

SUSTAINABILITY

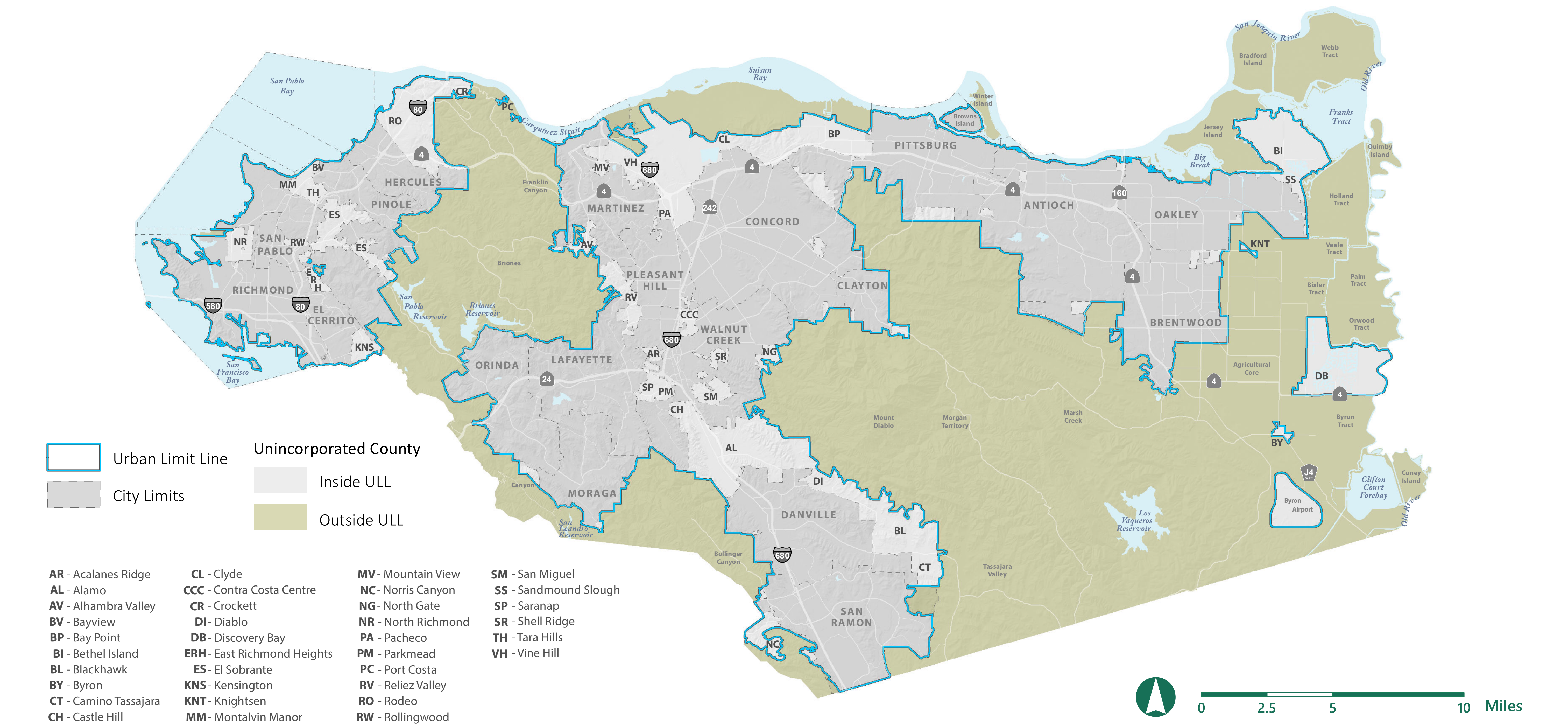
Sustainability means ensuring that Contra Costa County can meet its current resource needs in a way that isn’t detrimental to future generations. This includes using resources that are renewable (meaning that they don’t run out), minimizing waste, and improving resilience, which is the ability to withstand, recover, adapt, and learn from disasters and extreme events. Another important aspect of sustainability is conserving natural and working lands, which provide climate benefits by storing carbon, as well as ecological, recreational, and scenic benefits. To manage and guide

growth in Contra Costa County, voters adopted the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard and Urban Limit Line (ULL). The 65/35 Standard limits urban development to no more than 35 percent of the land area of the county, while the ULL (shown in the map below) defines where such uses can be applied. Communities that plan for sustainability, including how to make themselves more resilient, are in a better position to improve their economy, public health and well-being, and overall quality of life.





