or killing mosquito at the larval stage is a far more effective method of control than adulticide applications. Both OMAD and DMAD cited lack of resources for their policies of indiscriminate spraying.

Having three districts performing the same function in the same county brings redundancies. Each district has a board, is required to be compliant with all applicable labor and pesticide regulations, requires an annual audit, regular board meetings, budgets and bookkeepers. This encumbers each of the districts with a minimum level of costs, and the budgets of OMAD and DMAD are such that after covering the costs of these operational requirements, there is little funding left for actual control. Effectiveness would be greatly improved by consolidating the three districts under one set of policies and one management team.

In the past, when Grand Juries have recommended consolidation, or LAFCo released their MSR in 2004 recommending the districts be consolidated, no consolidation action was taken. The Grand Jury believes this is because there was no leadership to put the recommended changes into effect. The groups that benefit most from a consolidation are the residents within the OMAD and DMAD districts, however, they may not be aware of the potential improvements and thus not motivated to petition for policy change. Under California state LAFCo policies, a petition for consolidation may be initiated by LAFCo itself. The Grand Jury recommends Butte LAFCo take this course of action pending the results of the 2017 MSR.

FINDINGS

- F1. Due to their size, OMAD and DMAD are limited in their ability to fulfil the duties of a vector control district.

- F2. BCMVCD offers more services to the residents of their district with a lower parcel tax.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The Grand Jury recommends that pending the results of the 2017 MSR, LAFCo initiate the process of consolidating OMAD and DMAD under BCMVCD.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

- The Grand Jury requests the LAFCo Board of Directors respond to R1.

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Artist: Savannah Rivas, Paradise High School

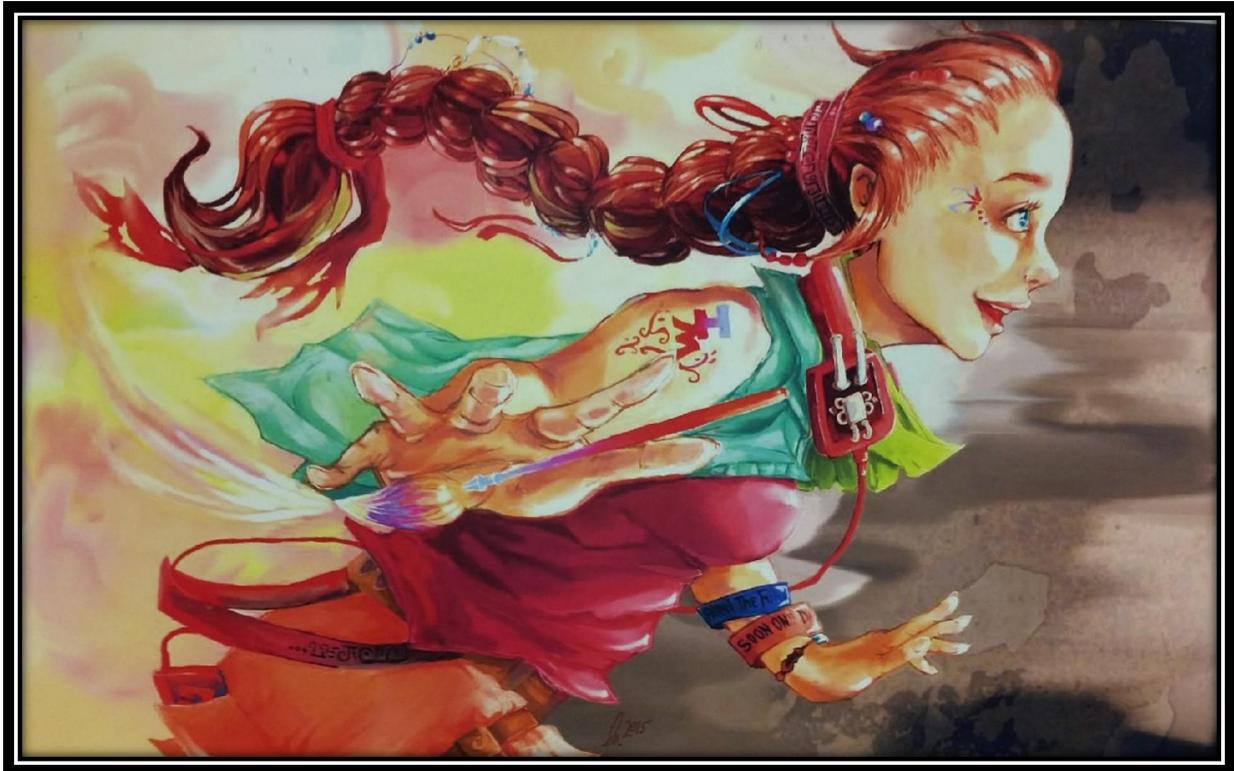
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BUTTE COUNTY JAIL AND JUVENILE HALL TOURS

In compliance with California Statute 919(b), the 2016-2017 Grand Jury inspected the operation and management of the Butte County Jail and Juvenile Hall. These visits were conducted between September and October, 2016.

No recommendations were made as a result of the inspection and no report was filed this term.

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Artist: Isabella McMurry, Inspire School of Arts

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**BUTTE COUNTY INFORMATION SYSTEMS DEPARTMENT
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIC PLAN**

SUMMARY

There is an old saying that, “If you don’t know where you’re going, how will you know when you get there?” Strategic planning can serve as a road map to help “get there.” A well-designed strategic plan provides guidelines as to how the department will develop and sustain its organizational mission. An annual review and updates help the plan remain relevant and assists with preparations for technological and other unexpected changes.

The 2016-2017 Grand Jury conducted a review of previous Grand Jury reports regarding the Information Systems Department’s (ISD) lack of a strategic plan. Included in the reports were recommendations regarding the development of the Information Technology Strategic Plan (ITSP). It was determined that no formal plan had been developed. In this age of rapidly evolving and changing technology, a strategic plan is very important to Butte County’s governmental departments. They are all reliant on various levels of technology and support functions which allow them to better serve the needs of other Butte County departments and residents.

For these reasons, the 2016-2017 Grand Jury concluded that a review of the ISD was warranted to provide the public with an update on the status of this vital plan.

GLOSSARY

- CGJA: California Grand Jury Association
- FY: Fiscal Year
- GIS: Geographic Information Systems
- IS: Information Systems
- ISD: Information Systems Department
- ITSP: Information Technology Strategic Plan
- VOIP: Voice Over Internet Protocol

BACKGROUND

The following timeline was prepared and reviewed:

1. Grand Jury Report Fiscal Year (FY) 2009-2010: The 2005 strategic plan is outdated. The recommendation to develop a new plan will be implemented in the future. Work has started on an updated plan and should be completed by November 2010.¹
2. Grand Jury Reports FY 2010-2011, 2011-2012 & 2012-2013: For three years the reports did not contain an ISD review/report.
3. Grand Jury Report FY 2013-2014: This report found that the 2005 strategic plan was outdated and recommended that ISD develop an ITSP to "...reflect new technology developments and new support services needed. It should be reviewed annually in order to respond to any unanticipated need or development opportunity." The Respondent agreed with the Grand Jury's finding and indicated that the recommendation "...has not yet been

¹ <http://www.buttecounty.net/administration/GrandJuryReportforFiscalYear2009-2010.aspx>

implemented, but will be in FY 2014-2015.” It will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure relevance to the business needs of the county.²

4. Grand Jury Report FY 2014-2015: No ISD strategic plan was mentioned in this report.

5. May 2015-Sept. 2015: During this time period, correspondence between the Butte County Chapter of the California Grand Jury Association (CGJA) a non-governmental organization, and the ISD, indicated that no action had been taken regarding preparation of the strategic plan. The Butte County Chapter of CGJA requested that ISD inform them when this action was completed.

6. Grand Jury Report FY 2015-2016: No ISD strategic plan was mentioned in this report.

APPROACH

The 2016-2017 Grand Jury conducted multiple interviews with ISD and county administration to discuss the lack of the ITSP. The Grand Jury also toured the ISD facility.

DISCUSSION

The ISD is currently divided into four sections. There is a total department staff of twenty-seven employees. It is their mission to provide efficient, secure, consistent, cost effective and reliable communication infrastructure that encompasses high-speed digital data, telecommunication and radio networks for the Butte County governmental organization.

² <http://www.buttecounty.net/administration/GrandJuryReportforFiscalYear2013-2014.aspx>

Section 1: ISD Administration

Administration provides support, leadership and management of all ISD activities. The focus of ISD in FY 2016-2017 includes:

- Modernization of the radio system
- Modernization of the data network
- Implementation of the Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP)

Section 2: Information Systems (IS)/Communications

IS is responsible for designing and maintaining the digital network infrastructure and enterprise system. The IS team provides the following enterprise services to all 23 county departments:

- Electronic messaging
- Web content management
- Database management
- Local and wide area network management
- Server virtualization
- Document management
- Network security

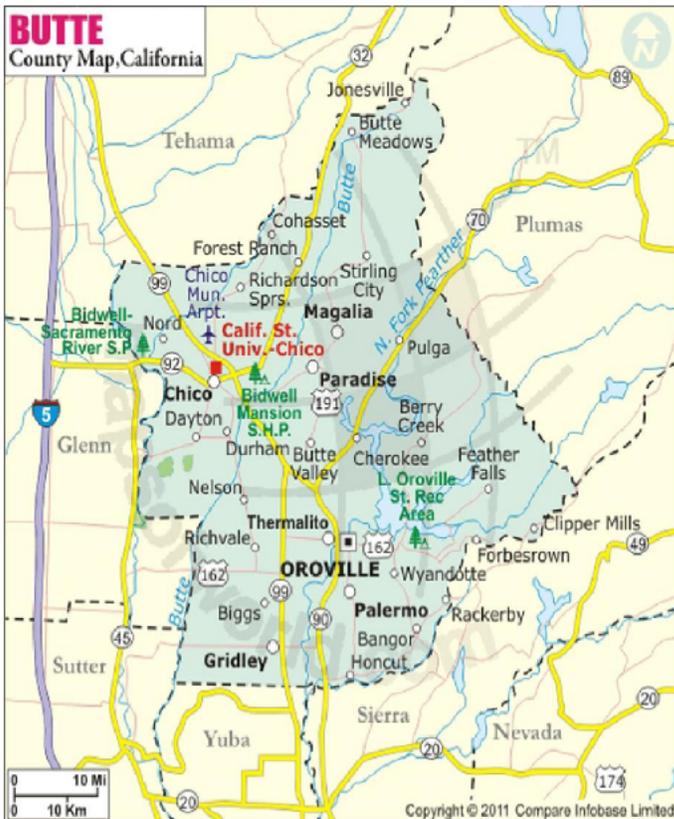
The enterprise system also helps to ensure that information can be shared across all functional and management levels. The IS section is the point of contact between departments and telecommunication suppliers. All products and suppliers or vendors are selected using competitive bid contracts.

Communications is also the E-9-1-1 coordinator to all of the Public Safety Answering Points within the Butte Operational Area along with cellular phones, pagers and other telephone services.³

Section 3: Radio Services

Butte County radio technicians manage and maintain radio infrastructure supporting Butte County departments: Sheriff, Fire, Public Works, Public Health, Probation, District Attorney and Office of Emergency Management. The infrastructure includes numerous radio sites, mobile equipment in vehicles and portable equipment carried by individuals.

Section 4: Geographic Information Systems (GIS)



A Butte County Map showing the county boundaries, county seat, major cities, highways, roads, rail network, airport and points of interest. This is just one example of the many varieties of maps produced by GIS.

Interactive Map Viewers: Interactive map viewers allow the user to identify, query, zoom and pan on map layers and the records contained within them.

www.buttecounty.net/gis/home.aspx

³ www.buttecounty.net/is/home

GIS shares data and coordinates with regional groups and agencies such as Butte County Association of Governments, Local Agency Formation Commission, CAL FIRE, incorporated municipalities within Butte County and similar agencies in adjacent counties to create, display, manage and analyze geographic information. The GIS also provides data integral to county business processes and to the public. Primary users are: Development Services, Public Health, Office of Emergency Management, Water and Resource Conservation, Communications and Public Works, along with law enforcement and fire support.⁴

During subsequent Grand Jury interviews additional information was provided:

- 1) A SharePoint website for developing the plan has been established. Individuals, teams and organizations are able to produce, share and collaborate on content in one place. It allows all personnel to have access and is user friendly.
- 2) The Grand Jury was informed that the ISD is satisfied with the support of county administration and the approved funding received from the FY 2016-2017 budget. Budget approval permitted the ISD to fulfill their largest planned infrastructure projects, i.e. radio towers, network switching and modernization of the radio system.
- 3) Radios have been delivered from the manufacturer, Motorola, to Delta Wireless, the implementation vendor. The radios still need to be inventoried in Sacramento, operationally tested, pre-programmed and then delivered. No equipment has been shipped to Butte County for use at this point. With regard to the network infrastructure, approximately 30% of the new network

⁴ https://www.buttecounty.net/Portals/1/Budget/FY16-17Recommended/Information_Systems.pdf

equipment has been installed. More equipment is being readied for installation, but has not yet been placed.

- 4) ISD is moving ahead with the radio modernization site preparation. The manufacturer will have a team visiting each of the sites to formally assess their readiness for the new equipment. The site visits will focus on the implementation and “turning up” the full 700 MHz system in January 2019. A detailed design review has been scheduled. The focus for this review is to work on the specific details of the implementation in Butte County.
- 5) Unified communication between county departments is vital for the ability to conduct county business remotely and securely. One aspect of the proposed strategic plan involves adding cloud based apps in order to become more efficient. What was formerly referred to as outsourced is now called the cloud. The cloud is able to provide more storage, is easy to access, requires less onsite storage and can save money.

The ISD ensures that Butte County governmental organizations are able to perform their functions to the best of their abilities by providing efficient, secure, consistent, cost effective and reliable communication infrastructure. This infrastructure also allows the departments to more effectively serve a wide variety of needs of Butte County residents.

Throughout the past few years, despite the lack of a strategic plan, the Grand Jury recognizes the ISD is well managed and effectively serves Butte County departments. There is a supportive working relationship within the department as evidenced by the results of interviews with ISD employees. Maintaining a positive atmosphere helps retain valuable employees. This is a very important factor since

hiring trained, knowledgeable employees is a problem in many areas of Butte County government.

FINDINGS

F1. The 2005 ITSP was the last plan available and is presently obsolete.

F2. The ISD is developing a current strategic plan, with regularly scheduled department meetings and employee input. The newly completed plan should help forecast expenditures, ensure better use of resources and help manage unexpected changes in technology and staffing needs. This is to be completed prior to the end of the FY 2016-2017.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. The ISD should ensure they have developed and implemented a strategic plan for Board of Supervisors review prior to the end of 2017.

R2. Beginning with FY 2017-2018, yearly plan updates should be scheduled to keep up with the rapid changes in technology, unexpected department needs and staffing.

R3. ISD should notify the Butte County Chapter of CGJA regarding the completion of the department's FY 2016-2017 strategic plan as previously requested.

R4. The Butte County Administration Office and Board of Supervisors should provide continued annual support for ISD funding, staffing requests and the continuation and regular updating of the newly developed ITSP.

