



NEWS RELEASE

City of Chico

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CITY OF CHICO RECEIVES APWA PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR NOTRE DAME BRIDGE PROJECT

CHICO, CA – The City of Chico is proud to announce that the Notre Dame Bridge Project has been selected as a 2026 Project of the Year in the Transportation Category by the Sacramento Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA). The award recognizes outstanding public works projects that exemplify excellence in engineering, project management, construction, sustainability, and community benefit through the collaborative efforts of the entire project team.

The Notre Dame Bridge Project creates a new connection between the existing north and south segments of Notre Dame Boulevard across Little Chico Creek. Developed to strengthen southeast Chico's transportation network, the project also provides an important additional route for emergency access and evacuation while improving bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between nearby neighborhoods, affordable housing communities, the regional bike park, and Bruce Road.

Designed to safely serve motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians, the project features:

- A three-span, cast-in-place reinforced concrete bridge approximately 100 feet long and 56 feet wide, with a 30-degree skew and a cambered 20-inch concrete deck
- Two 12-foot travel lanes and two 8-foot bicycle lanes
- A 5-foot sidewalk on the west side and an 8-foot multiuse path on the east side
- A 12-foot-wide Class I bicycle path undercrossing beneath the bridge
- Approximately 2,100 linear feet of reconstructed Class I bicycle path extending east to Bruce Road
- Approximately 1,710 linear feet of new 12-foot-wide Class I bicycle path, with 2-foot shoulders, extending west to nearby affordable housing communities and the regional bike park
- Bicycle-path lighting, street lighting, landscaping, drainage improvements, public utility extensions, and rock slope protection along Little Chico Creek

"Receiving this recognition from APWA is an honor for the City of Chico and the many partners who helped bring this project to completion," said Brendan Ottoboni, Director of Public Works –

Engineering. "The Notre Dame Bridge Project is more than a bridge—it is an emergency-access, evacuation, and multimodal transportation project. It demonstrates how strong partnerships, strategic use of funding, and thoughtful project delivery can create lasting benefits for the entire community."

Following the 2018 Camp Fire, the Notre Dame Bridge was identified as a critical emergency-access and evacuation connection for southeast Chico. Construction began in June 2025 and required extensive coordination among City staff, engineers, environmental specialists, permitting agencies, inspectors, and the contractor. By completing work within Little Chico Creek during the permitted construction window, the project team successfully delivered a new bridge and associated roadway, landscaping, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements. The bridge opened to traffic on June 20, 2026, enhancing safety, accessibility, and connectivity throughout the surrounding area.

The project was funded through the federal Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery program, administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Through continued coordination with HCD, the City expanded the project's benefits to include reconstruction of the Class I bicycle path east to Bruce Road, a new western connection serving nearby affordable housing communities and the regional bike park, and additional landscaping and lighting improvements.

The City extends its sincere appreciation to the entire project team whose dedication and collaboration made this award-winning project possible. Project partners included Meriam Park, NorthStar (design), Franklin Construction, Inc. (contractor), Unico Engineering (construction management and inspection), and the California Department of Housing and Community Development. The City also recognizes its Public Works project management, environmental, construction oversight, administrative, and support staff, whose collective expertise guided the project from early development through design, federalization, and construction.

The Notre Dame Bridge Project reflects the City of Chico's continued commitment to resilient infrastructure that improves public safety, strengthens emergency preparedness, and supports all modes of transportation. By linking roadways, neighborhoods, bicycle facilities, and community destinations, the project will provide lasting value to residents and visitors for generations to come.

For media inquiries, please contact the Public Works Engineering Department at (530) 879-6900.

Located in Butte County, California, Chico is the cultural and economic center of the northern Sacramento Valley and the largest city north of Sacramento. Known as a college town, the home of California State University, Chico and for Bidwell Park, one of the largest urban parks in the United States. For more information, visit www.chicoca.gov.

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