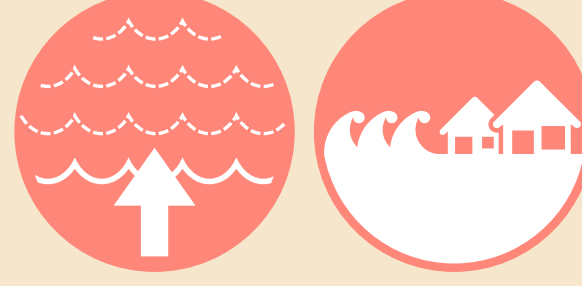


Key Components

- Renewable Resources
- Minimized Waste
- Improved Resilience
- Protection & Conservation of Natural and Working Lands
- Sustainable Land Use & Transportation
- Sustainable Industry



Improved Resilience

Some effects from climate change are now considered unavoidable. To sustain the quality of life communities have come to expect, the County must consider how to counteract potential threats to public health, buildings and infrastructure, economic drivers, biological resources, and key community services. The Draft 2045 General Plan and 2024 CAP Update include policies, strategies, and actions to improve community resilience to changing climate conditions. These approaches are tailored to individual climate hazards, including the key climate hazards described in the table below.

Hazard	Climate Change Effect	Biggest Impact
 Wildfire	The combined effects of higher temperatures, increased frequency and intensity of drought, and increased spread of ecosystem pests make large, intense wildfires more likely.	Wildfires can burn people and damage or destroy property. The smoke and ash from wildfires can increase air and water pollution levels.
 Drought	Changes in precipitation patterns could strain local and regional water supplies.	Communities may experience water shortages during drought conditions. Farmers and ranchers may be required to change businesses practices. Ecosystem health may deteriorate.
 Sea Level Rise and Shoreline Flooding	As global temperatures rise, glaciers and other land ice near the north and south poles melt and ocean water expands, causing increased shoreline flooding and rising sea levels.	Buildings, infrastructure, and ecosystems in shoreline areas and the Delta may experience more frequent and worse flooding or become permanently inundated, harming economic assets, water quality, and habitat while placing people at risk.
 Flooding	Increased frequency of extreme rain events may make floods larger and more frequent.	Floodwaters can drown people and damage property, infrastructure, and ecosystems as well as carry contaminants into the community.
 Extreme Heat	Unusually high temperatures are projected to become more frequent.	Extreme heat can cause heat-related illnesses and some types of infrastructure may fail.



Sustainable Land Use & Transportation

The Draft 2045 General Plan supports sustainable land use patterns and transportation systems, including through policies and actions that:

- Focus on development within established communities, direct housing and jobs close together, and encourage dense development near transit with opportunities to walk and bike.
- Embrace the principles of a circular economy and encourage ecologically sustainable practices and materials.
- Increase access to zero-emission vehicles and reduce dependence on personal vehicles.
- Continue to improve electric vehicle charging infrastructure within developments and the public right-of-way.



Protection & Conservation of Natural & Working Lands

The Draft 2045 General Plan works to protect and conserve natural and working lands, including through policies and actions that:

- Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the ULL to focus future development in the county’s established urban and suburban communities while preserving agricultural land, rangeland, natural habitats, watersheds, and open space.
- Require buffers for new projects adjacent to protected open space or agriculture and prioritize the health and viability of natural and working lands when resolving conflicts with urban uses.
- Preserve large, contiguous areas of the county for agricultural production and prohibit projects that would lead to fragmentation of agricultural areas.