RESPONSES

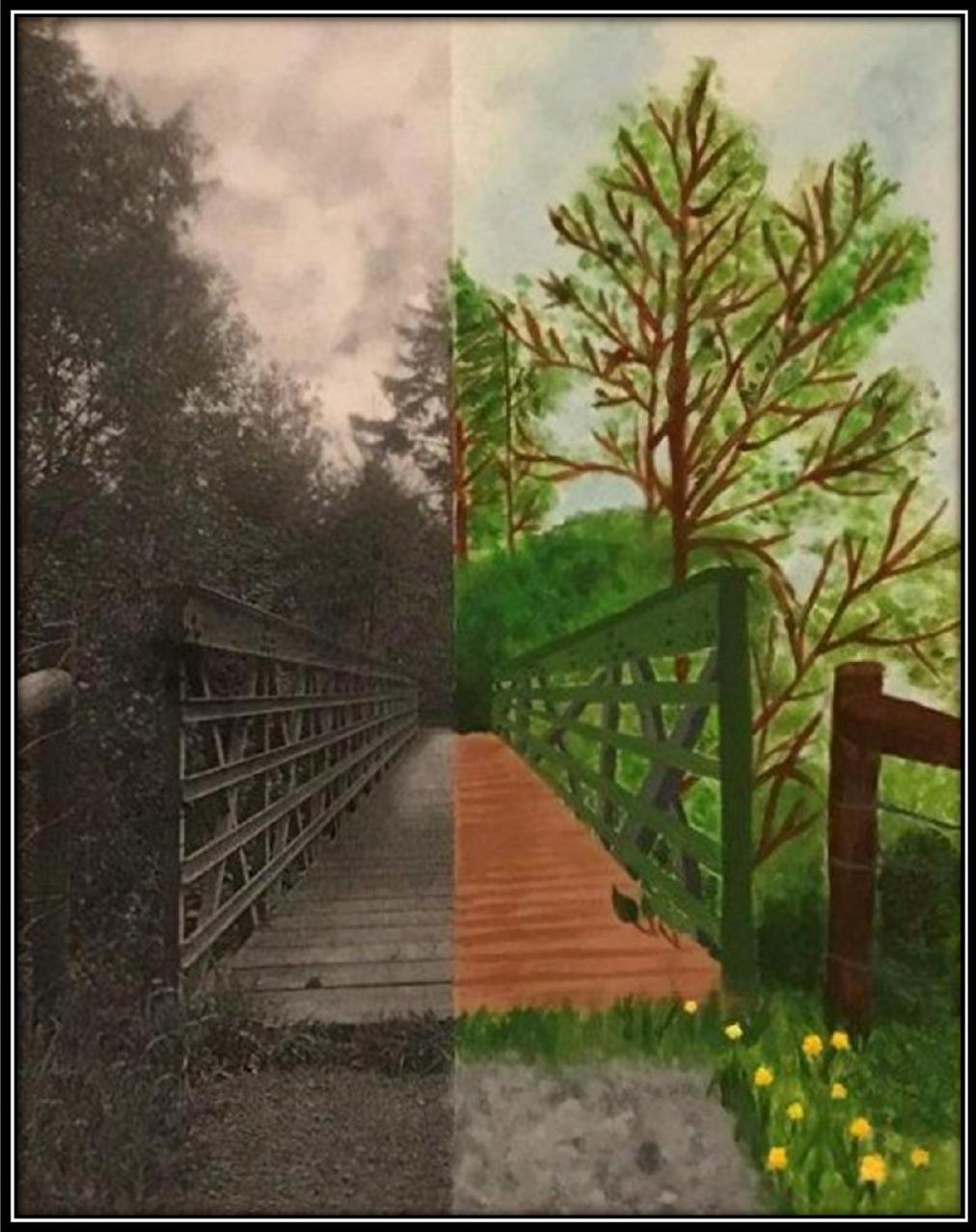
Pursuant to Penal Code section 933.05, the following response is required:

- Information Systems Department Director: respond to F1, F2, R1, R2 and R3 within 90 days

The Grand Jury invites the following responses:

- Butte County Administration Office, Chief Administrative Officer: respond to F1, F2, R1 and R4 within 60 days
- Butte County Board of Supervisors: respond to F1, F2, R1 and R4 within 60 days

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Artist: Jennyfer Nunez, Gridley High School

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**BUTTE COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER/REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
REVIEW**



**Butte County Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters Building
155 Nelson Avenue, Oroville, CA 95965**

SUMMARY

The current Grand Jury visited the Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters to discuss department functions prior to the November 8th, 2016 election.

All services offered by the Clerk-Recorder's Office are now under one roof. Previously they were in three different offices. Construction began in July 2014 and the new building opened December 21, 2015. The Clerk-Recorder's Office is responsible for at least 122 different types of records where collectively they are preserved and publicly available to view. Butte County, as one of the founding counties in California, has records dating back to the Gold Rush.

BACKGROUND

The County Clerk-Recorder, as the Chief Election Official/Registrar of Voters, administers and conducts all federal, state, county, city, school and special district elections. The current Butte County Clerk-Recorder is the longest tenured Clerk-Recorder in California. This accomplishment speaks to the stability of the office.

The Clerk-Recorder Office is responsible for the following:

- Maintaining voter files for the County of Butte
- Promoting and encouraging voter registration
- Processing and certifying initiative referendum, recall and candidate nomination petitions
- Processing and maintaining election records and candidate filings
- Precinct and district boundary maintenance
- Providing vote by mail balloting services
- Locating polling places that are accessible to the elderly and disabled voters
- Recruiting, appointing and training election-day workers
- Programming/testing ballot count system
- Tally/certification of ballots cast
- Conducts official canvass of the vote and any recounts

The County Clerk-Recorder is also the official filing officer for campaign disclosures and statements of economic interests as provided by state and local laws.

APPROACH

The Grand Jury held interviews with the department during which the election process was explained from beginning to end including counting, machinery,

security, staffing and trained volunteer positions. The staff is split between the Clerk-Recorder department (15) and Election office (6) for a total of 21 employees. A tour of the facility was conducted which involved explanations and visuals regarding the purpose of numerous pieces of equipment to be used. In addition to the meeting and tour of the department, the Grand Jury also received the training and informational documents listed below:

- Voting System Specialist Handbook
- Precinct Officer Handbook
- AccuVote Voting System
- Report to the Retired Public Employee Assoc.
- Secretary of State Voter Fraud Protection Handbook

DISCUSSION

Pre-Election

During the election process, approximately 500-600 county residents volunteer their services. Positions available are: Precinct Inspector, Voting Systems Specialist, Chief Inspector, Traffic Director and Clerk. Once selected, they are required to attend classroom training in Oroville. Approximately 85% of volunteers are 65 and older.

Students 16 years of age or older with a grade point average of 2.5 or better are encouraged to volunteer and participate in the election process. They must have permission from a parent and a teacher. The students are a huge asset to the election process and it also provides them with an important learning experience.

Three Grand Jury members volunteered and were trained to be on the Logic and Accuracy Board/Election Observer Panel. The purpose of the panel was to observe

all procedures of the ballot counting process and to verify that the program accurately tallies the logic and accuracy test ballot cards. The members of the panel performed random testing on voting system equipment to be used. The random test allowed each member to select a voting precinct, where they tested touch screen, vote by mail and polling place paper ballots.

The Logic and Accuracy Panel helps to ensure the accuracy of the election and to facilitate voter confidence in the process. On election night, the panel observes the ballot count and remains throughout the evening until all ballots are counted. Approximately 70% of Butte County residents vote by mail.

Post-Election

The Grand Jury held an additional interview to discuss the post-election summary which was created to help determine problems that may have surfaced during the election. These issues will be evaluated and addressed for future elections.

The day before the election, a call center is set up to log all calls regarding issues and concerns from poll workers and the public. Precinct Officers also provide feedback regarding problems and improvements. The information is compiled and the Post-Election Summary is created to prioritize needed changes and improvements for future elections. Some issues collected from the 2016 election are listed below:

- Inactive voters
- Absent precinct employees
- Not enough “I Voted” stickers
- Need more supplies, i.e. pens, paper, provisional ballots, etc.

- Extra paper for touch screens
- Need more County Chief Inspectors to volunteer and be available to answer questions
- Electioneering near precincts - individuals need to stay 100 ft. away from entrance door and are not to pass out information or interfere with lines and voters
- Better regulation of building temperature
- A lack of comfortable chairs at precincts
- Residency issues

In order for the Election Office to protect the integrity of the process and to operate more effectively, there is a need for an additional staff member. In view of the large number of responsibilities they have, the office is currently understaffed.

During the review, it was pointed out that the majority of voting equipment is approximately ten years old and considered outdated. In view of the advances in technology that can improve the efficiency of the voting equipment, replacement of the outdated equipment is advisable in the near future. Advanced planning for the costly replacements will be needed.

Notwithstanding these deficits, the Butte County Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters department shows a history of being well managed and is committed to improving and streamlining election processes. The Grand Jury also acknowledges their hard work and diligence in ensuring the accuracy and security of the 2016 election.

FINDINGS

F1. The majority of voting equipment is technologically outdated.

F2. Election office is understaffed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. It is recommended that the Butte County Clerk-Recorder/ Registrar of Voters request a budget category for the future replacement of outdated voting equipment within the 2017-2018 fiscal year budget.

R2. It is recommended that management conduct a labor and staffing review for additional staff by the end of FY 2017-2018.

RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code section 933.05, the following response is required:

- Butte County Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters respond to F1, F2, R1 and R2 within 90 days

The Grand Jury invites the Butte County Board of Supervisors to respond to:

- F1, F2, R1 and R2 within 60 days



Artist: Zoey McClain, Paradise High School

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FIRE SERVICES RESTRUCTURE PLAN**SUMMARY**

The 2016-2017 Grand Jury completed a general review of the restructuring plan for fire services. With current costs outpacing current revenues, the Board of Supervisors (BoS) requested county staff to develop a plan that would reduce cost reliance on the general fund. An independent consultant was hired and recommendations were presented to the BoS. The board selected three of six plans for further analysis.

The final recommendations from county staff and the independent consultant were presented to the BoS for a vote on April 25, 2017. Recommendations to the BoS included continuing the Cooperative Services Agreement (CSA) with CAL FIRE, the winter closing of three rural fire stations, the transfer of one station from county funding to state funding and a request to the City of Chico to fund a county fire station to prevent closure. In addition, the formation of a fire district was recommended by staff. As the county looks at a budget deficit of \$3.18M for the upcoming fiscal year, the current model is unsustainable and long-term solutions must be considered. The BoS have been unable to make a final decision as to the future of a fire restructure plan and have requested further review. The Grand Jury recommends that the BoS continue contracting with CAL FIRE for fire services.

In addition to reviewing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-2017 CSA between Butte County and CAL FIRE, Grand Jury members also visited fire stations in need of structural and utility upgrades. The Grand Jury recommends that County General Services pursue repairs and upgrades.

GLOSSARY

Amador Program - County funds the winter staffing of six CAL FIRE stations in some foothill communities through a CSA with CAL FIRE

BCFD – Butte County Fire Department

BoS – Butte County Board of Supervisors

CAL FIRE - California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

CalPERS – California Public Employees’ Retirement System

CSA – Cooperative Services Agreement

FY – Fiscal Year

ISO – Insurance Service Office

LAFCo – Local Agency Formation Commission

MOU – Memorandum Of Understanding

SCBA – Self Contained Breathing Apparatus

SRA – State Responsibility Area

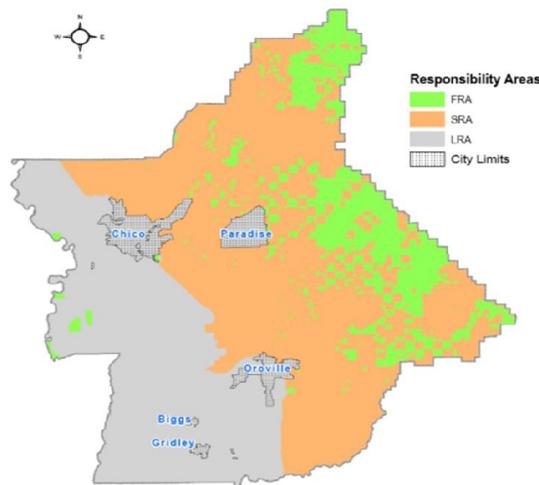
BACKGROUND

The Butte County Fire Department (BCFD) is the largest fire department north of Sacramento, California and south of Eugene, Oregon. Their mission: “To provide professional services to protect lives, property and environment to those residing, working or traveling within the

unincorporated areas of Butte County, the cities of Biggs and Gridley and the Town of Paradise.”⁵

A memorandum to the BoS from County Administrative Officer Paul Hahn, dated February 23, 2016, states that there are no existing federal, state or local mandates that the county must provide fire services. The county has done so for 85 years through a CSA with CAL FIRE. The BCFD provides structure fire protection, pre-hospital basic life support, response to hazardous material incidents and rescue. CAL FIRE is responsible for fire protection within the State Responsibility Area (SRA) that covers 1,639 square miles and is considered everything east of Highways 70, 99 and 149.

Fire Responsibility Areas



FRA – Federal Response Area - National Forest Services

SRA – State Response Area – CAL FIRE

⁵ <https://www.buttecounty.net/fire/Home.asp>

Butte County's fire protection agreement with CAL FIRE started in 1931. Together they operate 23 career-staffed fire stations and 15 volunteer fire stations.

METHODOLOGY

The Grand Jury formulated a series of questions and conducted interviews with county and BCFD upper management, mid-level management and staff.

In addition, the Grand Jury performed the following:

- Toured fire stations
- Interviewed BCFD personnel and Butte County Administration
- Reviewed county maintenance records and condition of fire stations
- Reviewed Cooperative Fire Programs Fire Protection Reimbursement Agreement between BCFD and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) for the agreement term of July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017
- Reviewed Operational and Capital Budgets FY 2016-2017
- Reviewed BCFD 2015 Statistics Package
- Reviewed Operational Letter of Understanding Between City of Chico and Butte County Fire Departments dated November 2011
- Reviewed BCFD career personnel organizational chart of state funded and county funded positions
- Reviewed Professional Service Contract Greater Than \$25,000 between Butte County and Matrix Consulting Group
- Reviewed Matrix Consulting Group Fire Services Restructuring Possible Alternatives report dated February 23, 2016
- Reviewed Matrix Consulting Group Final Report for the Fire Service Restructuring Study, Butte County, California dated April 2017

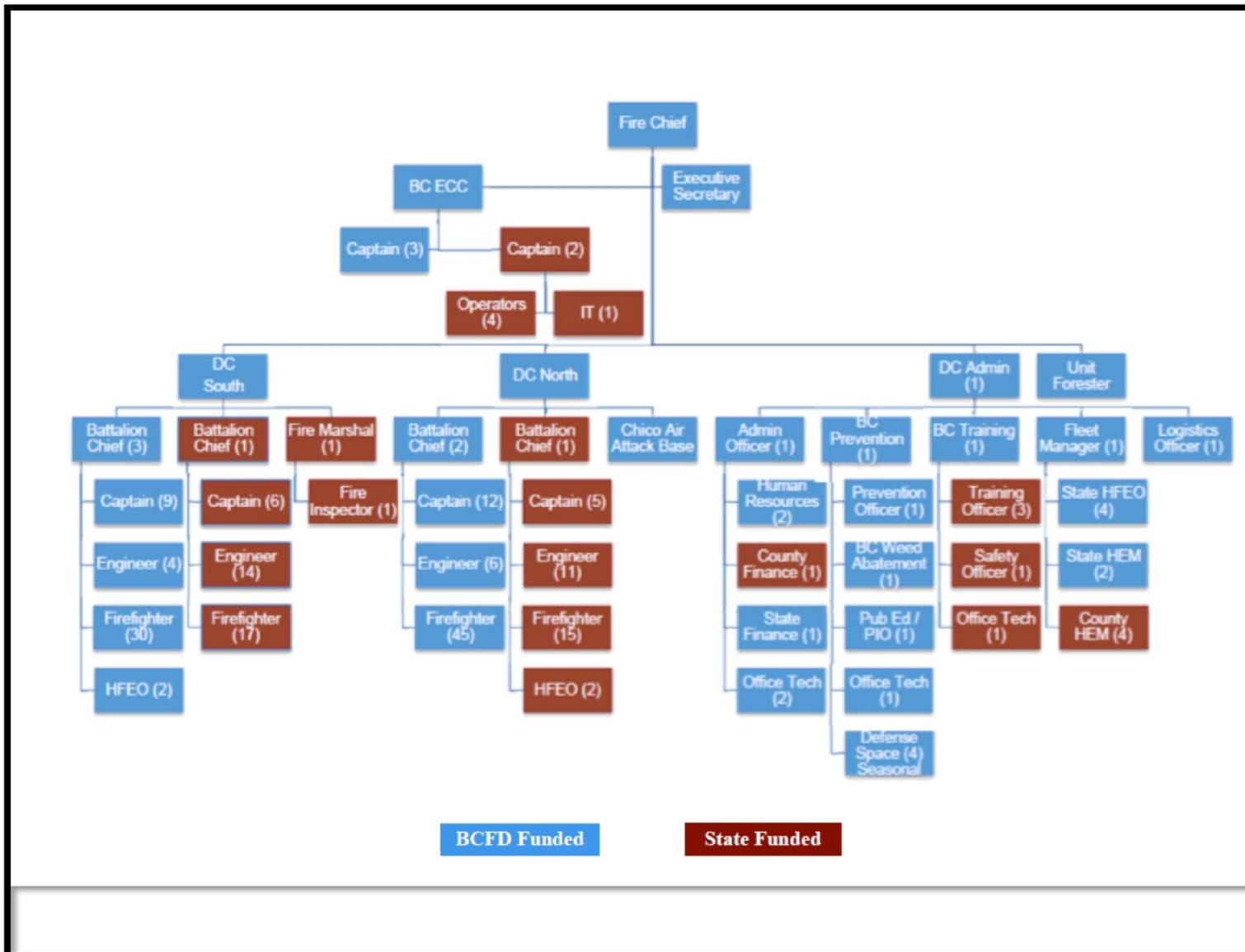
- Reviewed General Services work orders
- Reviewed General Services water well work orders and well water testing lab results for Stations 41 and 71

DISCUSSION

Fire Services Restructure

The BCFD is a fully integrated fire protection organization. Butte County is currently funding 105.5 full-time equivalent positions to staff the BCFD.

