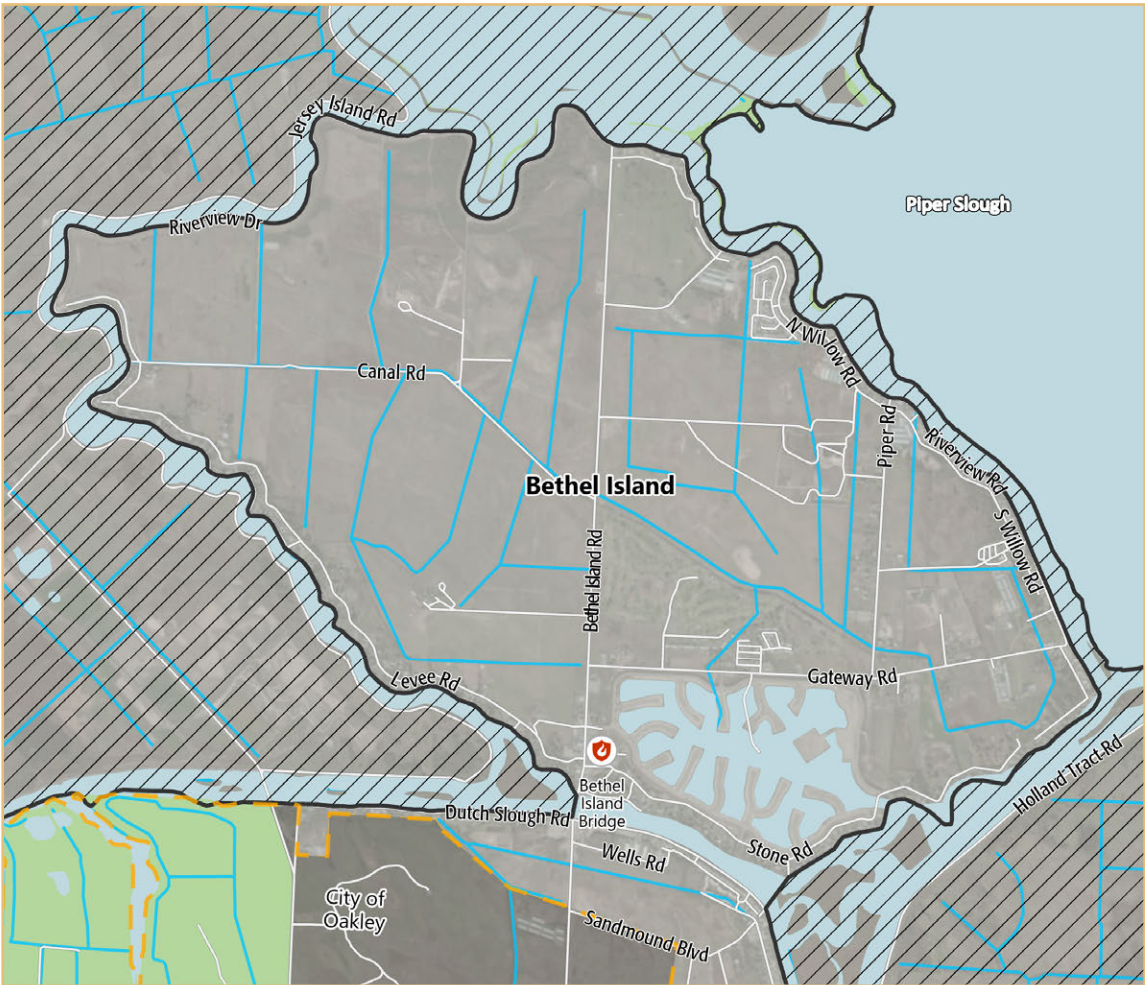
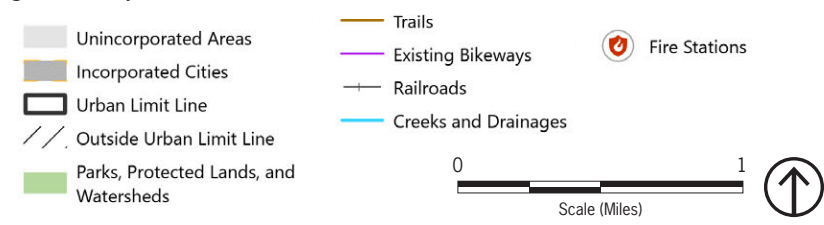


# BETHEL ISLAND - CONTEXT - 1

Situated in eastern Contra Costa County at the heart of the Delta, Bethel Island has welcomed visitors and new residents alike since the 1930s. For nearly a century, residents have been attracted to this island community for its water-related recreational activities and agricultural assets. Bethel Island's marinas were developed to capitalize on a growing interest in the community's warm waters and relaxed, rural atmosphere, away from the urban bustle of San Francisco Bay.

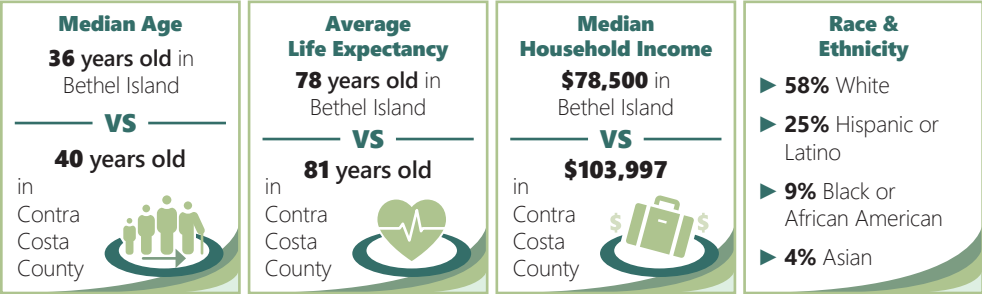
The residents of Bethel Island today cross the Bethel Island Bridge, replaced in 2009, to get to and from home. This singular ingress and egress to the 5.5-square-mile island limits development, but also causes roadway congestion during commute hours. Given the island's low elevation, there are also significant flooding and levee maintenance issues, as well as a need for improved infrastructure to address hazards.

Proud of their local tourism industry and water-oriented amenities, Bethel Island residents would like to further enhance the marinas with more retail uses, increased parking, and more family-oriented and/or water-related annual community events. The community also seeks to retain and enhance local agricultural vibrancy and character. The community is strongly opposed to development of heavy industrial uses but is amenable to a limited amount of light industry.



Source: Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2022.

## WHO LIVES IN BETHEL ISLAND?













(Community-submitted photo.)

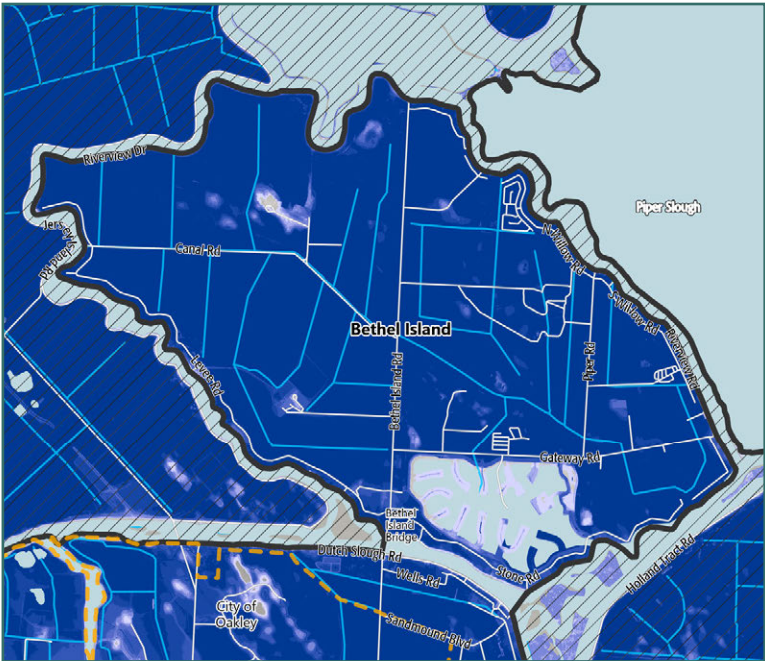




The information on this page presents a summary of hazards and vulnerabilities in Bethel Island based on the Contra Costa County Vulnerability Assessment; please see the [online Vulnerability Assessment](#) for a full description of these hazards and vulnerabilities

HAZARDS	
	Agricultural Pests and Diseases
	Air Quality
	Coastal Flood
	Drought
	Extreme Heat
	Flooding
	Human Health Hazards
	Seismic Hazards (Liquefaction)
	Sea Level Rise
	Severe Storm

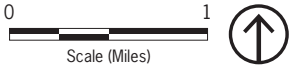
MAJOR VULNERABILITIES	
Cost-burdened households, households in poverty, and persons with chronic illnesses are vulnerable to coastal flooding.	
The entire community is on a single access road connected via a bridge, leaving it vulnerable to coastal flooding, flooding, sea level rise, and severe storms.	
Outdoor recreation and rangeland in the community are vulnerable to coastal flooding and sea level rise.	
Commercial and government buildings along Bethel Island Road, Stone Road, Willow Road, and Taylor Road are vulnerable to sea level rise.	
The island is vulnerable to liquefaction created by seismic hazards.	