The Fire Chief oversees the organization. The organizational chart is presented on the following page.



The CSA between Butte County and CAL FIRE identifies services to be provided by CAL FIRE and the costs related to those services. Personnel costs are approximately 87% of the contract.

Schedule A Cooperative Services Agreement*

FY 11-12 Budgeted	FY 12-13 Budgeted	FY 13-14 Budgeted	FY 14-15 Budgeted	FY 15-16 Budgeted
\$12,656,768	\$12,885,973	\$13,264,660	\$13,865,124	\$15,169,687

The above chart notes an increase of 19.9% in fire protection services from FY 2011 through FY 2016, or an average of 3.98% over the five-year period. The major reasons include the increase in minimum wage, a 4% Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) increase and benefit cost increases.

* Information obtained from Fire Services Restructuring Possible Alternatives report provided by Matrix Consulting Group dated February 23, 2016

BCFD Staffing 2011-2016*

Position	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Change
Battalion Chief	2	2	2	3	3	+1
Fire Captain	19	19	19.5	19	19	0
Fire Engineer	23	23	25	25	25	+2
Firefighter II	33	33	31	31	31	-2
Firefighter I	14	14	14	14	14	0
Communication Operator	4	4	4	4	4	0
Heavy Equipment Mechanic	4	4	4	4	4	0
Headquarters Manager	1	1	1	1	1	0
County Finance	1	1	1	1	1	0
Information Technology	1	1	1	1	1	0
Office Assistant	1	1	1	1	1	0
Fire Prevention Secretary	1	1	1	1	1	0
Fire Prevention Inspector	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	+1
Total Count Funded	104.5	104.5	105	105.5	105.5	+1

* Information obtained from Fire Services Restructuring Possible Alternatives report provided by Matrix Consulting Group dated February 23, 2016

The long-standing partnership between Butte County and CAL FIRE has provided the county with a highly professional and well-trained career-staffed fire department. These agencies work as a single fire service that provide the residents of unincorporated Butte County an appropriate level of fire protection and services. The cities of Biggs and Gridley and the Town of Paradise also have CSAs with CAL FIRE.

The CSA with CAL FIRE has a negative side because cost increases are not within the direct control of the BoS. Service cost increases are not proportionate with the local economy and are imposed on the county without regard to comparable local salaries and benefits.

Options

During the budget hearings for FY 2015-2016, the BoS directed staff to explore options to reduce the impact that fire services has on the general fund. At the BoS meeting of November 10, 2015, the board approved Matrix Consulting Group to assist staff in analysis and plan development that could potentially reduce the impact of fire services on the general fund. Matrix Consulting Group has experience in assessing fire services and plan development. Together with staff, the following six options were presented to the BoS at their meeting on February 23, 2016:

- Maintain CSA with CAL FIRE and modify deployment
- Create a stand-alone Butte County Fire Department as a county department
- Create multiple independent fire districts
- Create a single county-wide independent or dependent fire district

- Enter into a Joint Powers Agreement
- Create a Joint Powers Agency

The BoS selected the following three options that could potentially ease the burden of fire services on the general fund:

- Maintain CSA with CAL FIRE and modify deployment
- Create a stand-alone Butte County Fire Department as a county department
- Create a county-wide fire district

Benefits and Concerns of the Proposed Options

Option 1 - Review of Current Services (Status Quo)

Examine the current deployment and operation of the BCFD as operated by CAL FIRE. Examine the current positions, resources, support and deployment of personnel to determine cost efficiencies that can be found while service continues to be provided through the CSA with CAL FIRE.

Benefits

- Services continue to be provided with CAL FIRE
- The county has no employee responsibilities including hiring, promotions and terminations
- The county has no responsibility for potential pension liabilities
- The county has no responsibility for negotiations with bargaining units

Concerns

- No local control related to hiring, promotions and assignments

- No local control over salaries and benefits
- Cost increases realized by the state are passed on to the county in subsequent agreements

Option 2 - Stand-Alone County Fire Department

Examine the feasibility and cost associated with forming a stand-alone fire department fully funded and operated by Butte County. Develop a complete staffing and deployment plan along with all required support to operate separate from the operations of CAL FIRE.

Benefits

- County gains full local control of fire department operations
- County makes all personnel decisions
- County has control of negotiations with bargaining units
- County determines compensation package

Concerns

- Additional labor group(s) with which to bargain
- All fire department employees would be in the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) and bring potential long-term pension liabilities to the county
- Other county departments may be impacted requiring additional personnel in areas such as human resources, fleet maintenance, finance and information technology
- Staggered approach would be required for implementation to allow development of job descriptions, deployment plans and policies

Option 3 - Create A Single Countywide Independent or Dependent Fire District

Examine the feasibility of forming a single fire district allowing the district to contract for services and determine the makeup of the newly formed fire district board, which could be the county Board of Supervisors or an independent Fire District Board of Directors.

Benefits

- County Board of Supervisors could have governance control by being the board of the fire district
- Incorporated cities and towns can opt into the fire district
- Costs are removed from the county general fund and paid through a separate fire tax
- Fire district would not be required to be a part of CalPERS
- Option to continue to contract with CAL FIRE

Concerns

- Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) and voter approval required
- Other county departments may be impacted requiring additional personnel in areas such as human resources, fleet maintenance, finance and information technology
- Independent operations would need to be phased in
- Transfer of assets to the district would need to be decided by the county

- Turnover rates may be high due to proximity of higher paying agencies if compensation package is not competitive

Public Outreach

At the BoS meeting of February 23, 2016, staff was directed to further develop the options presented and to hold community meetings for public input and return to the board with detailed analysis and potential implementation plans.

An online survey was conducted through SurveyMonkey in April 2016. Survey outcomes were reported by county districts and full details of the survey can be found at <https://www.buttecounty.net/Portals/0/News/BCFire-Community-Presentations.pdf>.

Overall, there were 939 respondents to the survey. Structural firefighting, wildland firefighting and emergency medical response were regarded as the most important services. Of those surveyed, 86% were satisfied with current fire services, 83% of respondents had a positive impression of Butte County Fire personnel and 56% of respondents were interested in alternatives available to the current model of providing fire services.

In addition to the online survey, community meetings were held: June 21, 2016 in Paradise; June 22, 2016 in North Chico; June 28, 2016 in Oroville; June 29, 2016 in South Chico (Chapman Mulberry); July 8, 2016 in the Mt. Ida area. The number of community members in attendance at the respective meetings could not be found.

The final report from Matrix Consulting Group, dated April 2017, concluded that the public expressed great satisfaction with the current CSA between Butte County and CAL FIRE and with the services that are provided to residents and business owners. Residents also expressed concerns that any changes to the fire system would result in fewer resources or closing of stations. Many residents stated they would pay more to ensure fire protection.

An analysis recommending cost reduction opportunities, along with implementation of the three preferred options, found that the residents of Butte County are receiving a cost-effective service from the current CSA between Butte County and CAL FIRE. By remaining with the current CSA and working with other entities to implement cost sharing opportunities, the county could save as much as \$2,257,211 annually. According to Matrix Consulting Group this remains the most cost effective option of the three. The full report can be found at: <http://www.bawatch.org/sites/default/files/Butte%20County%20Fire%20Matrix%20FINAL%20REPORT.pdf>.

Moving Forward

The current contract between Butte County and CAL FIRE expires on June 30, 2017, presenting an urgency to county staff and the BoS to find an immediate resolution to the deficit in the general fund. County staff submitted their final fire services restructuring recommendations to the BoS for action at the April 25, 2017 board meeting:

- Maintain the CSA with CAL FIRE for the provision of fire services in the county

- Direct staff to request funding from the City of Chico for the operation of Station 42 within the city limits, or to close the station if the city chooses not to fund it
- Direct staff to negotiate with the state to transfer Station 55 in Bangor to CAL FIRE
- Direct staff to end the Amador Program at Station 13 in Stirling City
- Direct staff to end the Amador Program at Station 36 in Jarbo Gap
- Direct staff to end the Amador Program at Station 62 in Berry Creek
- Direct staff to begin LAFCo procedures to establish a fire protection district

With a budget deficit of \$3.18M for the upcoming fiscal year, county staff urged the BoS to look at the issue long term, to prevent further cuts in the coming years as salaries and benefits will continue to increase.

Residents and fire personnel presented the following major concerns to the BoS:

- Fear of losing fire and medical services during the winter months
- Longer response times
- Fewer available engines
- Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating and the impact on home insurance costs and the possibility of losing home insurance entirely
- Inconsistent information between county staff and the consulting group
- Increased reliance on volunteers
- Lack of time and resources to train new volunteers
- Lack of volunteers
- Lack of information and a need for more study

The Board of Supervisors acted as follows:

- Station 13 in Stirling City to remain open
- Station 36 in Jarbo Gap to remain open
- Station 62 Berry Creek to remain open
- Staff directed to discuss transfer of Station 55 in Bangor to CAL FIRE
- Staff directed to initiate discussions with the City of Chico regarding the funding of Station 42 to avert its closure

At the BoS meeting of April 25, 2017, the board did not give a clear indication as to how or if there will be a restructure of fire services moving forward. The BoS recognized their actions are a temporary fix and are not sustainable. They directed staff to find other areas to balance the next fiscal year budget and in addition, directed county staff to discuss with LAFCo the costs associated with the formation of a county-wide fire district.

Fire Station Visits

Fire stations serving Butte County include county, city/town and state owned facilities. In addition, some facilities are leased or community owned. Grand Jury members visited three fire stations: Station 41 (Nord), Station 45 (Durham) and Station 71 (Richvale). These stations are county owned facilities. Notable structural and utility deficiencies were found at Stations 41 and 71. These two stations also have a long history of water issues including the presence of coliform bacteria and nitrate. The well system at Station 41, the source for potable water, currently has an elevated level of nitrate and excess sediment in the water, requiring frequent filter changes. Station personnel use bottled water for drinking and cooking.

Several problems were observed at Station 71. Over the past several years, station personnel have used bottled water due to the presence of coliform bacteria in the well water. This bacteria prohibits normal use of water for personal hygiene, laundry and cooking. In addition, the concrete floor in the living quarters is settling.

The Grand Jury visited Station 45 to learn about BCFD's maintenance, testing and repair of their Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment. BCFD is trained and certified to perform this maintenance, testing and repair that includes backpacks, masks, helmets, air tanks, communication devices and emergency beacons. The county saves \$38,000 annually over the cost of having an outside vendor perform these services. In addition, the county has the certifications required to perform their own ladder and water tender testing. The Grand Jury commends the Butte County Fire Department for these cost savings services.

CONCLUSION

Officials of Butte County are elected by voters to represent their constituents. Residents deserve representation that addresses basic services including emergency medical response, law enforcement and fire protection. The Board of Supervisors has had adequate notice and information to calculate the eventual depletion of reserves to meet the increasing costs of basic fire protection. The Board of Supervisors is fully aware of the CAL FIRE expiration date that is rapidly approaching. After chronologically reviewing the process, the Grand Jury concludes the Board of Supervisors has failed to adopt an adequate fire restructuring plan in a timely manner. Residents of Butte County will be faced with

financial hardships and inadequate basic services if the Board of Supervisors fails to promptly execute their civic responsibility.

FINDINGS

- F1. The present Cooperative Services Agreement between Butte County and CAL FIRE is serving residents and business owners well.

- F2. The cost of fire services is outpacing general fund revenues.

- F3. County staff have been directed to find other areas outside of fire services to reduce the cost impact on the FY 2017-2018 general fund.

- F4. Structural, water well and utility repairs and upgrades are needed at county owned stations 41 and 71.

- F5. BCFD saves the county \$38,000 annually by maintaining their SCBA equipment as opposed to contracting with an outside vendor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors continue contracting with CAL FIRE for fire services.

- R2. The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors address the potential hardship and impact on the rural community when establishing any restructuring plan.

R3. The Grand Jury recommends the upgrade, repair and maintenance of the structural and utility deficiencies at Stations 41 and 71. In addition, bring water wells up to safe potable water standards.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code section 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses as follows:

- The Butte County Board of Supervisors respond to F1, F2, F3, F4, R1, R2 and R3 within 60 days
- The Butte County Chief Administrative Officer respond to F1, F2, F3, F4, R1, R2 and R3 within 90 days
- The Butte County General Services Director respond to F4 and R3 within 90 days

Responses are to be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Butte County Superior Court in accordance with the provisions of Penal Code section 933.05.

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Artist: Natalie Coronado, Paradise High School

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WASTE MATTERS

AN UPDATE ON THE NEAL ROAD RECYCLING & WASTE FACILITY

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide information about changes occurring at the Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility (NRRWF), how these affect the public and how residents can get involved in maintaining and extending the life of the landfill – a community resource.

The collection and disposal of solid waste, septage waste and green waste are issues that impact every residence and business in Butte County. Questions surrounding the landfill have surfaced within the realm of public interest. Specific areas of concern include extending the lifespan of the landfill, the franchise agreement regulating the trash haulers, the decommissioning of the septage ponds and changes to the reception of green waste at the landfill.

This report focuses on the franchise agreement between Butte County and the franchise haulers. Cities such as Chico and Gridley are not subject to the county franchise agreements and may negotiate their own contracts for waste and recycling collection and disposal.

For these reasons, the 2016-2017 Grand Jury felt an update on the state of waste and the landfill would be beneficial to the residents of Butte County.

GLOSSARY

Green waste: biodegradable waste that can be composed of garden or park waste, such as grass or flower cuttings and hedge trimmings, as well as domestic and commercial food waste.

(LFG) Landfill gas: A natural byproduct of the decomposition of organic material in landfills. LFG is composed of roughly 50% methane (the primary component of natural gas), 50% carbon dioxide (CO₂) and a small amount of non-methane organic compounds.

NRRWF: Neal Road Recycle and Waste Facility

Septage waste: sludge (liquid/solid material) that accumulates in a septic tank, cesspool, or other storage containment.

Solid waste: for the purpose of this report, solid waste is referred to as any residential or commercial garbage or trash that is not suitable for recycling and is diverted to the landfill.

BACKGROUND

The NRRWF is the sole landfill serving approximately 220,000 residents of Butte County. It has been in operation since 1970. According to the Public Works Department, it is anticipated to reach capacity by 2048 or in approximately 31 years.

Revenue is generated by gate fees, contracts with private vendors to remove recyclables from the landfill (bicycles, tires, mattresses, appliances) and from the sale of electricity produced by the landfill gas (LFG) plant. The current gate fees

can be found on their website:

www.buttecounty.net/publicworks/Services/NealRoadRecyclingandWasteFacility

In a proactive effort to stabilize the operational revenue, the Butte County Department of Public Works Waste Management Division developed a strategic plan covering the planning period of 2012-2021. The strategic plan includes goals to increase revenue as well as goals to divert waste from entering the landfill in an effort to extend its lifespan.

The 2013-2014 Grand Jury Report on the NRRWF can be referenced as a summary of the development of the LFG plant.

After a review of numerous documents and committee discussions, four focus areas were identified:

- Extending the lifespan of the landfill
- Butte County haulers and franchise agreements
- Septage disposal and processing
- Green waste disposal

METHODOLOGY

- Interviewed personnel at Butte County Public Works and Waste Management Division
- Interviewed personnel at the NRRWF
- Toured the NRRWF
- Interviewed staff at the three hauler franchisees

- Interviewed and visited local green waste recyclers
- Reviewed the following documents:
 - Commercial Waste Hauler Franchise Collection Agreement
 - Appendix B of the 2015 NRRWF Remaining Site Capacity and Service Life Update
 - Methane gas power plant contract with Ameresco, Inc.
 - NRRWF Strategic Plan 2012-2021
 - Current gate fees at NRRWF
 - Cal Recycle data, initiatives and goals for Butte County

DISCUSSION

The Landfill: It's Capacity, Lifespan and Future Options

The NRRWF is a 190 acre Class III solid waste facility, of which approximately 140 acres is permitted for waste disposal in areas known as solid waste modules. The remaining 50 acres are used for the septage and leachate ponds, storm water detention basins, soil stockpiles and the methane gas power plant. Modules 1 through 3 have been developed and are closed. A two acre portion of Module 4 remains to be developed and Module 5 is being developed on the remaining 38 acres.

The NRRWF has been in operation for 37 years. In July 2015, Golder Associates prepared a Capacity and Service Life Update for the Neal Road Recycling and

Waste Facility.⁶ The analysis was completed as part of the 2015 Joint Technical Document Update of the facility. This is done in order to estimate the capacity and remaining service life of the NRRWF. The complex analysis calculates the remaining capacity and service life based on current incoming tonnage rates, growth rate projections and final grading plans for the facility. The report concluded that as of July 2015, the NRRWF had approximately 15.4 million cubic yards of airspace available for waste placement, equating to approximately 7.4 million tons of waste. The results of the analysis indicate an anticipated closure date for NRRWF of 2048.

In 2016, Butte County produced and sent approximately 141,000 tons of solid waste and septage waste to the landfill. Diversion of tonnage (including solid waste trash, recyclables, septage waste and green waste materials) away from the landfill appears to be an efficient solution to extending its lifespan.

The county will identify a viable alternative well in advance of the landfill reaching the anticipated capacity/closure date. Options include the transfer of solid waste to another site and possibly to another state.

⁶ Golder Associates Technical Memorandum to Butte County Public Works, December 18, 2015

Aerial View of Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility

**Franchise Agreement for Butte County Haulers**

According to the Butte County Waste Management Division, franchised collection service was identified in the NRRWF Strategic Plan 2012-2021. The plan provides a sustainable source of revenue to ensure operations at NRRWF. Operations include environmental monitoring and development of landfill capacity, renewable energy projects and waste related program services. Consolidation of the commercial service areas was also implemented as an effort to reduce impacts on local streets and to avoid overlapping of services.

Conditions Prior to the Franchise Agreement

Prior to the franchise agreement, inefficiencies and inconsistencies were occurring with respect to overlapping of services, pricing, recycling and confusion as to the responsibilities of the haulers. For example, multiple waste haulers were competing for customers over the entire county. The base pricing for these services varied from hauler to hauler. Consequently, customers were charged different fees for the same service. Overlapping trash routes and responsibilities resulted in considerable confusion to residents. It also added to maintenance costs related to wear and tear on the streets. The haulers reported increased wear and tear on their fleet and increased fuel costs due to the wide customer base and varied locations. Furthermore, recycling was not being encouraged. This caused inconsistency in how recyclables were managed throughout the county. Most recycling at the curbside was intermingled with regular garbage that ultimately ended up in the landfill.

Finally, the NRRWF experienced inconsistent operating funds because the various haulers were not required to utilize NRRWF for all solid waste disposal.

Conditions After the Franchise Agreement

As part of the franchise agreements, three commercial haulers were selected to provide solid waste and recyclable collection services to Butte County. Contracts were awarded to Waste Management, Recology and Northern Recycling and Waste Service. The franchise agreement provides operational rules and regulations for the three haulers. It sets forth a clear delineation of the service areas between the various haulers. The franchise agreement became effective on March 1, 2015. The document can be found at this link:

www.buttecounty.net/recyclebutte/CollectionAreas/FranchiseAgreement

Waste Management services the northern portion of the county, including the City of Chico and unincorporated areas north of Chico. Waste Management also serves the cities of Gridley and Biggs as part of previous contracts. Recology handles the southern portion of the county, including the City of Oroville. Northern Recycling and Waste Service covers Paradise and the other ridge communities. The commercial haulers are required to utilize the NRRWF for solid waste disposal. For curbside collection, residents can choose from three container sizes based on their needs.

Recycling zones were established throughout the county to encourage the collection and disposal of all recyclables. Mixed recycling (bottles, glass, plastic, etc.) is disposed of at different locations. Waste Management diverts mixed recycling to its regional facility in Sacramento. Recology transports mixed recycling to its own facility in Marysville, and Northern Recycling and Waste Service transports its recycling trash to a facility in Napa County.

Residences within the recycling zones are provided with two separate collection containers for recyclables. One is designated for mixed recyclables and the other is designated for green waste materials. Collection schedules and disposal locations are determined by the individual haulers, typically either weekly or bi-weekly.

Finally, a benchmark goal for profit consistency between the haulers was established at a 10.5% operating margin.

Initial Results of the Franchise Agreement

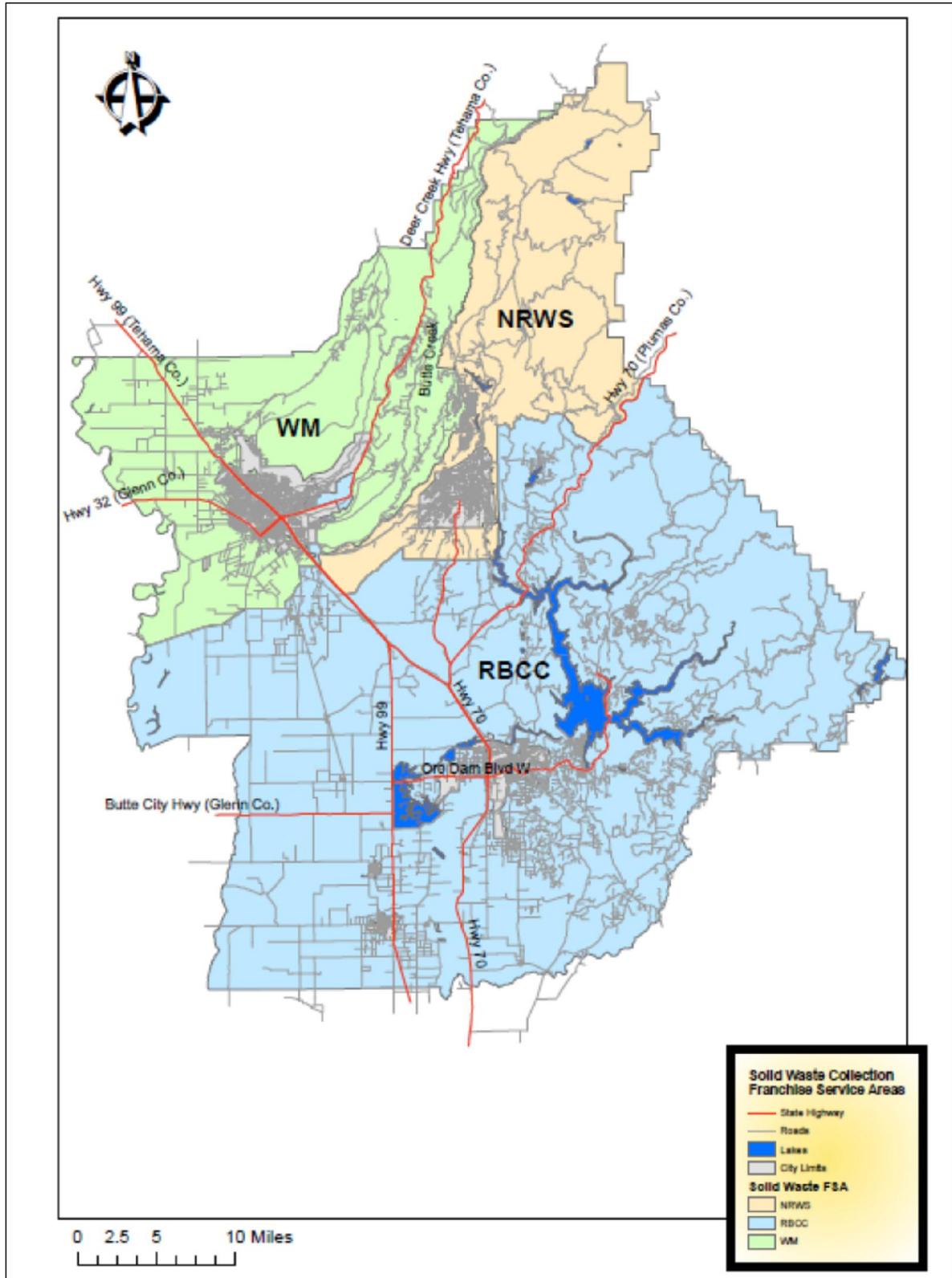
The franchise agreement is to be reviewed every three years. The haulers have completed the second full year under the new agreement. Representatives from the three haulers stated that the franchise agreement has been beneficial to their

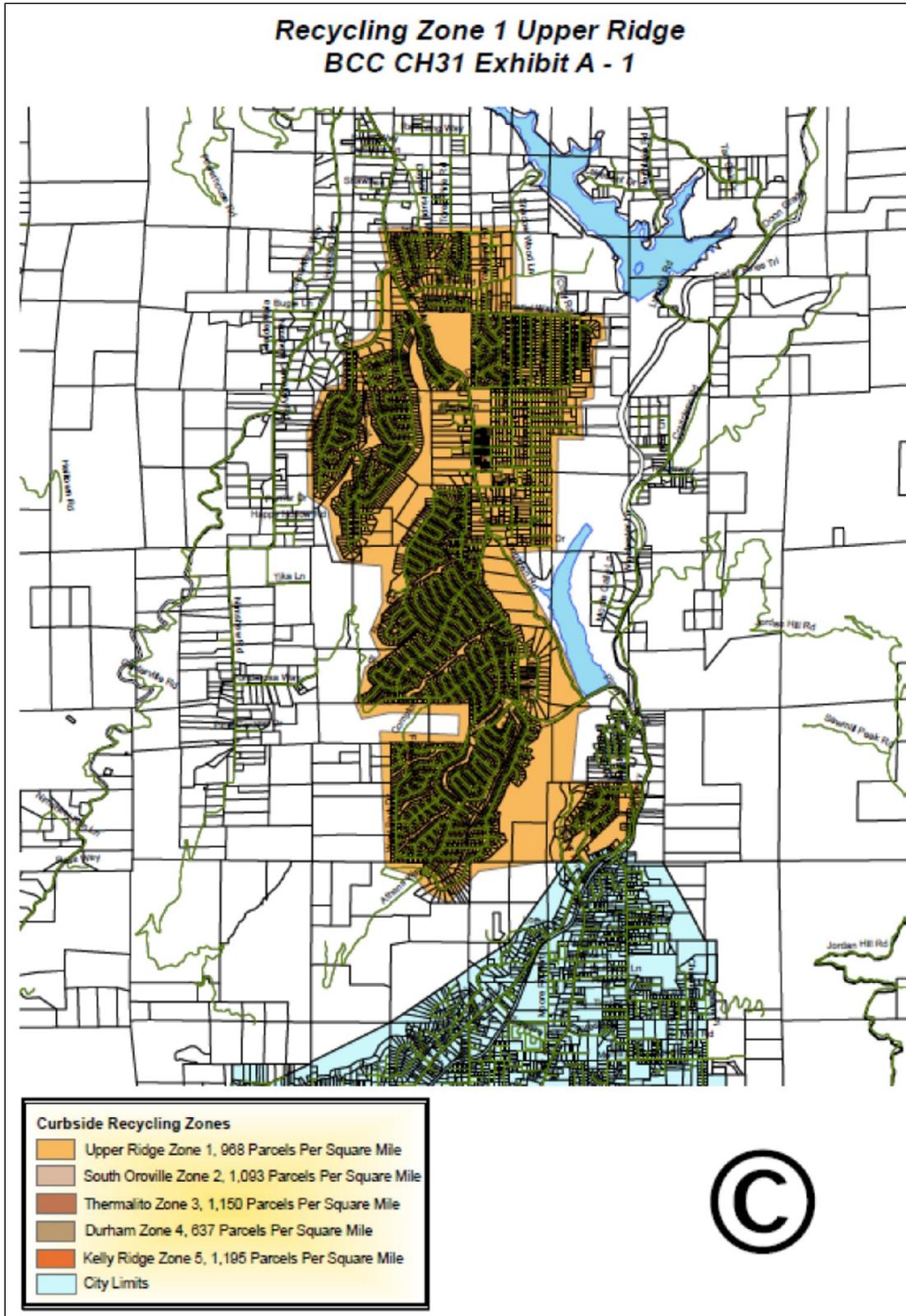
respective companies. The clearly defined service areas have allowed them to become more efficient and economical in serving the public. Fewer miles traveled has reduced wear and tear on their fleet. Fewer miles also helps reduce noise and air pollution on the neighborhoods.

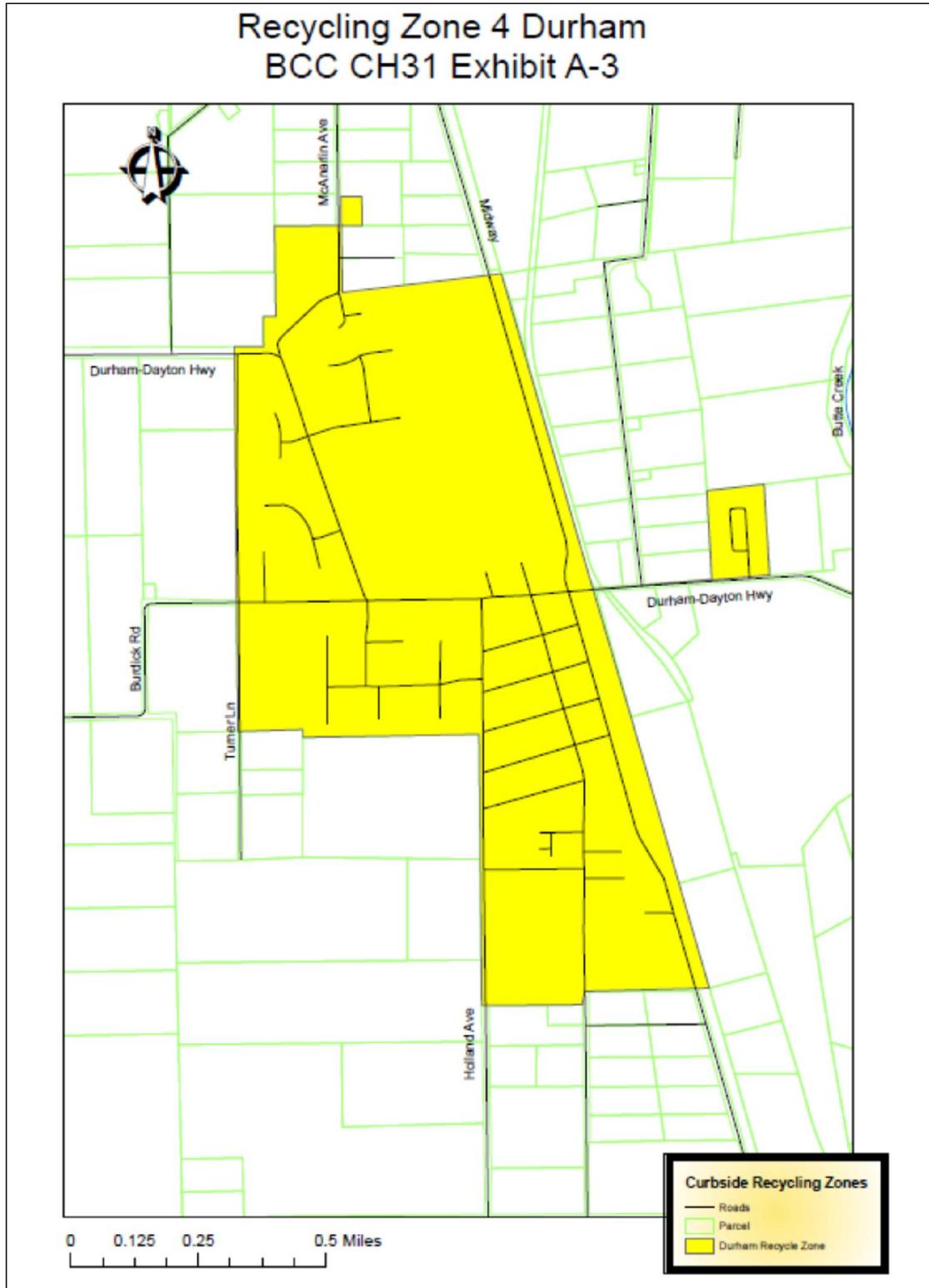
Increased efforts to encourage recycling have reduced tonnage to the landfill, effectively helping to extend the lifespan of the landfill.