## FLOOD ZONES

### Flood Hazard Areas

- 100-Year Flood Zone
- 500-Year Flood Zone
- Areas of Undetermined but Possible Flood Hazard
- Water
- Incorporated Cities
- Urban Limit Line
- Outside Urban Limit Line
- Creeks and Drainages



A 100-year flood zone represents a 1% chance of flooding in any given year.

A 500-year flood zone represents a 0.2% chance of flooding in any given year.

Source: FEMA, 2019; Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2022.

## SEA-LEVEL RISE

### Sea Level Rise 2050 with 100-Year Storm Severity

#### Water Depth (feet)

- 0-2
- 2-4
- 4-6
- 6-8
- 8-10
- 10-12
- 12+
- Water
- Incorporated Cities
- Urban Limit Line
- Outside Urban Limit Line
- Creeks and Drainages



Source: San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, 2017; Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2022.



## PLANNED LAND USE

Land use designations for Bethel Island are shown on Figure LU-1, General Plan Land Use Map, and are defined in the Land Use Element. The majority of Bethel Island is planned to preserve its rural open space character and support and enhance local tourism business and water-oriented recreation. Most of the area is designated for agricultural, commercial recreation, and resource conservation uses. The commercial core of Bethel Island is located along Bethel Island Road and supports public, recreation, and residential uses. This core is envisioned to expand east along Gateway Road to allow for more retail uses, increased parking, and community events, enhancing community character and vibrancy. The perimeter of the island will continue to host most of the community's residential neighborhoods.



Existing agricultural uses in Bethel Island.



Existing single-family home in Bethel Island.



Existing marina in Bethel Island.



Residential street in the community.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles articulate the values, priorities, and aspirations for the future shared by Bethel Island community members:

1. Bethel Island residents enjoy a relaxed, rural community located away from urban areas of San Francisco and the East Bay. The small-town, family-oriented atmosphere and quiet character should be preserved.
2. Local businesses, including tourism and water-oriented recreation amenities, are an asset to the community and should be supported. There should be more opportunities for new local businesses, such as a grocery store, to provide services to the community.
3. To maintain a safe community, public services such as the Contra Costa Fire Protection District and Sheriff's Office should be supported and enhanced.
4. Bethel Island's topography and location within the Delta expose it to potential flooding hazards. The community should be protected from these and other hazards through proper emergency response planning and infrastructure upgrades.



## POLICIES

1. Retain the characteristics of Bethel Island that make it a unique Delta community by limiting development to a low overall density and supporting uses that enhance the rural, relaxed, water-oriented character. (3-64)
2. Preserve and protect agriculture, open space, wetlands, and rare plant communities found on Bethel Island. (3-64)
3. Encourage rehabilitation of distressed properties, including improving aging structures and reducing vegetation overgrowth, both on land and along waterways.
4. To the extent permitted by State law, limit new residential development to already-approved development and one dwelling unit per legal parcel. (3-56)
5. Do not approve General Plan Amendments that would increase residential density unless at least the following are accomplished:
  - a. A financing mechanism is fully and completely assured for improvements to the entire perimeter on-island levee system.
  - b. The levee improvement plans are approved by the Bethel Island Municipal Improvement District (BIMID) and the Army Corps of Engineers.
  - c. Subsidence and impacts on wetlands are adequately mitigated. (3-57)
6. Prohibit levee breaches unless the entire perimeter levee is improved to Army Corps of Engineers standards. (3-58)
7. Require that any internal levees meet Army Corps of Engineers standards. (3-60)
8. Require that new construction be set back from levee centerlines a minimum of 100 feet unless adequate substantiation for reduction is approved by Reclamation District 799 or BIMID. (3-60)
9. Require that any new construction that is not protected by certified levees meets FEMA standards. (3-60)

## POLICIES (CONTINUED)

10. Establish Bethel Island Road between Dutch Slough and Gateway Road, and Gateway Road between Bethel Island Road and Piper Road, as the community's commercial core.
11. Encourage establishment and growth of locally serving businesses that fulfill the needs of Bethel Island residents.
12. Allow temporary uses, such as food trucks, pop-up restaurants, retail shops, and recreation equipment rentals, to provide visitor-serving amenities during special events like fishing tournaments and the annual lighted boat parade.
13. Prioritize roadway improvements to reduce traffic congestion on Bethel Island and directly connected public roads. Incorporate pedestrian, bicycle, and stormwater infrastructure improvements when feasible to improve safety and facilitate mobility throughout the island.

## ACTIONS

1. Identify suitable locations for additional park and recreation facilities, including kid-friendly amenities such as play structures, an expanded community gathering space, and a public access point to the water, potentially with a boat ramp.
2. Encourage the Diablo Water District to examine the feasibility of annexing Bethel Island into their service area to improve access to a reliable source of water for fire protection services and general consumption.
3. Improve signage along waterways to minimize boat wakes and reduce accidents.
4. Explore the feasibility of a centralized parking area in the commercial core.