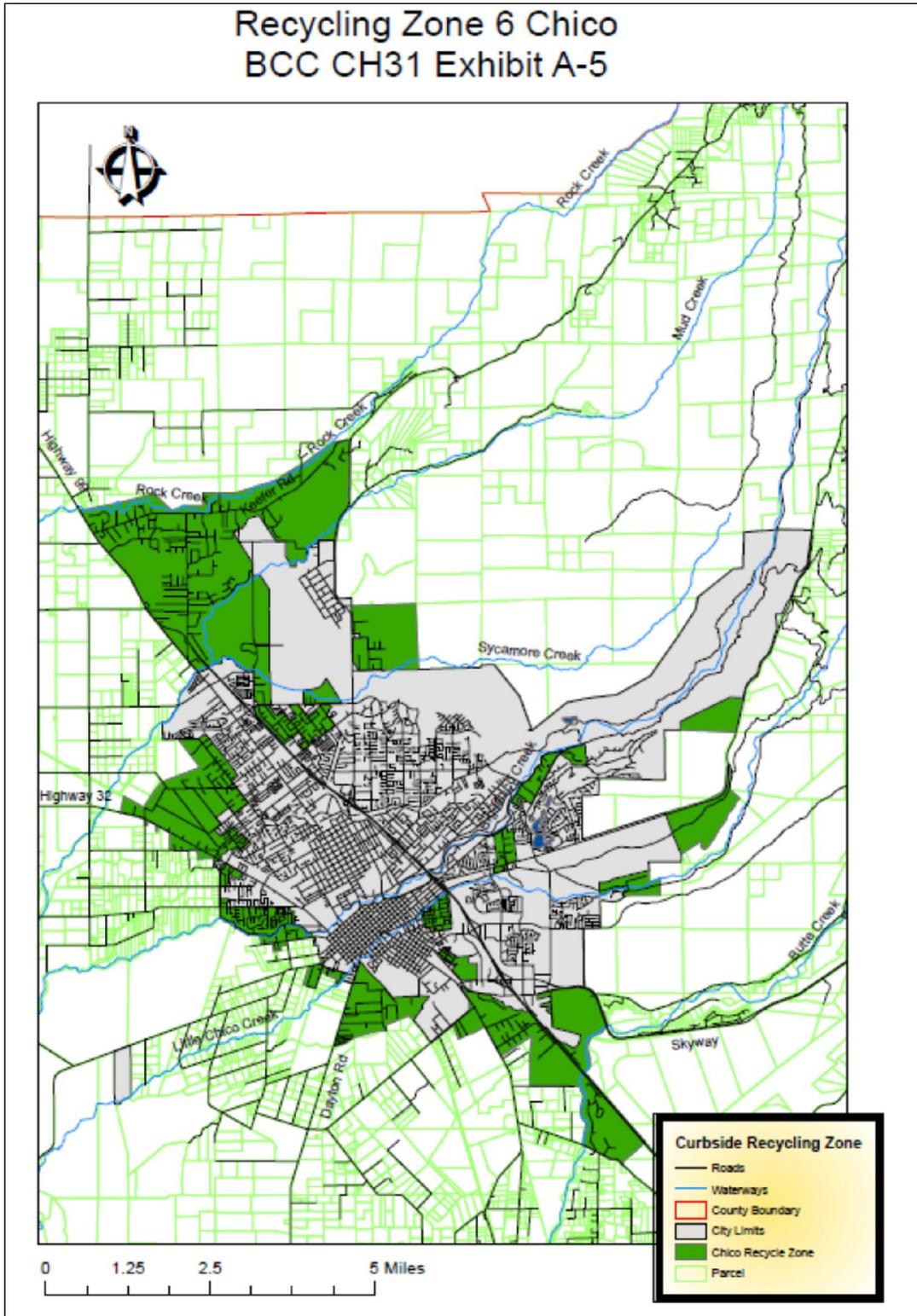
The solid waste collection map and recycling zone maps are presented on the following pages.

SOLID WASTE COLLECTION FRANCHISE MAP



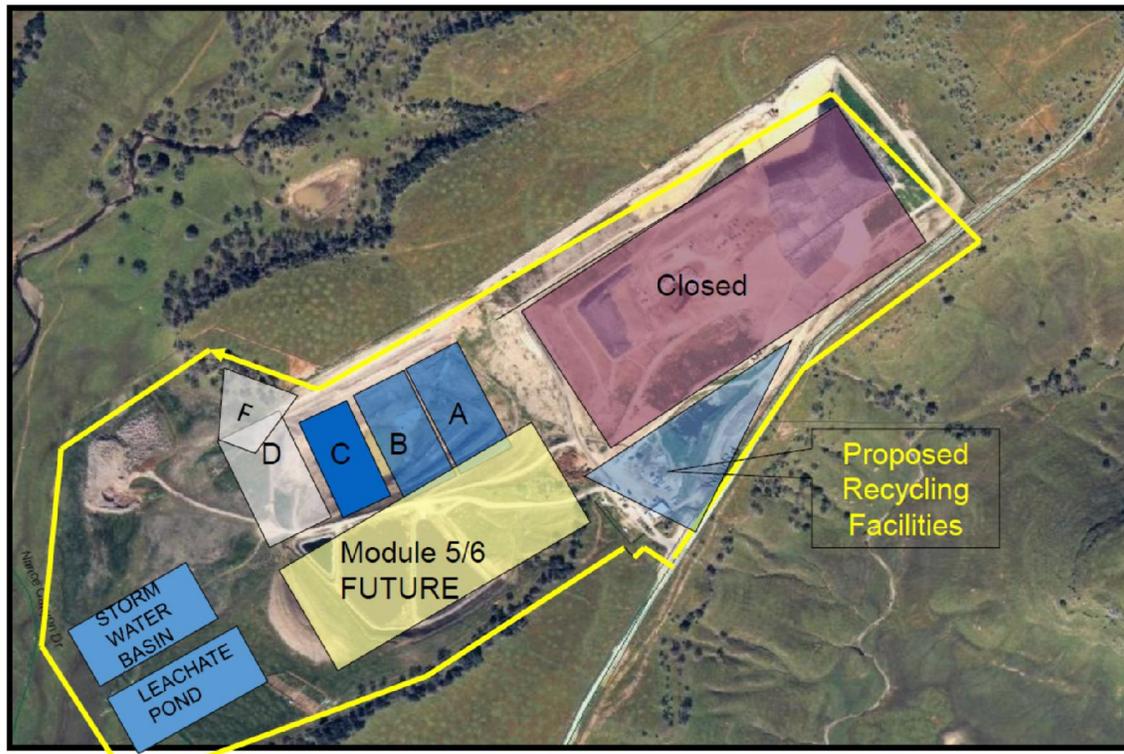






Septage Disposal and Processing

The following exhibit illustrates the development sequence of the landfill.



A necessary plan to divert septage waste from the landfill is under development. Module 4 (identified on the map as areas A through F), is built up nearly to the maximum allowable height. Only portions D & F remain to be developed in Module 4.

Further development of Module 4 requires the build-up of Module 5 for structural support. When NRRWF began to contemplate the opening of Module 5, it became clear that something would need to be done with the septage treatment ponds, which currently occupy the Module 5 area. Construction and quality assurance monitoring contracts for the development of Phase A of Module 5 have been executed.

On September 13, 2016, Butte County Public Works presented the Board of Supervisors with three options to allow for the decommissioning and removal of the septage treatment ponds. Options included:

1. Transfer Station (out of county disposal). This option includes constructing a transfer station on approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ acre at NRRWF and utilizing a private company to operate the transfer station. The company would transfer the septage for processing at their facility in Lincoln. The estimated cost for this option is \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. No loans would be required under this scenario.
2. Septage Receiving and Treatment Facility (local disposal). This option includes constructing a larger facility at NRRWF on approximately 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres, to receive and treat the septage by removing the solids. The effluent would then be trucked to an additional storage facility constructed within the City of Chico's sewerage area. The waste would be metered into the system at night at a low flow rate. This option would require a long-term agreement between the City of Chico and Butte County. The estimated cost is \$2,000,000 to \$3,100,000. Funding is likely required. A similar option between the City of Oroville and Butte County proved to be more difficult.
3. Discontinue accepting septage at the NRRWF. This option would require the individual septic tank pumping trucks to make the trip to the privately owned septage processing facility in Lincoln every time they pump a tank. The round-trip travel time associated with this option (approximately 4 hours) would result in the haulers passing a substantial increase in their per trip charge to the customer, as well as getting less pump-outs done per day.

The decision was made to pursue Option 1, the construction of a septage transfer station at NRRWF. This option requires less capital from the NRRWF Enterprise Fund than Option 2, uses less labor and provides the lowest gate fee for septage disposal while still providing a local disposal site. The Board of Supervisors directed Public Works to negotiate the contract for the septage transfer station at NRRWF.

In January 2017, the contract was awarded to Envirotech based in Lincoln. Envirotech will operate the transfer station at NRRWF and will oversee the transportation and processing of the sewage. All processing will be accomplished at the Lincoln facility. Butte County will pay for the construction and own the transfer station. The construction process is expected to be completed by the end of summer 2017.

The contract was negotiated for a continued volume of 20,000 gallons per day, which is the current volume being received at NRRWF. Once construction is complete, the transition will allow the closure of the ponds one day, and the start-up of the transfer station operation the next day.

This will allow the removal of the ponds' solids to proceed on a schedule that prepares Module 5, Phase B to receive solid waste. The NRRWF anticipated closure date is based on the final buildup of Modules 4 and 5.

Green Waste - What Is It and Where Does It Go?

Green waste materials include grass or flower cuttings and hedge trimmings, trees and branches as well as domestic and commercial food waste. Historically, green waste was used at the landfill as part of its alternative daily cover.

In September 2014 Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill 1594, which mandates that as of January 1, 2020, the use of green material as alternative daily cover will no longer be considered to be “diversion” through recycling. Instead, green waste will be considered “disposal” in terms of measuring a jurisdiction’s annual 50% per-capita disposal rate.

In addition, the closure of several co-generation plants eliminated another disposal option for these materials at NRRWF.

In December 2016, NRRWF made policy changes with regard to the reception of green waste materials in bulk including:

- Commercial haulers and companies that require bulk disposal utilize local composting and recycling yards as an alternative to diverting green waste to the landfill.
- Gate fees for green waste disposal at NRRWF are now charged at the same rate as solid waste.
- For residents, there is no change to curbside collection.

The commercial haulers divert waste to various locations. Waste Management diverts its green waste to Chico Compost. Recology diverts its green waste to their

Marysville facility and Northern Recycling and Waste Service diverts its green waste to Old Durham Wood.

As part of this investigation, the Grand Jury visited several local green waste recyclers to explore options the public and commercial haulers have with respect to green waste disposal and processing. A brief overview of these options is presented below.

City of Chico Compost Facility

This facility is located at 4441 Cohasset Rd, near the Chico Municipal Airport. The site is owned by the City of Chico and operated by Waste Management. Its capacity is estimated to be 15,000 cubic yards. It provides the public a green waste disposal option at a reduced fee along with the ability to purchase processed compost materials. The disposal fees vary based on the type of vehicle and load size. The City of Chico provides information about this facility on their website which can be found at the following link:

www.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/solid_waste_and_recycling

Due to its proximity to the airport, there are height restrictions and a 1,000 foot boundary clearance in place so as to not interfere with airport operations. These restrictions eliminate the possibility of further expansion of the facility.

Old Durham Wood

Located at 1156 Oro-Chico Highway in Durham, this operation is privately owned, encompassing approximately 80 acres. Old Durham Wood deals mostly in orchard

removal, processing and sale of the firewood and large woody debris. Upon request, the orchard compost material is returned to the orchard owner for a fee. The facility also accepts green waste materials from the public and commercial haulers.

The Earthworm Farm

Located at 704 Neal Road, The Earthworm Farm is a privately owned producer of composting and gardening products. They also sell fishing and composting earthworms to the public. The facility uses unique vermiculture techniques to compost green waste. They are limited to a capacity of approximately 12,500 cubic yards. While open to the public, this facility accepts only “trash-free” green waste from select providers due to the nature of its operation. Overall, it has minimal impact in terms of green waste management for Butte County.

FINDINGS

- F1. The anticipated 2048 closure date of the NRRWF facility is based on current tonnage, population growth rates and final grading plans for the facility.
- F2. The Franchise Agreement between Butte County and the three commercial waste haulers has been beneficial to the county, the haulers and the general public.
- F3. The closure of the septage ponds allows for the development of the NRRWF to its full capacity.
- F4. The decision to divert septage away from the landfill utilizing Option 1 requires less capital from the NRRWF enterprise fund with no loan obligations.

F5. State regulations and limited options for green waste materials dictated changes to the handling of green waste at NRRWF including gate fee increases to the public. Commercial haulers divert green waste to other facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

None.

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.



Artist: Emily Redeker, Inspire School of Arts

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TOWN OF PARADISE REVIEW

SUMMARY

Pursuant to California Penal Code 925(a), the 2016-2017 Grand Jury completed a general review of the Town of Paradise (TOP) to highlight how the town is managing its fiscal responsibilities, the impact of Measure C and the issues related to the town’s lack of a central wastewater treatment system. The review revealed that the town is managing its day-to-day operations as efficiently as possible, however, significant infrastructure deficiencies are becoming evident.

GLOSSARY

Centerline Mile: A one-mile segment of road measured along the centerline

FY: Fiscal Year

LAFCo: Local Agency Formation Commission

MSR: Municipal Services Review

TOP: Town Of Paradise

VIPS: Volunteers In Police Services

BACKGROUND

The TOP is located in the foothills of Butte County. The town was incorporated in 1979 and encompasses approximately 18.3 square miles. Population grew slowly between 1990 and 2012, but in recent years it has declined slightly to the current estimate of 25,405 residents. In addition, approximately 10,000 residents of Magalia, Inskip and other ridge communities utilize the business, medical and school services located in Paradise.

During the course of the investigation and review of the various department policies and procedures, three focus areas were identified as having a significant impact on nearly all town departments and the community as a whole:

- Measure C
- Proposed Sewer Project
- Long-Term Fiscal Plan

Measure C: As with many communities throughout California, Paradise was significantly impacted by the 2007 recession and subsequent economic downturn. Annual revenues declined, requiring the town to implement hiring freezes and pay cuts, while scheduled fleet replacements and capital projects were postponed. To maintain public services, voters approved Measure C, a one-half percent (0.50%) temporary sales tax increase for the preservation of public services such as police protection, fire suppression, street maintenance and animal control. The tax went into effect in April 2015 and automatically expires in six years, or April 2021. Measure C is anticipated to generate approximately \$1.2 million in revenue each year.

Proposed Sewer Project: According to the TOP website, Paradise is the largest community in California to operate without a centralized wastewater treatment system. Approximately 11,500 private septic tanks and leach fields serve the residents and businesses. The need for a centralized system has been identified as a primary issue impacting the densely populated residential and commercial corridors.

Long-Term Fiscal Plan: The town is adequately addressing current budget needs through creative endeavors including grant applications and Measure C. However, these are short-term solutions. The wastewater issue will most likely result in a

significant impact on the town budget, as well as an assessment to the residences and businesses within the proposed sewer district. The town should be proactive in developing a long-term strategy to address future budget requirements.

METHODOLOGY

In order to identify areas of concern or interest within the various town departments, the Grand Jury formulated a series of questions and conducted twelve interviews with members of upper management, mid-level management and other staff. In addition, the Grand Jury reviewed the following documents:

- TOP current and historical organizational charts
- 2016-2017 Operational and Capital Budgets and Mid-Year Update (February 2017)
- Preliminary Measure C Financial Plan Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-2016 through 2020-2021
- Town of Paradise Sewer Project Alternative Analysis and Feasibility Report, February 2017 Draft
- LAFCo's 2007 Municipal Services Review (MSR) for the TOP
- Prior Grand Jury final reports related to the TOP

DISCUSSION

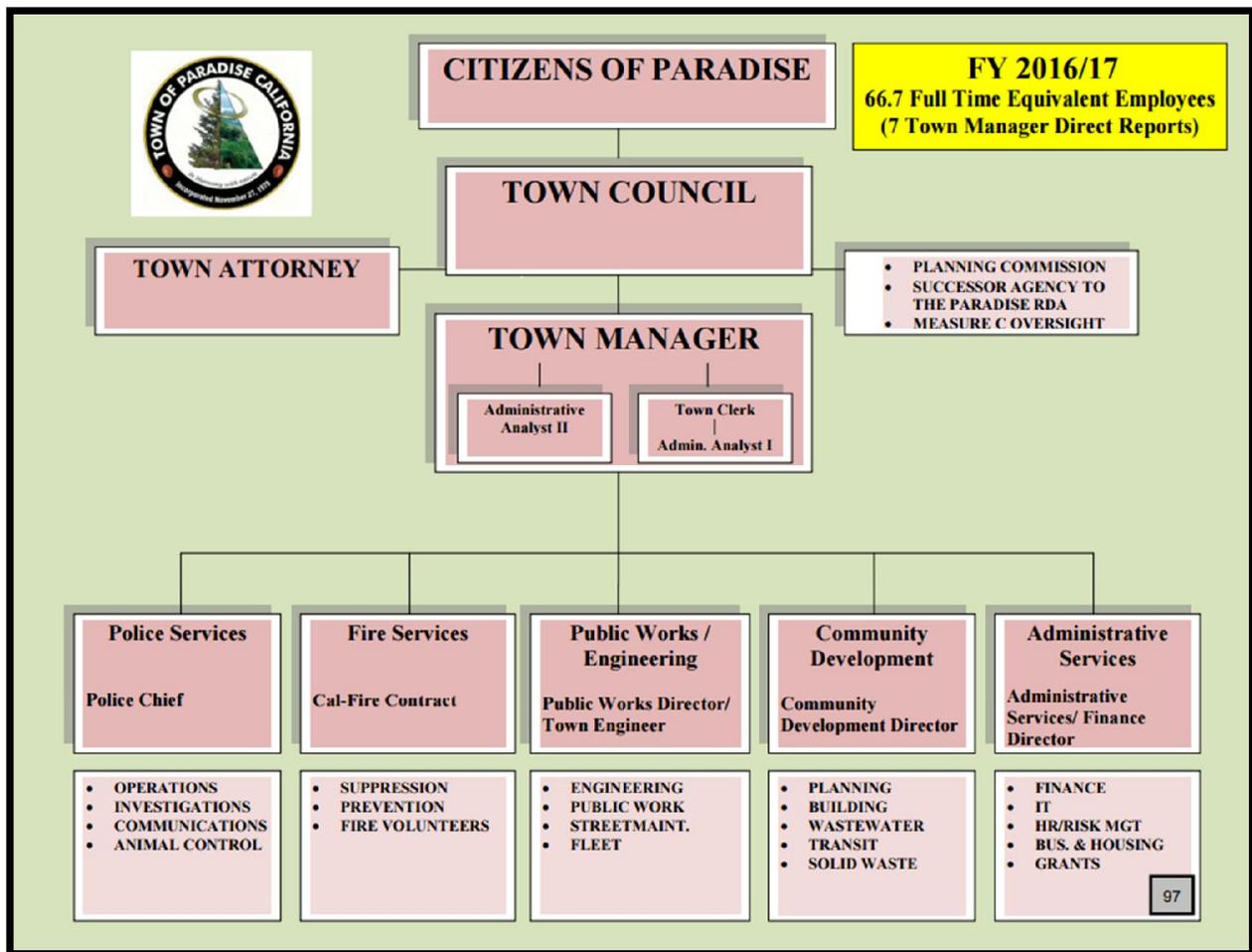
Town Administration

A five member community-elected Town Council sets the policies and establishes priorities for the town. The TOP is staffed by 66.7 full time employees overseen by the Town Manager, who reports to the Town Council. The manager administers the day-to-day affairs and activities of the TOP, advises the council on public policy issues and implements the town's adopted policies and programs.

According to the Organizational Chart, there are seven positions that report directly to the Town Manager: Administrative Analyst II, Town Clerk, Police

Chief, CAL FIRE Chief, Public Works Director/Town Engineer, Community Development Director and Administrative Services/Finance Director.

The organization has been streamlined in recent years to improve efficiency and communication between departments and management. Teamwork, inter-departmental communications and the ability to be efficient within the confines of a thin budget were demonstrated to the Grand Jury throughout the course of the review. These attributes are to be commended and reflect positively on the management and staff of the TOP.



Administrative employees took a 5% pay cut in 2012 when the town had a budget deficit. Only recently has the town been able to implement pay increases.

The town is currently operating with a balanced budget. The 2016-2017 Mid-Year Budget Report, dated February 14, 2017, indicated an ending fund balance of \$3,430,132 including general fund and Measure C revenues.

Police Services

Police Services has a staff of 19 sworn officers and 14 non-sworn staff overseen by the Chief of Police. As of March 31, 2017, there were two open positions – one sworn position and one non-sworn position. There are also five “frozen” positions that are allocated but not funded. The sworn officer positions are summarized in the following chart:

Position	Position Control	Actual Staff as of March 2017
Officer	12	11
Officer Trainee *	0	1
Officer Cadet **	0	1
AB109 Officer	1	1
Investigator	2	1.5
Sergeant	4	3
TOTALS	19	18.5

* Fully Trained June 2017

** Fully Trained January 2018

In 2015 there were 26,769 calls for service. The number increased slightly in 2016 to 27,234, an increase of 1.74% overall.

Based on the size of the town and service level, each shift should be staffed by three officers and one sergeant. Currently, each shift has two officers and one sergeant. As a result of the reduced staffing levels, the department incurs significant overtime, fewer patrols and longer call response times.

Police Services is facing a steadily increasing turnover rate as illustrated in the following chart:

Year	Turnover Rate
2013/2014	11%
2014/2015	16%
2015/2016	26%

Police Services faces challenges with respect to retention and recruitment. One of the primary reasons stated by employees on exit interviews is “burnout” due to overtime.

Barriers to recruitment and retention include a lower salary and benefits scale, fewer advancement opportunities and lower sign-on bonuses as compared to other agencies in Butte County and the region. Most recruits come from the Butte College Police Academy. The town offers two academy sponsorships in exchange for a three year commitment to Paradise.

Police Services is supported by a strong volunteer organization known as Volunteers In Police Services (VIPS). This 40 plus member organization is “...committed to assisting the Paradise Police Department in their goal of enhancing community safety, protecting life and property, reducing crime and reducing the fear of crimes.” A new VIPS academy began in May 2017 and that could add 8 to 10 additional volunteers to the program. The Grand Jury commends the members of VIPS for their service to the department and the community.

In FY 2015-2016 and FY 2016-2017, Police Services benefited from Measure C in the following ways:

- Funded the salary and benefits for one detective
- Purchase of 3 new police cars
- Body cameras and hardware
- Officer training

- K-9 Program (training, food, veterinary costs)
- Police academy sponsorships
- Lieutenant development (transition plan, training, professional conference)
- Animal control funding
- Facility repairs (exterior siding, men's locker room)

The 2015-2016 Grand Jury report identified two recommendations that required responses from Police Services. The first was the recommendation to implement tracking of calls related to crimes involving the homeless. The department has implemented this recommendation and reported that in 2016 there were 424 incidents involving transient activity.

The 2015-2016 Grand Jury also recommended that the TOP allocate funds to update, renovate or enlarge the local animal shelter. While full implementation of this recommendation was not possible because of budget constraints, the Town Council and Measure C Committee dedicated funds to provide four new animal isolation units. The department also implemented online dog registration.

Fire Services / CAL FIRE Contract

There are three operating fire stations that serve Paradise. Stations 81 and 82 are within the TOP and are operated by CAL FIRE. The third station, Station 35 located in the county near Magalia, is owned by Butte County and operated by CAL FIRE. In December 2012, the TOP fire department was dissolved and CAL FIRE was contracted for fire service. The contract stipulates that CAL FIRE provide the fire personnel (Chief, Captains, Engineers and Firefighters) while the TOP is responsible for the operational costs including building and fleet maintenance, equipment, apparatus and facilities.

The personnel contract is scheduled for review in June 2017 and the town is already negotiating to renew the contract. Both TOP and CAL FIRE personnel stated that the CAL FIRE contract has been economically beneficial to the town.

Measure C has been beneficial to the Fire Department, as it funded the purchase of a new fire engine as well as the roof replacement at Fire Station 81 located on Birch Street.

Public Works and Engineering

Public Works and Engineering has a broad range of departmental responsibilities including the oversight and maintenance of the fleet, public streets, street lights, ditches, facilities and tree removal.

There are nine employees in Public Works and Engineering including six street maintenance staff, one fleet maintenance mechanic, one construction/building maintenance staff and the department director. The Public Works Director is also the Town Engineer.

The TOP maintains approximately 99 miles of public streets within the town limits as well as 200 miles of storm drainage pipes and 15 traffic signals. The town implemented TOP Access, a web-based customer service center. This provides residents a convenient, trackable method for reporting complaints or service requests for road maintenance, ditch or drainage problems and street lights. Town staff uses tablets purchased with Measure C funds for improved communication and accountability when responding to service calls or complaints. The Grand Jury commends the TOP for the implementation of this community resource.

Pavement condition surveys are completed about every ten years, the most recent in 2009. This survey identifies road treatment needs by centerline mile. Treatment needs refers to preventative maintenance, resurfacing, overlay and total reconstruction.

The following table summarizes the number of centerline miles requiring treatment needs as identified in the 2009 survey. The table also includes a 2017 update which accounts for recently completed projects and the estimated funding for all roadway treatment needs:

Summary of Public Streets in Need of Treatment, Treatment Type & Estimated Funding Required			
Survey Year:	2009	2017	
Treatment Type Required	# Centerline Miles Needing Treatment	# Centerline Miles Needing Treatment	2017 Estimated Total Funding Needed
Preventative Maintenance	21	13	\$220,000
Resurfacing	13	8	\$700,000
Overlay	58	65	\$22,750,000
Reconstruction	7	11	\$21,200,000

Street and road repairs are funded primarily through gas tax revenues and grants. Current town revenues allocated to road repairs do not meet the preventative maintenance and resurfacing costs for a year. Gas tax revenues have declined in recent years while maintenance costs have increased.

The Grand Jury commends the department for being resourceful in finding creative means of funding through grant applications for public safety improvement projects and road maintenance. Between November 2013 and December 2016 the department secured six Active Transportation Program Grants for safety projects/non-motorized transportation infrastructure and five Highway Safety

Improvement Program Grants, which provide funds for road maintenance. In addition, one grant was awarded for Congestion Mitigation Air Quality. Seven of these projects are 100% grant funded, but five require a small match from the town. Four projects are planned for 2017, followed by five projects planned for 2018 and 2019.

In FY 2015-2016 pedestrian safety crossing improvements were completed. The FY 2016-2017 Measure C funds allocated to Public Works provided for road rehabilitation and drainage improvements on Pearson Road.

Despite these grants and Measure C allocations, significant funding is required to complete the treatment needs identified in the 2009 Pavement Conditions Survey.

In addition to town maintained public streets, there exists approximately 100 miles of private roads within the town limits. Private streets are not town maintained and some do not conform to public standards for width and condition. As a result, access for emergency services can be challenging.

The TOP fleet includes 90 vehicles and 30 pieces of heavy equipment. The average age of the entire fleet, including three new police cars and a new fire engine, is 13 years. Fleet maintenance is staffed by one mechanic. The facilities include a two-bay garage with a lift. Due to the number of vehicles requiring maintenance, it is sometimes necessary to service them in the driveway. The Grand Jury feels this segment of the department should be reviewed for future budget considerations related to additional staff and facility improvements.

Community Development

Community Development encompasses the Planning, Building, Wastewater, Transit and Solid Waste departments. A primary issue this department deals with is the on-site monitoring of nearly 11,500 private septic tanks and leach fields. Paradise faces limitations on new residential and commercial development due to physical characteristics such as its topography, vegetation and soils. However, the primary restraint is the region's lack of a municipal wastewater system for sewage disposal.

The aging storm water drainage system is another significant issue. The TOP Storm Water Drainage System includes approximately 200 miles of town maintained pipes. The 2007 LAFCo MSR made three determinations related to needs and deficiencies in the Master Storm Drainage System. The following Summary of Determinations was sourced from LAFCo's 2007 MSR:

Summary of Determinations

Determination 3.3-1 (Existing Conditions and Facilities):

The Master Storm Drainage Study and Facilities Plan is out of date and inadequate to accurately describe existing storm drainage facilities and conditions in the Town of Paradise. An updated study is necessary to document current conditions, assess potential impacts of current and future development, identify mitigation strategies, and recommend means of implementation.

Determination 3.3-2 (Existing Conditions and Facilities):

Formal adoption of the Interim Drainage Design Guidelines or a full set of drainage design criteria by the Town Council will provide a more effective means to enforce storm drainage requirements for future development.

Determination 3.3-3 (Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies):

The existing storm drainage facilities are likely inadequate to effectively serve the basic needs of the Town of Paradise, since at least one-half of the improvements recommended in the 1980 study have not been completed to date. Improvements recommended in an updated study should be implemented to provide the basic storm water collection needs for the Town and to support expected growth.

Based on the number of miles in the system and the high cost of repair and maintenance associated with aging pipes, the town should continue to work toward a long-term solution for the storm water drainage system.

Proposed Sewer Project

As noted, the TOP does not have a centralized wastewater system for sewage disposal. All residences and businesses utilize private septic systems which are comprised of septic tanks and leach fields. The components of this type of wastewater system will eventually require system repairs or replacement. Drought conditions increase septic tank failures due to tree roots seeking out water, causing intrusion into pipes. Septic tanks have the tendency to degrade soils which can

lead to contamination of ground and surface water. Heavy rain seasons will have an impact on leach line failures.

Based on the number of permits issued for repairs and/or replacement, residents and business owners are incurring significant annual costs to maintain these systems. The reported number has increased slightly in recent years, particularly in the commercial areas along the Skyway. The following chart summarizes the total permits issued for septic system repairs and/or replacements. As shown, the failure rate fluctuated from 1.5% to 3.3% between FY 2008-2009 and FY 2014-2015. Data for FY 2015-2016 was not available.

TOP SEPTIC SYSTEM FAILURE RATE FISCAL YEARS 2008/2009 THROUGH 2014/2015							
	<u>FY 08/09</u>	<u>FY 09/10</u>	<u>FY 10/11</u>	<u>FY 11/12</u>	<u>FY 12/13</u>	<u>FY 13/14</u>	<u>FY 14/15</u>
Repair Permits Issued	300	294	299	344	284	376	174
# of Septic Systems	11,500	11,500	11,500	11,500	11,500	11,500	11,500
Indicated Failure Rate	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	3.0%	2.5%	3.3%	1.5%

In some instances the property does not have the land area required for a replacement system. Even when the property is large enough, residents and business owners may not be able to afford the significant costs associated with repairs or replacement. These factors can result in limitations on business operations such as fewer chairs in a hair salon, fewer units in an apartment complex or fewer tables in a restaurant. Attracting new businesses in this environment is difficult because septic system limitations restrict numerous potential uses. These complications can also prevent existing businesses or commercial property owners from expanding or further developing their property.

Since 1979 there have been seven in-depth studies dedicated to providing viable solutions to the wastewater and septage disposal issue. These documents can be viewed online at: <http://paradisesewer.com/technical-documents>.

The most recent feasibility analysis titled, Town of Paradise Sewer Project Alternatives Analysis and Feasibility Report: Determining a Preferred Option for Implementation, was released in February 2017. This study considered five options for the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater from properties within a proposed sewer service area:

1. Localized Treatment Plant with effluent land application
2. Localized Treatment Plant with surface water discharge to a creek
3. Regional Connection to the City of Chico
4. Localized Treatment Plant with beneficial re-use of effluent for irrigation
5. No Project Option

The goal of the analysis was to determine which of the five options was the most “permit-able, construct-able, and financially and operationally feasible” for the town to consider. According to the study, the two most favorable options were a Regional Connection to Chico and a Localized Treatment Plant with surface water discharge. The Localized Treatment Plant option had the lowest capital cost estimated at \$64 million compared to \$83 million for the Regional Connection option.

The Regional Connection to Chico option was ultimately selected as the recommended option because it provided for the lowest net present cost over its projected 80-year life cycle, fewer public and environmental impacts and lower

long-term operational cost burden. The regional connection option will require the TOP to work through a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Chico.

The sewer project feasibility study identified the preferred long-term solution for the town, but it did not identify an adequate source of grant funding to make the project economically feasible for the rate payers. The recommended option will require a significant tax assessment, individual loans for equipment and connections, and high operational fees. The study recommended that the town begin negotiations with the City of Chico for a Memorandum of Understanding and discuss opportunities with state and federal representatives to identify approximately \$40 to \$60 million in funding. The following exhibit illustrates the proposed sewer service area boundaries:

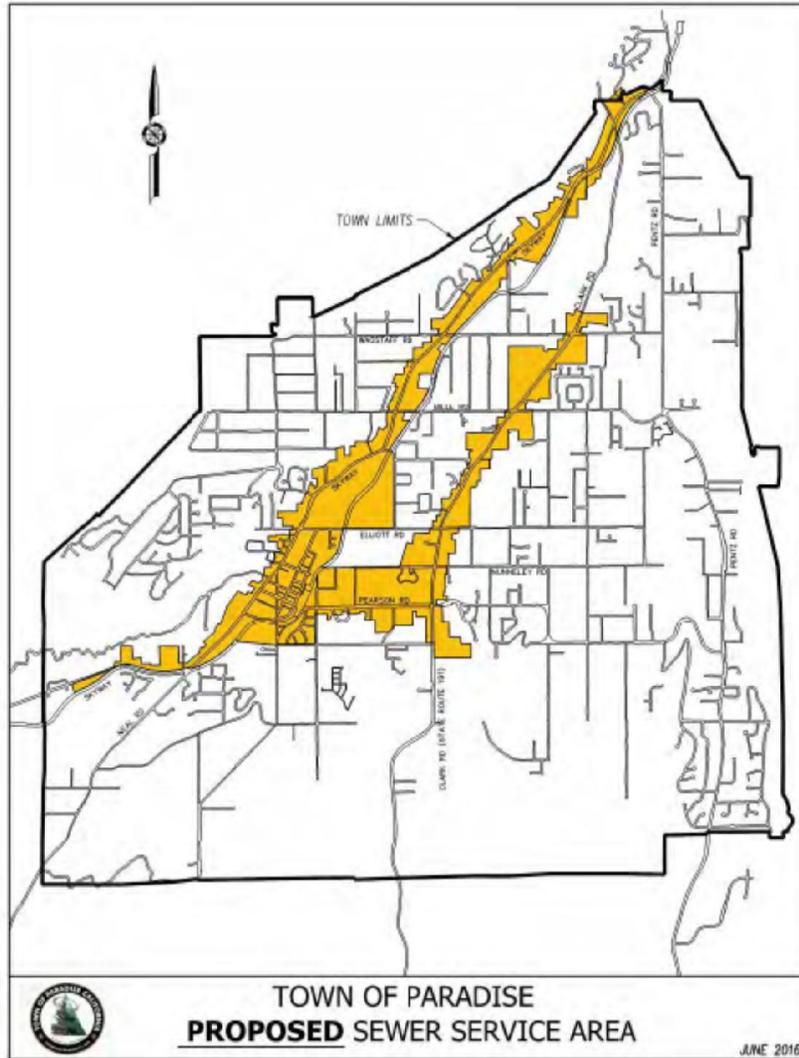


Figure 1.1: Town of Paradise Proposed Sewer Service Area.

CONCLUSION

The TOP is cognizant of the significant challenges it faces with respect to aging and deficient infrastructure. Management is transparent in its efforts to be fiscally responsible. They recognize that Measure C is a temporary fix and are to be commended for being proactive in planning for when it expires. The purchase of modern equipment, supplies and vehicles for many of the departments, made possible by Measure C, has improved efficiency and morale. However, a long-range plan to provide for the infrastructure needs should be a top priority for TOP.

In order to achieve this, the town must engage its greatest resource: the creative and volunteering spirit of its citizens.

FINDINGS

- F1. Measure C has been successful in the preservation of public services, such as police protection, fire suppression, street maintenance and animal control, while also providing a short-term solution for capital improvement and equipment funding.
- F2. The lack of a waste water treatment system limits the town’s future growth and burdens residents with high maintenance and replacement costs for private septic tanks and leach fields.
- F3. The TOP fleet includes more than 100 vehicles and pieces of equipment currently maintained by a staff of one mechanic.
- F4. Police Services is under-staffed and experiencing an increasing turnover rate combined with recruitment difficulties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The TOP town council should consider a vote to extend Measure C prior to its expiration in 2021.
- R2. The TOP should urgently pursue one of the two preferred options for the proposed sewer project identified by the most recent feasibility study.
- R3. The TOP should develop a long-term fiscal plan to address deficiencies in streets, storm water drainage pipes and wastewater treatment.

- R4. The TOP should hire another mechanic or shop assistant for fleet maintenance by FY 2017-2018.

- R5. The TOP should consider facility improvements to the fleet maintenance shop, possibly a canopy to provide protection from the elements when repairing vehicles or equipment in the shop driveway. This should be completed by FY 2018-2019.

RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code section 933.05, following response is required:

- The Town of Paradise Town Council respond to R1 within 60 days.
- The Town of Paradise Manager respond to F1, F2, F3, F4, R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5 within 90 days.

The Grand Jury invites the following response:

- Director of Public Works/Engineering is invited to respond to R3, R4 and R5 within 90 days.

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

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Artist: Elizabeth Oppy, Chico High School

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THERMALITO UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

SUMMARY

A significant portion of taxpayer dollars are allocated to our public school systems. With that in mind, the Grand Jury decided to examine a local district—Thermalito Union Elementary School District (TUESD). TUESD serves mainly low-income students, many learning English as their second language. What the Grand Jury found were professionals, paraprofessionals, and other staff and community members committed to providing the very best educational experience to their students.

GLOSSARY

CAASPP - California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress

CDE - California Department of Education

Certificated employee - Signifies employees who hold a California Credential to perform their administrative or teaching duties, includes teachers, principals and superintendents

Classified employee - Includes positions such as custodian, cooks, bus drivers, secretaries, classroom instructional aides

EL - English Learners

ELA - English Language Arts

LCAP - Local Control Accountability Plan - This plan describes a school district's overall vision for students, annual goals and specific actions the district will take to achieve the vision and goals.

LEA - Local Education Agency - A commonly used synonym for school district

SARC - School Accountability Report Card - The purpose of this document is to provide parents and the community with important information about each public school.

TUESD - Thermalito Union Elementary School District

BACKGROUND

The 2016-2017 Grand Jury chose to review the TUESD, one of seven separate elementary districts in the Oroville area whose students eventually feed into the Oroville Union High School District. In 2013-2014 the Grand Jury visited the four small rural elementary school districts. The 2014-2015 Grand Jury reviewed the Oroville City Elementary School District. With this review of the TUESD, all feeder districts to Oroville Union High School District (with the exception of Palermo Union School District) will have been reviewed by a recent Grand Jury.

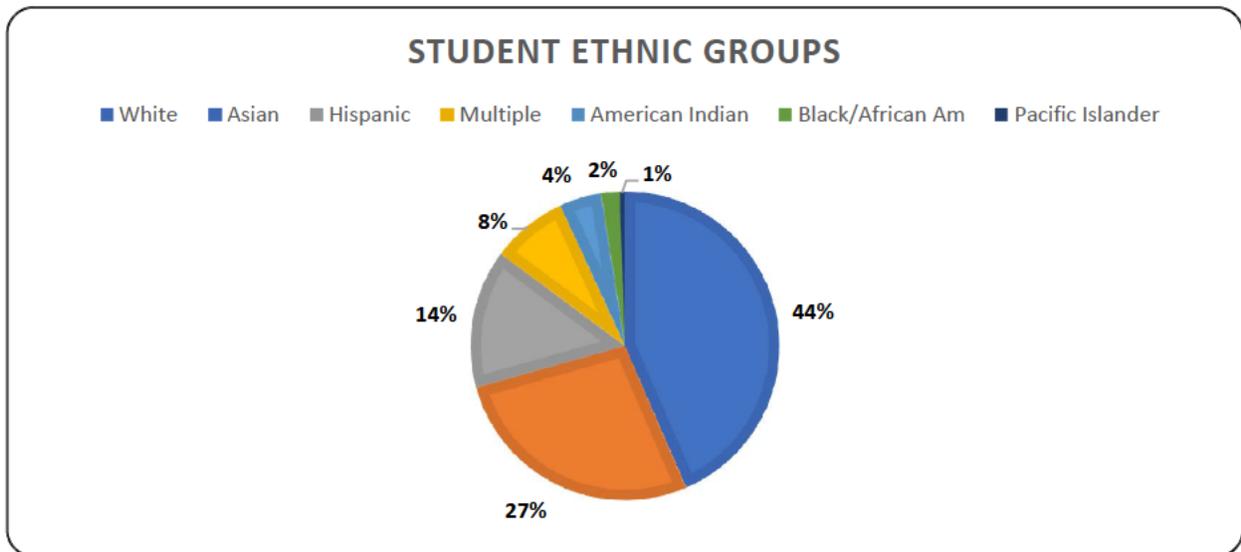
Since the most recent Grand Jury reports cited above, there are some very significant changes to how our school systems function. While the Common Core State Standards⁷ were new in the previous reports, there is now a significantly changed funding formula, as well as major changes in the testing and accountability systems. This Grand Jury report provides some general impressions about TUESD, but focused its responses on these newest changes in education. The ultimate goal - every student succeeding regardless of socio-economic status or other key factors that typically impact academic achievement.

TUESD has three neighborhood elementary schools (Sierra Avenue, Poplar Avenue and Plumas Avenue) serving students in K through 5th grade, while one

⁷ <http://www.corestandards.org>

middle school (Nelson Avenue) serves 6th through 8th grade students. There is also Heritage Day School an independent study program. Preschool age students may attend a California State Preschool located on the Poplar Avenue Elementary campus.

TUESD maintains a student population of roughly 1,500 students in pre-K through 8th grade. The student population is primarily low socio-economic with typically 90% of students qualifying for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program. Nearly 20% of students are designated as English Learners (EL): about 85% are Asian, while the other 15% are Hispanic. The predominant languages are Hmong and Spanish. The ethnic group percentages are from the October 2015 census as shown in the following chart:



METHODOLOGY

The 2016-2017 Grand Jury first examined:

- Local Education Agency (LEA) Plans from previous years
- 2015-2016 Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)
- 2015 and 2016 results of the California Assessments of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)
- District Technology Plan
- School Accountability Report Cards (SARC) for all four schools
- District School Board agendas and minutes
- Websites for the district and each school

The Grand Jury noted from these documents that student academic performance remains below average overall, especially for certain student groups. The Grand Jury wanted to understand why there seems to be little progress made toward closing the achievement gap.

To gain more information than just a ‘document-review’ of TUESD, the Grand Jury chose to interview a sampling of employees and other stakeholders to better understand the strengths and challenges. In all, well over a dozen people were interviewed, representing all four school sites and the district. Interviewees included certificated employees, classified employees and community members. The interview responses provided insight into the workings of TUESD. Members of the Grand Jury also conducted observations at all school sites. The dual intent was to explore the quality of education offered to students in the district and confirm interview responses of various programs provided by the district.

During this review, it became quite clear that the LCAP is now a driving force for districts. Each school district must engage parents, educators, employees and the community to establish these plans. These plans must also demonstrate how the district’s budget will help achieve the goals, while also assessing how well the strategies in the plan were able to improve outcomes each year. The Grand Jury organized its final report with the LCAP in mind. The LCAP template, which school districts are required to use, groups the Eight State Priorities for school districts into the following three categories:

Conditions of Learning	Pupil Outcomes	Engagement
<p>Access to core services—credentialed teachers, materials, quality facilities</p> <p>Implementation of state standards</p> <p>Access to a broad course of study and programs for high-need students</p>	<p>Student achievement, using multiple measures</p> <p>Other student outcomes, such as physical education and the arts</p>	<p>Student engagement—graduation and dropout rates, chronic absenteeism and attendance</p> <p>Parent involvement and participation, engagement in decision making and educational programs</p> <p>School climate—suspension and expulsion rates, as well as other measures.</p>

See appendix for complete version of California’s Eight State Priorities for Improving Student Outcomes.

DISCUSSION

This section of the Grand Jury report is organized around the three broad categories of the LCAP. The dual purpose of this report is to inform the public about educational initiatives impacting all school districts in Butte County and to identify opportunities for improvement specific to TUESD.

Conditions of Learning

Various documents from TUESD, as well as interviews, demonstrated to the Grand Jury that all students are taught by fully credentialed teachers teaching within their designated area(s). Additionally, all students have access to standards-aligned textbooks and materials, particularly in the core content areas. In addition to ongoing efforts for professional development, time is set aside for teachers to examine student data and collaborate with others to monitor student progress. These actions allow teachers to share best practices for targeting instruction which in turn supports closing the achievement gap for students. At the same time, teachers are able to share new instructional resources.

The district secured grant funds to purchase Chromebooks, with the intention that by the end of 2017-2018 school year all students will have access to these simple laptop computers for use at school. As stated in the most recent LCAP, “Technology hardware and software continues to be a priority that will enable all of our students to access 21st century knowledge.”

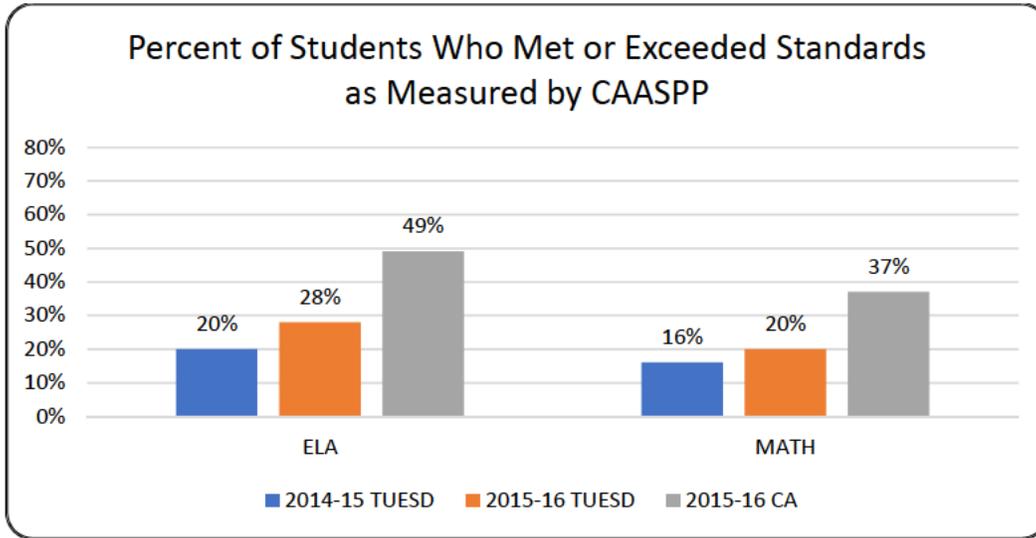
The district’s facilities, and the various buildings and structures, are in good condition and well-maintained. This allows students to attend their classes on safe and clean campuses. Classified employees appear to be quite knowledgeable about their responsibilities and have the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform their

assigned duties. With over 90% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunches, the district is able to provide breakfast and lunch as well as a snack to *all* students. This program is provided to students at all of the school sites. These elements indirectly support student learning.

TUESD classrooms are populated with about 90% of the students living in low socio-economic conditions. Every classroom has a wide range of achievement and English language ability levels. The challenge for educators is to meet this broad range of learners individually across all content areas each day in order to close the achievement gap. Given this challenge, the Grand Jury noted that there appears to be a need for more Hmong-English bilingual adults. The recent update to the LCAP states that K-3 classrooms will have an increased adult to student ratio. As the district crafts job descriptions for these new positions, special attention should be given to recruiting bilingual professionals and paraprofessionals.

Pupil Outcomes

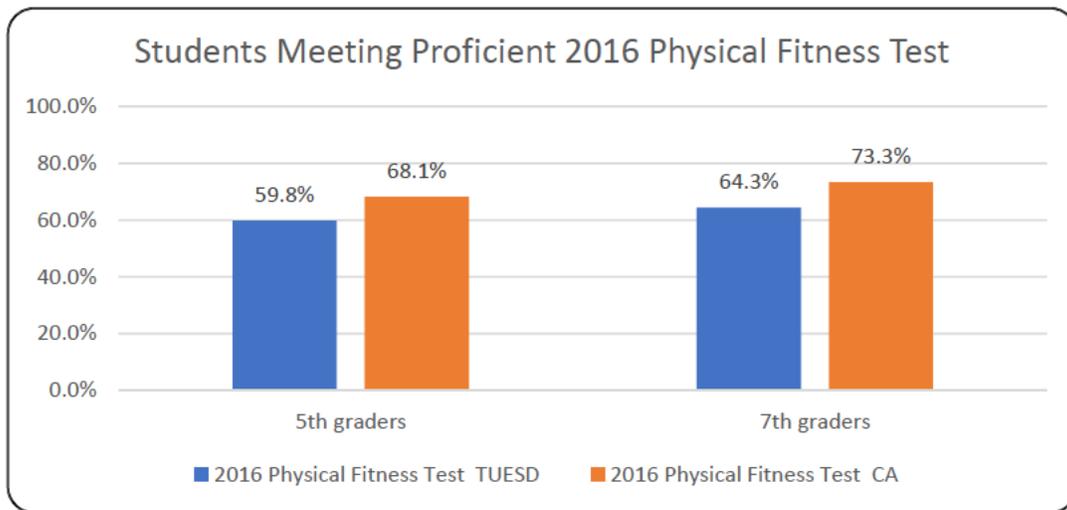
Given that the Common Core State Standards are fairly recent, there is a new testing system - California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). Annual computer-based tests are given to students in grades 3 through 8, and 11th grade. The test results are used to determine progress toward meeting the new standards. The chart below displays some recent results. California's statewide 2016 results indicate 49% of students met or exceeded standards on the English Language Arts (ELA) test and 37% scored at or above the standard in math. For TUESD, the 2016 results report 28% of students at or above proficient for ELA, with 20% meeting that same target in math - well below statewide results. TUESD did post gains in English and math over its spring 2015 tests.



Students with disabilities in the district account for about 10% of the total student population. This is a typical percentage of special education students. For this group of students there was little growth in the ELA portion of the CAASPP, and a decline of 11 points in math during the same time period depicted in the previous chart. During this same time period, students learning English as a second language made only a small increase in proficiency in ELA and math as indicated by scores on this same test.

In addition to the CAASPP, students whose home language is not English are required by law to be assessed in English language proficiency. California uses the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). The CELDT allows schools to identify students who need to improve their skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English. As reported in LCAP minutes, ELs are not making adequate progress on the CELDT.

Pupil outcomes in physical fitness are assessed annually for 5th and 7th graders. The target for proficient is meeting 4 of 6 fitness indicators. The district has set a goal to increase by five percentage points the number of students reaching proficient in the coming year. The chart below illustrates how TUESD compares to the California averages in the 2015-2016 Physical Fitness Test:



TUESD uses the iReady reading assessment system to monitor student progress throughout the school year. This information guides teachers to plan classroom instruction as well as target students for extra support. The Grand Jury noted that afterschool tutoring in literacy is available at some schools, while tutoring in mathematics is available at the middle school.

The Grand Jury noted from the LCAP that TUESD intends to use additional funding to impact pupil outcomes with these actions:

- Encourage early literacy by (1) increasing the adult to student ratio in all K-3 classrooms with more teachers and in K-1 with paraprofessional support; (2)

providing professional development for K-2 teachers and (3) purchasing supplemental materials

- Fund bilingual para-educators and EL intervention teachers to support ELs and target English Language Development (ELD)
- Provide additional support to all students in the areas of reading and writing
- Increase opportunities for field trips and guest speakers

As the California Department of Education (CDE) website states, “High-quality schools are able to differentiate instruction, services, and resource distribution to respond effectively to the diverse needs of their students, with the aim of ensuring that *all* students are able to learn and thrive.”

Engagement

Welcoming environments and communication practices of the school community encourage parent and family involvement, thus enhancing student engagement and academic success.

California’s total student population maintained an average daily attendance of 87% in 2015-2016. By comparison, TUESD data indicate attendance rates are at 95%. This small piece of information communicates a much larger picture.

TUESD maintains inviting climates at their schools. Staff at schools and other district offices are respectful and welcoming. Students show up for school when they feel safe. There are minor behavior issues, and positive behavior is recognized and rewarded. Across the district, the Grand Jury noted a climate that was both positive and conducive to learning.

During the course of the investigation, the Grand Jury used the various district and school websites to gather information. In general, the websites were cumbersome. There is a need for improvement as website information is often the first impression a family, or incoming family, makes with the district. School websites are also effective methods for communication between teachers and parents. The district recognizes the need for updating all websites.

After many interviews, the Grand Jury gathered a sense of effective communication between all levels of employees throughout the district. Even though in-house communication is effective, the district and its schools struggle to engage parents in district and school activities. Teachers want parents to be able to support students with homework or other home-based projects. Teachers and administrators would like to see more parent participation.

Parent involvement is critical for low-income and EL students. The new accountability system pushes districts to actively create new ways to engage parents. As noted in the recent LCAP, “Parental involvement is important in TUESD and school sites will continue to provide increased clerical support (bilingual when possible) in their front offices to welcome and provide support to our parents.” The district recently used a parent survey to gather information about awareness and participation in the LCAP. Although results are generally quite positive, the information is based on only 58 responses, in a district totaling nearly 1,500 students.

The Grand Jury sought the most current resources available to districts regarding parent participation. Many new resources are available for districts to use to enhance parent engagement. The California PTA and the California Department of

Education have many resources available. One of the most intriguing resources the Grand Jury discovered is a program called “School Smarts.” This parent outreach program is unique in that it is built around the stages of immigrant involvement and is therefore relevant to TUESD. See bibliography for the source of this program developed by the Alameda Unified School District.

CONCLUSION

TUESD, like other California school districts, is responding to new testing, new funding and new accountability systems. This is a district that serves mainly low-income students, many who are learning English as a second language. The district serves its students with dignity, passion and strong sense of community. TUESD continues to seek solutions to effectively meet the challenging and diverse needs of its students.

FINDINGS

- F1. The school district does not have sufficient employees to support the language needs and diversity of the community.
- F2. Academic achievement as indicated by test scores across content areas remains below state averages for virtually all student groups attending TUESD schools.
- F3. The district does not have adequate support for the variety of technology-based needs.
- F4. Parental involvement, a critical element especially for low-income and EL students, is a concern throughout the district.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The district should actively recruit staff who reflect the language diversity of the student population as job openings occur.
- R2. The district should hire a technology person or contract with an agency for support no later than the end of the 2017-2018 school year.
- R3. The district should explore similar schools with accelerated academic growth and adopt strategies to address the persistent concern of low test scores by the end of the 2017-2018 school year.
- R4. The district should develop an outreach program to encourage parent participation by the end of the 2017-2018 school year.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code section 933 and section 933.05, the following response is required:

The Superintendent of the Thermalito Union Elementary School

District must respond to all Findings (F1 through F4) and to all Recommendations (R1 through R4) of this Grand Jury report within 90 days.

INVITED RESPONSES

From the following governing bodies:

The Grand Jury also invites the Governing Board of the Thermalito Union School District to respond to all Findings (F1 through F4) and all Recommendations (R1 through R4) within 60 days.

The governing body of TUESD should be aware that the comment or response of the governing body must be conducted subject to the notice, agenda and open meeting requirements of the Brown Act.

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

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- **Plumas Avenue Elementary 2015-16:**
<http://www.sarconline.org/SarcPdfs/Temp/04615490102327.pdf>
- **Poplar Avenue Elementary 2015-16:**
http://poplar.thermalito.org/files/_aGL1R_/35b1e3f3a87528c03745a49013852ec4/Poplar_SARC_15-16.pdf

- **Sierra Avenue Elementary 2015-16:**

http://sierra.thermalito.org/files/_aGL4V_/e6130a9816f75e683745a49013852ec4/Sierra_SA_RC_15_-_16.pdf

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http://www.thermalito.org/pages/Thermalito_Union_Elementary/About_Us/Contact_Us/Local_Control_and_Accountability/2016-2017_LCAP_Meeting_Minutes March 20, 2017.

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APPENDIX

California's Eight State Priorities for Improving Student Outcomes	
1	Access to core services as measured by the extent to which students are taught by fully credentialed teachers, have standards-aligned textbooks and materials, and attend classes in safe and clean facilities.
2	Implementation of California's academic standards, including the CCSS in English language arts and math, Next Generation Science Standards, ELD, history social science, visual and performing arts, health education and physical education standards.
3	Parent involvement as measured by the extent to which parents participate in key school decisions.
4	Student achievement as measured by performance on standardized tests, the Academic Performance Index, the proportion of students who are "college and career ready," the percentage of English learners who are reclassified as fluent in English, the share of high school students who pass Advanced Placement course exams with a score of at least a 3 out of 5, and other measures.
5	Student engagement as measured by graduation and middle and high school dropout rates, chronic absenteeism and attendance.
6	School climate as measured by suspension and expulsion rates, and other measures as defined by local school districts.
7	Access to a broad course of study and programs for high-needs and exceptional students: One measure will be levels of enrollment in all required courses for admittance to a 4-year state university.
8	Other student outcomes as measured by performance in other required areas of study such as physical education and the arts. Other forms of assessments, such as SAT or ACT college entrance examination scores of high school students, could also be included.

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Artist: Angelina Miranda, Fair View High School

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**COMMENTS REGARDING RESPONSES TO THE
2015-2016 BUTTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT**

BACKGROUND

California state law requires local government agencies to respond in writing to Grand Jury reports. The governing body of an agency that is the subject of the report has ninety days to submit a response, while elected officials and department heads are allowed sixty days to respond.

Responding agencies must state whether they agree or disagree with Grand Jury findings, whether recommendations will or will not be implemented, or whether they require further analysis. With both findings and recommendations, agencies are required to explain disagreements.

DISCUSSION

According to Penal Code 933.05, responses to findings must meet particular requirements. Section (a) responses to findings must: 1) agree with the findings, or 2) disagree wholly or partially with the findings.

Section (b) responses to recommendations must include whether each recommendation: 1) has been implemented, 2) not yet implemented but will be, 3) requires further analysis, 4) will not be implemented.

The final 2015-2016 Butte County Grand Jury report contained a total of forty-one recommendations. The Butte County audit report had no recommendations. The Butte County Water District report had no recommendations. Of the forty-one recommendations, twenty have been implemented. Two recommendations have been partially implemented. Five of the recommendations may be implemented.

Eight of the recommendations will be implemented. Six of the recommendations will not be implemented by the agencies.

Agency responses to the 2015-2016 reports are available at www.buttecounty.net (See Attachment A for a recap of responses).

REQUIRED RESPONSES

The responses from Butte County entities to the 2015-2016 Grand Jury report were received on time and in accordance with California state law. Respondents included the Sheriff's Office, Town of Paradise, Paradise Police Department, City of Chico, City of Oroville, City of Gridley, City of Biggs, Butte County Public Works, Butte County Emergency Services and the Butte County Board of Supervisors.

BUTTE COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTERS

The Paradise Police Department, as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's three findings. Of the three recommendations, one has been implemented, one has been partly implemented and one will not be implemented.

The Paradise Town Council, as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's four findings. The one recommendation will not be implemented.

The City of Gridley, as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's one finding. The one recommendation will be implemented.

The City of Chico as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's one finding. The one recommendation will be implemented.

BUTTE COUNTY AUDIT

There were two findings, both of which were agreed upon. There were no recommendations.

BUTTE COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS/ REGIONAL WASTE FACILITIES

This report required responses from the Butte County Public Works Department, Butte County Board of Supervisors, Butte Regional Household Hazardous Waste Facility and Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility. The response received from Butte County Public Works incorporated the responses from all of the required respondents. The jury's eleven findings were agreed upon. There were five required responses. One has been partly implemented. Three will be implemented and require further analysis. One will not be implemented.

BUTTE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

There were three findings, however, no required responses.

CITIES REPORT/GASB GASP

The Butte County Board of Supervisors, as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's six findings. Of the three recommendations, two have been implemented, and one will not be implemented.

The City of Chico, as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's six findings. All three recommendations have been implemented.

The City of Biggs, as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's six findings. Of the three recommendations, two have been implemented and one may be implemented.

The City of Gridley, as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's six findings. Of the three recommendations, two have been implemented, and one may be implemented.

The Town of Paradise, as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's six findings. Of the three recommendations, one has been implemented and two may be implemented.

The City of Oroville, as a required respondent, agreed with the jury's six findings. Of the three recommendations, two have been implemented and one will be implemented.

HOMELESSNESS IN BUTTE COUNTY

The Butte County Emergency Services, as a required respondent, replied that the jury's one recommendation will not be implemented.

The Butte County Sheriff's office, as a required respondent, replied that the jury's one recommendation has been implemented.

The City of Chico, as a required respondent, replied that the jury's one recommendation will be implemented.

The City of Oroville, as a required respondent, replied that the jury's one recommendation will not be implemented.

The Town of Paradise, as a required respondent, replied that the jury's one recommendation has been implemented.

The City of Gridley, as a required respondent, replied that the jury's one recommendation has been implemented.

The City of Biggs, as a required respondent, replied that the jury's one recommendation has been implemented.

The Butte County Department of Behavioral Health, as a required respondent, replied that of the jury's two recommendations, one will be done and one may be implemented.

HOW DOES BUTTE COUNTY EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION COMPARE?

The Butte County Board of Supervisors, as the required respondent, agreed with the jury's six findings. All four of the jury's recommendations have been implemented.

A matrix of the findings and recommendations is presented on the next page.

Attachment A							
	FINDINGS		RECOMMENDATIONS				
	Agree	Do Not Agree	Done	Will Be Done	Partly Done	May Be Done	Will Not Be Done
2015-2016 GRAND JURY REPORTS							
BUTTE COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTERS:							
Paradise Police Department	3		1		1		1
Paradise Town Council	4						1
City of Gridley	1			1			
City of Chico	1			1			
BUTTE COUNTY AUDIT	2						
BUTTE COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS	11			3			1
BUTTE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT	3						
CITIES REPORTS GASB/GASP:							
Butte County Board Of Supervisors	6		2				1
City of Chico	4	2	3				
City of Biggs	6		2			1	
City of Gridley	6		2			1	
Town of Paradise	6		1			2	
City of Oroville	6		2	1			

Attachment A (Continued)							
	FINDINGS		RECOMMENDATIONS				
	Agree	Do Not Agree	Done	Will Be Done	Partly Done	May Be Done	Will Not Be Done
2015-2016 GRAND JURY REPORTS							
HOMELESSNESS:							
Butte County Emergency Services		0					1
Butte County Sheriff	0		1				
City of Chico				1			
City of Oroville							1
Town of Paradise	0		1				
City of Gridley			1				
City of Biggs			1				
Behavioral Health	4			1		1	
HOW DOES BUTTE COUNTY EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION COMPARE:							
Butte County Board Of Supervisors	6		4	0			